

Running head: AMBUSH MARKETING AND SPORT EMPLOYEES

50 Shades of Ambush Marketing: Exploring the Effects of Ambush Marketing on Sport
Employees

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Abstract

Academic research into ambushing has grown and developed as a subsection of sponsorship literature during this time, inspiring a number of important themes and areas of focus. To date, however, the effects of ambush marketing – and those counter-ambush efforts employed by event owners – on employees of the commercial rights holder have yet to be explored. This is a significant gap in the literature, given that employees are the individuals who must manage sponsorship deals, interact with sponsors, and enact counter-ambush efforts for their organizations.

As such, this study sought to explore the effects of ambush marketing on employees involved with hosting a professional, national-level, sport championship event, specifically examining the impact of ambush marketing on event host employee stress and group cohesion. Drawing on Doherty's (1998) human resources conceptual framework and social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974), the present research explored ambush marketing's effects on sport employees and group identification within the sponsorship department of the host organization. Specifically, within the lens of social identity the assumption was that the national sporting event would cause an emotional tie to the activity that impacts both entities of employee stress and group cohesion, therefore influencing employee behaviour.

Data collection was composed of two phases: participant observations and semi-structured interviews. These two methods were selected to enable the collection and analysis of data to gain the most insight, understanding, and creation of a holistic view of how and why ambush marketing affects employee stress and group cohesion. The participant pool included individuals involved in the delivery of the event from the host

organization, including Directors and Managers from the Sponsorship and Operations departments of the host organization.

Through exploring the impact of ambush marketing on employees, this study provides additional insight into the unique effects of ambush marketing on sponsorship relationships and its role as a stressor for the participants. Here, social identity provides a valuable lens to understand how external factors influence participants during the planning and delivery of a national sporting event. Based on the themes within the data triangulated from interviews and observations, theoretical and practical implications will be presented.

Keywords: Ambush Marketing, Sponsorship Servicing, National Sporting Event, Stress, Cohesion

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Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iv</i>
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Contextual Analysis	4
1.3. National Sporting Event	7
1.4. Purpose Statement	8
1.5. Justification of Study	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
2.1. What is Sponsorship?	10
2.1.1 Background of Sponsorship	11
2.2. Sponsorship Servicing	14
2.3. Sponsorship versus Ambush Marketing	15
2.4. Ambush Marketing	17
2.4.1. What is Ambush Marketing	17
2.4.2. Complexities of Ambush Marketing	19
2.4.3. Impact of Ambush Marketing	23
2.4.4. Impact on Employees	26
2.5. Ambush Marketing and Employees	27
2.5.1. Doherty’s Conceptual Framework	27
2.5.2. Social Identity Theory	30
2.5.3. Impact of Ambush Marketing on Employees	33
2.5.4. Stress	33
2.5.5. Cohesion.....	36
2.6. Theoretical Conclusions	37
Chapter 3: Methodology	39
3.1. Researcher’s Paradigm	39
3.2. Research Design	39
3.3. Participant Recruitment	42
3.4. Data Collection	46
3.5. Data Analysis	52
3.6. Data Representation	55
3.7. Trustworthiness	55
3.7.1. Triangulation	55
3.7.2. In-Depth Description.....	56
3.7.3. Member Checking	56
3.7.4. Reflexivity.....	57
3.7.4.1. Personal Challenges and Triumphs.....	58
3.7.4.2. Prior Expectations and Thoughts	60
3.7.4.3. Researchers Own Age and Experience	62

3.8. Ethical Considerations	62
3.8.1. Confidentiality.....	63
3.8.2. Do No Harm.....	63
3.8.3. Informed Consent.....	64
3.9. Methodological Conclusions	64
Chapter 4: Findings.....	66
4.1. RQ1: How do employees interpret ambush marketing?	66
4.1.1. Complex Views of Ambush Marketing	69
4.1.2. Sponsor Servicing and Relationships	75
4.1.3. Age and Experience	78
4.2. RQ2: To What Extent Does Perceived Ambush Marketing Influence Perceptions of Employee Stress?	81
4.2.1. Limited Stress.....	81
4.2.2. Eu- Stress	86
4.2.3. Hyper-Stress	88
4.2.4. Hypo-Stress	89
4.2.5. Coping Mechanisms.....	90
4.3. RQ3: To What Extent Does Perceived Ambush Marketing Influence Employee Perceptions of Group Cohesion?	94
4.3.1. Stakeholder Relations.....	94
4.3.2. Strong Cohesion	95
4.3.3. Evidence of a Support System	96
4.4. Findings Summary	101
Chapter 5: Discussion	103
5.1. RQ1: How do employees interpret ambush marketing?	104
5.1.1. Complex Views of Ambush Marketing	105
5.1.2. Sponsor Servicing and Relationships	108
5.1.3. Age and Experience	109
5.2. RQ2: To What Extent Does Perceived Ambush Marketing Influence Perceptions of Employee Stress?	111
5.2.1. Limited Stress.....	111
5.2.2. Forms of Stress	112
5.2.3. Coping Mechanisms.....	114
5.3. RQ3: To What Extent Does Perceived Ambush Marketing Influence Employee Perceptions of Group Cohesion?	115
5.3.1. Stakeholder Relations.....	115
5.3.2. Strong Cohesion	116
5.3.3. Evidence of a Support System	117
5.4. Discussion Summary	118
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	119
6.1. Limitations and Future Research	123
6.2. Implementations on Sport Event Host Employees	124
6.3. Theoretical Contribution	126

References	129
Appendix A.....	138
Appendix B.....	140
Appendix C.....	142
Appendix D.....	144

List of Tables and Figures**Tables:**

Table 1: Ambush Marketing Definition Overview	20
Table 2: Participant Overview	46
Table 3: Summary of Observations	50
Table 4: 4.1. RQ1 Summary of Findings	80
Table 5: 4.2. RQ2 Summary of Findings	93
Table 6: 4.3. RQ3 Summary of Findings	100

Figures:

Figure 1: Doherty's Conceptual Framework.....	29
Figure 2: Focused Conceptual Framework.....	29
Figure 3: Proposed Mediation between Stress and Cohesion	100

List of Acronyms

GOC: Games Organizing Committee

IOC: International Olympic Committee

NHL: National Hockey League

SIT: Social Identity Theory

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

Numerous shifts have occurred over time in the terms and phrases used to describe ambush marketing, making it difficult to manage a clear comprehension of how to define ambush marketing exactly (Burton, Snyder & McKelvey, 2018; McKelvey & Gladden, 2006). Historically, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and commercial rights holders have held onto the power to frame the perceived and defined practice of ambush marketing as a negative, immoral, and unethical act by using terms like parasitic, stealing, illicit activity (Burton & Bradish, 2018). This view is a one-sided opinion, which restricts the understanding and interpretation of ambush marketing as a strategic process (Burton & Bradish, 2018; Burton, et al., 2018; Hill, 2016). This historical dominance of the IOC-led perspective challenges scholars who are attempting to craft a generic definition due to the fact they are unsure of what “constitutes innovative marketing tactics as opposed to illegitimate associating” (Burton, et al., 2018, p. 19). Therefore, it is important to understand the grey areas around ambush marketing: ambushing’s complexity is in its nature, as it is “in the eye of the beholder” of how ambush marketing is perceived (Meenaghan, 1994 p.85), an important consideration for both researchers and practitioners.

The first documented incident of ambush marketing was in 1984 during the Los Angeles Olympic Games, where Fuji Film owned the official international sponsorship rights for the Games. Kodak – a long-time sponsor of the Olympic Games – felt aggrieved at losing the official rights and sought new means of associating with the Games and became the “proud sponsor of the ABC’s broadcast of the Games, and the

official film of the United States track team” (Sandler & Shani, 1989, p. 11). By 1988, “ambush marketing was the name for the game” for the Seoul, Korea Summer Olympics, Kodak once again secured an official sponsorship and Fuji responded with revenge (Sandler & Shani, 1989, p. 11). Among the companies that ambushed the event were Wendy’s, American Express, Quality Inns, and Chevrolet, each designing creative ways to associate themselves with the Summer Olympics (Sandler & Shani, 1989).

Following the emergence of ambush marketing during the 1984 Olympics, ambush marketing has proliferated and the number of brands participating in ambushing has increased (Chadwick & Burton, 2011). Ambushing brands have adopted unique approaches towards ambushing sporting events, including implicitly linking to the event through commercials, clothing, social media, or promotions. In response, rules and regulations have been created by the IOC, Games organizing committees (GOC), and more to ensure that ambush marketing efforts are less able to impact upon consumer understanding of the official sponsor at these sporting events (Meenaghan, 1994). In the end, the primary purpose of an event sponsorship is two-fold; one, to make sure the sponsor is happy with consumer purchasing of their product/service, and two, to ensure a healthy revenue flow for the event (Crow & Hoek, 2003; Meenaghan, 1996).

Ambush marketing is alleged to dilute this two-fold purpose by weakening the sponsors’ and commercial rights holders’ connection with the event. For example, when Coca-Cola was the official soft drink supplier for the National Hockey League (NHL) in 1992, Pepsi ambushed the partnership. Pepsi gained advertising perks through their connection with Molson Breweries (Crow & Hoek, 2003). This conflicting advertisement campaign, of commercials and Pepsi bottle caps sharing NHL outcomes, gave the

perception that Pepsi was the official soft drink sponsor (Crow & Hoek, 2003). As a result, Pepsi's ambushing potentially could have stop consumer purchasing that could result in a loss of revenue for Coca-Cola. These tactics have been deemed legally and morally unacceptable practice by scholars such as Cornwell and Maignan (1998) Meenaghan (1996), and O'Sullivan and Murphy (1998).

Ultimately, our understanding of ambush marketing is rooted in such early instances of ambushing, informing much of the ambush literature and guiding scholarly conceptualisations of the practice. As a result, previous definitions of ambush marketing are linked to limited understanding of the perspectives, aims, motives and uses of ambush marketing, making ambush marketing a complex phenomenon (Chadwick & Burton, 2011). In response, Chadwick and Burton (2011) proposed a new definition of ambush marketing, in an effort to explore a different perspective and re-envision ambush marketing's role in contemporary marketing. The authors thus redefined ambush marketing as:

a form of associative marketing which is designed by an organization to capitalize on the awareness, attention, goodwill, and other benefits, generated by having an association with an event or property, without the organization having an official or direct connection to that event or property (p. 714).

This new definition removes any negative connotation around ambush marketing and highlights the strategic tactics around ambushing, therefore, gaining a more positive perception towards ambushing.

1.2. Contextual Analysis

In line with ambush marketing's emergence and development since the 1980s, academic research into ambushing has similarly grown and developed as a subsection of the sponsorship literature. To date, four broad themes that ambush marketing research has commonly addressed can be seen: (1) the definition of what ambush marketing is and its aims and objectives (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; Crompton, 2004, Meenaghan 1994; Sandler & Shani, 1989; Seguin & O'Reilly, 2008); (2) the measuring of the impact of ambush marketing on consumers, such as post-event sponsorship recall and recognition studies (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; McDaniel & Kinney, 1998; Meenaghan, 1998; Sandler & Shani 1989); (3) the ethical concern of ambush marketing with campaigns towards events (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; Ellis, Scassa & Seguin, 2011; Meenaghan, 1994; O'Sullivan & Murphy, 1998; Payne, 1998); and (4) the exploration of the legal implications of ambush marketing towards the sponsors and rights holders of events (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; McKelvey, 2006; McKelvey & Grady, 2008; Scassa, 2011; Townley, Harrington & Couchman, 1998).

Related to this extensive research, Crompton (2004), Scassa (2011), and O'Sullivan and Murphy (1998) explored impacts on consumers, and the ethical and legal implications behind ambush marketing through consumer-based studies and different ethical paradigms, such as social interest, societal rights, and stakeholder analysis. From this exploration, Crompton (2004) suggested little evidence exists to support the idea/thinking that ambush marketing actually has an impact on consumers and sponsors, due to a reliance on faulty recall and recognition metrics. Both Scassa (2011) and O'Sullivan and Murphy (1998) likewise concluded that the ethical and legal lines of

ambush marketing are blurred given that the majority of ambush marketers avoid using trademarks or logos.

To date, new trends have emerged in the ambush literature, including a focus on legislative powers and renewed calls for investigations into ambush ethics and discourse (Ellis, Parent, & Seguin, 2016; Hill, 2016; Nufer, 2016). Specifically, Ellis, Parent, and Seguin (2016) discuss a new lens to view ambush marketing in that they focus attention on the legal perspective of ambush marketing and the influence of legislation on ambush marketing practice. Ellis et al., (2016) stated that legislation is an essential strategy for the IOC and Olympic committees to address to combat against ambush marketers, to ensure their sponsorship value stays intact. Legislation creates an added value for these elite committees to ensure their sponsors receive complete satisfaction from sponsoring the event (Ellis et al., 2016). Equally, Hill (2016) and Nufer (2016) reignite previous claims that ambush marketing is an unethical practice for non-sponsor organizations to participate in. However, Burton and Bradish (2018), Burton et al (2018), and Weeks, O'Connor, and Martin (2017) contrast this view and argue ambush marketing is not as parasitic as fellow scholars proclaim. These contradictory findings highlight the disparity in scholarly perspectives of and approaches to ambush marketing, as researchers and practitioners describe and identify ambush marketing differently.

As such, Chadwick and Burton (2011) stated that while advances have been made in the ambush marketing literature, there is still much to be discovered and investigated to advance theory in this area. Although extensive research, the impact of ambush marketing – on sponsors, consumers, managers, and rights holders – is relatively unknown. More specifically, little is known about the impact of ambush marketing on

employees within ambushing or ambushed organizations. Despite the development and deployment of myriad counter-ambush strategies, and the growth of an industry intended to manage ambush marketing efforts and to protect sponsors' investment, little is known about the effects of ambushing on employees across the many stakeholders implicated. Given the strategic element of ambush marketing and the large role of sponsorship for revenue generation in sport organizations, this gap in knowledge creates an area of inquiry that requires further investigation.

According to Doherty's (1998) conceptual framework for managing human resources, external forces such as ambush marketing may impact employee attitudes and behaviours. It is expected that external environmental factors (in this context, ambush marketing) will impact on the internal work environment of employees, because employees come from the external environment and enter the organization, bringing their own values and expectations about ambush marketing into the organization (Doherty, 1998). These external assumptions and expectations around ambush marketing may influence employee attitudes and behaviours.

Further, social identity theory (SIT) may help explain the association between ambush marketing and employee outcomes. Specifically, SIT is defined by individuals self-identifying with "oneness" of a group who embodies similar values and traits to categorize themselves and others into social groups to strengthen an individual's self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2014; Tajfel, 1974). This theory highlights that individual self-concept is tied to membership in particular groups. In the case of ambush marketing, working in the sponsorship department may provide the catalyst for "oneness" where employees have a strong commitment to maintaining the

goals and outcomes of the group. Therefore, SIT may frame the connection between an external force such as ambush marketing influencing employee stress and group cohesion, specifically (Tajfel, 1974). For example, combating ambush marketing as a strategic management practice may cause in-groups from the organization to form through protecting internal sponsorship brands, thus resulting in stress to ensure protection of the in-group is maintained and cohesion from building the strength of the in-group.

1.3. The National Sporting Event

For confidentiality purposes the name of the property has been withheld, however, the case study context of this study was an annual, national, televised professional sporting championship that changes locations ever year, where the event in this case study was hosted in Ontario in 2017. The host city had their own team that did not qualify for the event. Because this is a national event, and not a mega event, the steering committee of the host team had to balance pleasing their own team sponsors and the event sponsors, majority of which were not the same. The host had different telecommunications, automobile, and alcohol sponsors compared to the event, resulting in team sponsors being excluded from the event. This sponsorship tiering left host organization employees in a difficult position, whereby they had to make sure they serviced event sponsors and supported their activation efforts during the event, while also ensuring that their own sponsors did not feel neglected or upset with their host city sponsorship strategy. This case thus offered an interesting and insightful view of sponsorship relations and rights management, and the potential effects of ambush marketing prevention on internal employees. Moreover, because this situation – where

sponsors of a host team may not be the sponsors of the event – is common in sport, it was determined that this case would provide a valuable context to transfer the findings and explore the variables of interest.

1.4. Purpose Statement

Exploring the impact of ambush marketing on employees will provide additional insight regarding the unique sponsorship relationship (and stressor) that ambush marketing can have internally to an organization and may further inform our theoretical understanding of this phenomenon.

The purpose of this single-case study is to explore the effect of ambush marketing on employees who host a national sporting event. Of particular interest is the impact of ambush marketing on stress and group cohesion during this national sporting event. This study of the effects of ambush marketing on employee stress and group cohesion aims to develop a new lens to view ambush marketing through SIT. Moreover, the data suggests that this new lens may be transferred to other sporting events with sponsorships that have the potential to encounter ambush marketing, and employee interactions.

This single-case study examines the phenomenon of interest by adopting Doherty's model for managing human resources and SIT to explore the influence of ambush marketing on sport event employees. Drawing on participant observation as the initial form of data collection and interviews as the secondary form of data collection, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. How do employees interpret ambush marketing?
2. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress?

3. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion?

Following the statement of purpose and justification of study, a review of relevant literature is presented to provide a brief overview of sponsorship literature and the role sponsorship has played in the development of ambush marketing. Following this, a review of prior studies aimed at developing an understanding of employee stress and group cohesion is presented, further explaining the role of SIT and Doherty's conceptual framework for managing human resources in sport. Finally, the study's methodology is outlined, to demonstrate the data collection strategy and analysis.

1.5. Justification of Study

The purpose of this single-case study is to develop a stronger understanding of the extent to which ambush marketing affects employee stress and group cohesion during a national sporting event, to enhance the theoretical understanding of the nature and influence of ambushing marketing within sport management literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review is arranged around five sections pertaining to the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees. The first section provides a review of sponsorship literature and practice in order to provide a foundation for how ambush marketing has evolved. The second section examines ambush marketing's nature and alleged effects on sponsorship relations. The third section contextualizes the relationship between ambush marketing and employees using Doherty's (1998) conceptual framework. Finally, the fourth section examines stress and group cohesion, both external environmental factors and components of Doherty's model of human resource management. Within this section, SIT is discussed to further expand upon the external environmental factors which impact employees. These four sections will create the framework for how and why the research questions will be studied.

2.1. What is Sponsorship?

There is no evidence of a definitive and consistent definition of sponsorship within the extant literature; rather, definitions vary between countries and researchers (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Walliser, 2003). However, Cornwell and Maignan (1998) found similar themes and ideas present in multiple variations of sponsorship definitions, and developed a definition that summarized what sponsorship is:

Sponsorship involves two main activities (1) an exchange between a sponsor and a sponsee whereby the latter receives a fee and the former obtains the right to associate itself with the activity sponsored and (2) the marketing of the association by the sponsor (p. 11).

The definition provided by Cornwell and Maignan (1998) refers to the primary actors involved in a sponsorship agreement. These are the sponsor, and the person or event (sponsee) (Weeks, Cornwell & Drennan, 2008). The sponsor is highly important as they pay a sponsorship fee or an in-kind payment towards the sports property owner to promote their brand throughout the event, instead of a media owner (Tripodi, 2001). This makes sponsorship a business agreement between two entities, where both parties benefit (Tsiotsou, 2011). A brand relationship is then created with the sponsor and sponsee that can have an impact on their stakeholders.

Stakeholders include multiple groups of individuals, such as employees, customers, suppliers, the financial community, the government, and the media (Tsiotsou, 2011). To qualify as a stakeholder, one must have a connection to the organization, such as one who specifically gains a benefit from the relationship or represents a specific interest towards the organization (Tsiotsou, 2011); in sum, stakeholders are anyone “who can affect or is affected by the organization’s objectives” (Tsiotsou, 2011, p. 558). Therefore, it is important to consider these stakeholders’ goals, objectives, needs and opinions, because the organization’s success is dependent on these stakeholders (Farrelly & Quester, 2005; Tsiotsou, 2011).

2.1.1. Background of Sponsorship

Sponsorship is one of the fastest growing communication methods for an organization to cut through the noise of other persistent advertising to ensure they can address and target their desired audience (Nickell, Cornwell, & Johnston, 2011).

Sponsorship research gained popularity between the 1980s and 1990s and during this period, the main research focus was the growth of sponsorship with an interest towards

industries that gained momentum as sponsors (e.g., the beverage industry; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). In tandem with significant growth in sponsorship activities across different sectors, sponsorship research has become prevalent across sport, arts, and culture, where sponsoring organizations see the benefits of increasing the public's knowledge and opinion about their product using sponsorship (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005; Walliser, 2003).

Meenaghan and O'Sullivan (2013) noted a significant increase in sponsorship spending on a global scale between 2000, when \$24.8 billion was spent on sponsorship, to 2013, when \$53.8 billion was spent (Nickell et al., 2011). This financial growth of sponsorship is connected to the creation of new and cost-efficient direct lines of communication between the audience and the product. Sponsorship allows the sponsoring organizations to directly communicate with audiences, either at a sporting event or through commercials and advertisements, stating they are the official sponsor of that particular event (Meenaghan, 1994; Nickell et al., 2011). Sponsorship is viewed as a device capable of being this "versatile, multi-functional communication tool" that is a creative instrument for cutting through noise and clutter to ensure the specific target audience is capable of viewing and experiencing the brand (Nickell et al., 2011; Walliser, 2003, p.19).

Organizations appear to favour sponsorship due to its strategic nature towards the intangibility relationship held between both the sponsee and sponsor, while also enhancing and developing financial positioning (Farrelly, Quester & Burton, 2006). For instance, increased sponsorship value can occur through multiple strategies such as naming a stadium, using sponsored athletes with product endorsements, or being the

official supplier/sponsor of the event (Farrelly et al., 2006). Some sponsees receive revenue, such as rights fees, from the beginning of the sponsorship; however, to ensure maximum value and revenue from the sponsorship deal the organization should make an effort to invest in an “activation” to really shift the consumers towards the sponsorship (Farrelly et al., 2006).

Nickell et al., (2011) state that sponsorship success is based on achieving rich and successful leveraging and activation activities. Throughout the literature, the terms activation and leveraging are often used interchangeably (Weeks et al., 2008). However, from a practical perspective leveraging is “used to describe all sponsorship-linked marketing communication and activities collateral to the sponsorship” (Weeks et al., 2008, p. 2). By contrast, activation has a focus on enhancing ways for the consumers to participate, or interact in some way, with the sponsorship. An example of an activation could be event-related sweepstakes, such as the Canadian Football League’s BC Lions Nissan giveaway sweepstakes where a selected number of 2016 season ticket holders were given the opportunity to have a chance to win a brand new Nissan Murano for being loyal season ticket holders (Nissan Give Away, 2016; Weeks et al., 2008).

Importantly, if the sponsor and sponsee fail to complete leveraging and activation it increases the risk of the event having a competitor organization ambush the event (Tripodi, 2001). This was supported by Sandler and Shani (1993), who found ambush marketing to be dominant in areas where sponsors fail to invest in leveraging their sponsorship, thus resulting in decreasing and devaluing their sponsorship and allowing for ambushers to be dominant in the presence of their consumers.

2.2. Sponsorship Servicing

This rise in sponsorship's value, and the corresponding growth in prominence and strategy behind sponsors' leveraging and activation activities, has helped inform a new perspective of sponsorship in recent years. As opposed to more traditional transactional views of sponsorship agreements, it has instead been argued that sponsorship should be viewed as a partnership, where an analogy has been used to compare a sponsorship relationship to a marriage. To be successful they need to create trust, build mutual understanding, establish strong communication and cooperation, and be committed to one another (Chadwick, 2002; Nufer & Buhler, 2010). Commitment here refers to the efforts of the event owners to ensure that the sponsor knows their value (Chadwick, 2002). Having commitment with a sponsor is a fundamental component in ensuring that the event owner and sponsor have a positive lasting relationship where they become familiar and comfortable with one another (Chadwick, 2002). However, if a sponsor perceives a lack of commitment in the relationship, they could view the relationship as temporary and leave for an alternative sponsorship deal. Therefore, when a sponsorship deal ends it also means that investments will become lost (Chadwick, 2002). Thus, sponsorships should be viewed as a more dynamic source rather than just a short-term financial investment; these committed relationships have a lot of depth and substance that become an attractive value to a sponsor (Chadwick, 2002).

As well, Morgan and Hunt (1994) discussed the importance of creating and establishing a successful sponsor relationship. They described having a successful sponsorship by ensuring that there is trust and commitment, and having trust is the foundation to creating a strong mutually committed amicable relationship (Morgan &

Hunt, 1994). Trust is created when the sponsor believes and is confident in the deliverance of the event owner's reliability and integrity, which are associated with qualities such as being "consistent, competent, honest, fair, responsible, helpful, and benevolent" (Morgan & Hunt, 1994, p.23).

Farrelly and Quester (2005) noted to gain commitment in the sponsorship context there needs to be investment and leveraging activities. What this commitment means is it is a "long-term strategic intent" that is a vital component in sponsorship satisfaction (p. 212). Commitment shared between sponsor and event owner is a mutual relationship where both feel they are able to achieve their goals, which will have a "direct and positive result towards their economic satisfaction" (Farrelly & Quester, 2005). This level of commitment cannot be achieved without developing a trusting relationship, where this then reassures and comforts sponsors that this is a "worthwhile" relationship (Farrelly & Quester, 2005, p. 212).

2.3. Sponsorship versus Ambush Marketing

Importantly, sponsorship's rise in prominence and value has mirrored a parallel growth in the commercialization of major events (Hoek & Gendall, 2002). Events are now able to offer a variety of elite sponsorship opportunities, including venue or event naming, multiple sponsorship tiers ranging from international to immediately local partnerships, and media-specific sponsor agreements. A component to these advances has been the restructuring of formal sponsorship programmes, such as the enforcement of category exclusivity amongst sponsors, limiting the number of official sponsors for the event where only one official sponsor is selected per product or market category, such as, credit cards, banks, restaurants, sportswear and apparel, alcohol, telecommunications and

more (Hoek & Gendall, 2002). The creation of category exclusivity has in turn created conflict and competition among rival corporations, resulting in bidding wars that increase the cost of sponsorship to ensure the title of exclusive sponsor of the event.

Prior to the implementation of exclusive sponsorship categories, any organization could independently negotiate to become a sponsor for an event (Hoek & Gendall, 2002). For example, at the 1976 Montréal Olympic Games it was reported that a total of 628 official sponsors were present (CBCNews.ca, 2006; Hill, 2016). Following the restructuring of the sponsorship program for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, it was reported there was a total of 43 official sponsors for the Games (Burton, 2011). This re-structuring changed the nature of sponsorships by creating a relationship between the sponsor and event owner where a focus was now on promoting and protecting the sponsorship for the purpose of generating a mutually beneficial large sum of revenue (Burton, 2011).

Such changes have not come without consequence for sponsorship; however, even though the Los Angeles Olympic Games were able to bask in the success of being the most commercially successful Olympics in history, the changes implemented equally led to the growth and development of ambush marketing (Burton, 2011; LaRocco, 2004; Meenaghan, 1994, 1996; Sandler & Shani, 1989). Prior to 1984, brand rivals (e.g., McDonald's and Wendy's, Kodak and Fuji, and Pepsi and Coca-Cola) were both able to sponsor the Games, thus avoiding any conflict between the rivals. Following the 1984 Games, only one brand from each brand category could successfully hold the prestigious and exclusive title sponsorship for that product and/or product category during the event. Non-sponsor organizations therefore sought to improvise and find creative ways to

associate themselves with the event. Specifically, ambush marketing developed as non-sponsors found ways to capitalize on events by strategically affiliating themselves with the event (Chadwick & Burton, 2011). Throughout the subsequent evolution of sponsorship and ambush marketing, ambushing has threatened to devalue sponsorship (Hill, 2016; Hoek & Gendall, 2002; Meenaghan, 1998) and created a competitive, cluttered environment for official sponsors and events to navigate (Burton, 2011).

The result of ambushers invading the event to promote themselves, has developed a strained relationship between the sponsor and event owner (Nickell et al, 2011). The event owner continuously attempts to keep the official sponsor pleased, by striving to limit the ambusher's effects and ensure the sponsor receives all the benefits from the event. Based on the sponsorship strain that ambush marketing has created, multiple definitions of ambush marketing have been developed to aid in the study of the impact of ambush marketing on consumers, legal issues, and ethical issues.

2.4. Ambush Marketing

2.4.1. What is Ambush Marketing?

Ambush marketing's definition has evolved since the first documented instance in 1984. Shani and Sandler (1989) were the first scholars to discuss and define ambush marketing (Crow & Hoek, 2003), inspiring a line of research in which multiple scholars have researched and redefined ambush marketing to aid in new topics of interests, such as consumers, legal issues, and ethical issues. Past definitions have emphasised a more targeted, rivalry-influenced form of ambushing, whereas more recent definitions have focused on more associative, strategic, generic efforts resulting in a lack of a firm and clear definition of ambush marketing (Chadwick & Burton, 2011).

Ambush marketing arose through the evolution of sponsorship when exclusivity was established and a limited number of prestigious sponsors for events was created (Crow & Hoek, 2003; Hoek & Gendall, 2002). Because of the division between sponsors and non-sponsors following the creation of exclusivity, organizations that were unsuccessful in their bid to sponsor events have been labeled as “disgruntled” (Hoek & Gendall, 2002). These “disgruntled” organizations often take matters into their own hands and ambush the event in an attempt to establish an association with the organization, and the event in the minds of consumers, thus enjoying similar benefits at the cost of the official sponsor (Hoek & Gendall, 2002; Meenaghan, 1998).

Meenaghan (1996) subsequently proposed a list of common ambush marketing methods that rival organizations use, they are as follows: (1) sponsoring media coverage of an event; (2) sponsoring subcategories (a lesser category, such as with the Olympics, where a sponsor is able to sponsor a single team rather than the entire event or country) within the event and exploit the investment; (3) making sponsorship-related contributions to the “players’ pool;” (4) planning advertising that coincides with the sponsored event and; (5) developing imaginative ambush strategies. However, as sponsorship protection strategies have emerged, and media outlets have diversified, the methods employed by ambush marketers have varied over time, further complicating the discussion and perception of ambush marketing’s true nature (Chadwick & Burton, 2011).

In turn, Chadwick and Burton (2011) developed 11 different typologies to aid with managerial considerations and marketing communications around classifying and identifying ambush marketing. These typologies were broken down into three categories of (1) direct ambush activities, (2) indirect or associative ambushing, and (3) incidental or

unintentional ambush attempts. Latterly, Burton and Chadwick (2018) proposed three types of ambush marketing strategy: (1) incursive ambushing, (2) obtrusive ambushing, and (3) associative, ambushing that the new typology afford a better reflection of the complexity and diversity of what encompasses ambush marketing.

2.4.2. Complexities of Ambush Marketing

Based on the continued evolution in methods and media which ambushers have employed reflected in such categorisation, multiple definitions of ambush marketing have been developed to aid in the study of the impact of ambush marketing on consumers, legal issues, and ethical issues (see Table 1). The relevance and context of these definitions and conceptualizations, however, merit consideration. For instance, Shani and Sandler's (1989) definition offered a quite neutral view of ambush marketing, whereas McKelvey (1994), IOC (2001), and Farrelly et al., (2005) proposed definitions which evidenced a more aggressive, pessimistic perspective. Most recently, both Chadwick and Burton (2011) and Burton and Chadwick (2018) positioned the perception of ambush marketing in a more strategic lens. Throughout, considerable subjectivity in the views held by sponsorship stakeholders is evident, as rights holders, sponsors, and event marketers have sought to position ambushing in a prescriptive manner. There has been considerable bias regarding ambush marketing's nature and intents evident throughout, as commercial rights holders, journalists, sponsors, and consumers each hold their own perceptions of what is ambush marketing and how it should be defined (Burton, et al., 2018).

Table 1: Ambush Marketing Definition Overview

Author	Year	Proposed Definition
Sandler & Shani	1989	<i>"Ambush marketing" will be defined as: A planned effort (campaign) by an organization to associate themselves indirectly with an event in order to gain at least some of the recognition and benefits that are associated with being an official sponsor."</i>
Townley	1992	<i>"Ambush marketing essentially consists of the unauthorized association by businesses with an event through any one or more of a wide range of marketing activities."</i>
McKelvey	1994	<i>"Ambush marketing refers to the intentional efforts of one company to weaken, or 'ambush', a competitor's official association with a sports organization, which has been acquired through the payment of sponsorship fees. Most often, an ambush marketing campaign is designed to intentionally confuse the buying public as to which company is in fact the official sponsor of a certain sports organization"</i>
Meenaghan	1994	<i>"The practice whereby another company, often a competitor, intrudes upon public attention surrounding the event, thereby deflecting attention toward themselves and away from the sponsor, is now known as 'ambush marketing'"</i> <i>"... a whole variety of wholly legitimate and morally correct methods of intruding upon public consciousness surrounding an event"</i>
O'Sullivan & Murphy	1998	<i>"The term ambush refers to an attempt by a company to associate its own brand with the sponsored activity without securing formal rights, and this frequently results in a weakening of the impact of an official sponsor's activity."</i>
Meenaghan	1998	<i>Ambushing occurs when "another company, often a competitor of the official sponsor, attempts to deflect the audience's attention to itself and away from the sponsor. This practice simultaneously reduces the effectiveness of the sponsor's communications, while undermining the quality and value of sponsorship opportunity being sold by the event owner"</i>
International Olympic Committee	2001	<i>"A planned attempt by a third party to associate itself directly or indirectly with the Olympic Games to gain the recognition and benefits associated with being an Olympic partner."</i>
Farrelly, Quester & Greyser	2005	<i>"In all cases, ambushers have aimed to enhance their own brand equity, at the expense of official sponsors, by illegitimately associating their name with the positive brand equity of the target sport or event"</i>
Chadwick & Burton	2011	<i>"a form of associative marketing which is designed by an organization to capitalize on the awareness, attention, goodwill, and other benefits, generated by having an association with an event or property, without the organization having an official or direct connection to that event or property"</i>
Burton & Chadwick	2018	<i>"The incursive, obtrusive, or associative activities of a brand intended to yield a range of benefits similar or comparable to those typically achieved by brands that have a formal, contractual sponsorship agreement with an event"</i>

Importantly, though, each of these share a different perspective and power with respect to ambush marketing: for instance, commercial rights holders and sponsors held the reins in the beginning in depicting how ambush marketing would be portrayed as morally unethical (Burton, et al., 2018). While Meenaghan (1994), amongst others, argued ambush marketing had the potential to devalue and harm the overall sponsorship. Hill (2016) suggested that consideration should be given for small companies or local businesses who ambush because they do not have the revenue to compete in a sponsorship with the high costs and large corporations. Moreover, the term “ambush marketing” – and its positioning as a parasitic or attack-minded tactic by sponsors’ rivals – has been shown to be a product of deliberate framing on the part of commercial rights holders. The IOC, alongside the 1996 Atlanta communications team, argued that ambush marketing was parasitic and that it dampened the support for their athletes (Burton & Bradish, 2018), in an effort to guide consumer views and media coverage.

As a result of these different views and perspectives, Burton and Bradish (2018) argued that ambush marketing has been presented in both the professional and academic worlds as “a generalized, all-encompassing term, with little agreement between researchers, commercial rights holders, event sponsors, and ambush marketers as to [what is] the true nature of ambush marketing” (p. 214).

Moreover, to be classified as an ambusher “the duty of labeling ambushers typically falls to sport properties due to their higher affinity amongst sport consumers and perceived authority on the matter” (Burton, et al., 2018, p. 19). Such allegations are based on the event owner’s bias of what constitutes an ambush marketing effort where they might construe the ambush attempt, due to the fact they do not want to harm their

sponsorship. This is supported with Burton and Bradish (2018), who stated that rights holders have “informed and arguably misguided much of ambush marketing discourse, perceptions, and rights protections” (p. 212). Rather, non-sponsor organizations are typically aware of what they are allowed and not allowed to do during an event to market around major events, such as avoiding use of protected symbols, names, terms, or images (Burton & Bradish, 2018).

However, despite ambushers being mindful of event regulations and careful to avoid infringing upon events’ rights holders, event owners and sponsors will still view and deem any type or form of ambushing as a “threat to sponsorship, an illegitimate or unauthorized activity” (Burton and Bradish, 2018, p. 212). This further goes to prove how much power and influence event owners and sponsors hold in attempting to guide ambush discourse and opinion around events (Burton and Bradish, 2018). Event owners will often react immediately to perceived ambush marketing activities, implementing counter-measures such as the ‘name and shame’ public relations where ambushers are then ‘outed’ to cast them in a negative image. Ironically, though, name and shame strategies have proven only marginally successful in deterring ambushers, and rather has drawn attention to the ambusher and their products or services (Burton & Bradish, 2018).

Ultimately, the true nature of ambush marketing is unclear: general understandings of ambush marketing are based on definitions proposed over 30 years ago, and pre-existing definitions “are inadequate to account for diversity of ambush marketing media and strategies prevalent today” (Burton & Chadwick, 2018, p. 284). Recently, Chadwick and Burton (2011) crafted a definition for ambush marketing where the focus is on the strategic nature of ambush marketing today rather than consumers:

A form of associative marketing which is designed by an organization to capitalize on the awareness, attention, goodwill, and other benefits, generated by having an association with an event or property, without the organization having an official or direct connection to that event or property (p. 714).

This definition was used to guide the research to allow for an understanding that ambush marketing is more complex and elaborate in that it is utilized as a strategic element for organizations to strategically position their brand and capitalize on the commercial benefits of sporting events or properties, rather than its predecessor definitions that framed and defined ambush marketing as aggressive and confrontational.

2.4.3. Impact of Ambush Marketing

Although ambush marketing was first documented in sponsorship literature in 1984, the literature shows an underdeveloped area of research that is limited to only examining the four main themes present in ambush marketing research, and more specifically, how ambush marketing should be defined, the impact on consumers, legal issues and ethical issues.

When examining the impact of ambush marketing on consumers, the main theme has been dissecting whether consumers are able to recognize and recall the official sponsor of the event in light of ambushing (Shani & Sandler, 1989). This is because ambush marketing is said to create confusion for the consumer regarding who the official sponsor actually is, harming their recall and recognition of the event (Meenaghan, 1994). Sandler and Shani (1989) claim consumer confusion with ambush marketing is only successful when the consumers themselves are not properly informed of who the official

sponsors are, what the sponsor's rights are, and what role the sponsor is playing during the event.

Nevertheless, event owners and sponsors view ambush marketing as an unethical practice because ambush marketing is seen as a threat to the official sponsorship (Meenaghan, 1996). Even though event owners and sponsors may view ambush marketing as an unethical practice, the majority of these disputes have no standing because these claims are purely based on the event owner's own ethical opinion which has no standing in court (Crow & Hoek, 2003). Hoek and Gendall (2002) believe it is a matter of opinion how one perceives ambush marketing as either an unethical or immoral tactic, therefore, this opinion creates a large bias towards research that is conducted when questioning the ethical approach of ambush marketing.

Rather, the authors argued that non-sponsor companies take advantage of ill-informed consumers to create unique ambushing attempts towards the mega sporting events and to weaken the exclusive categories, while also gaining recognition and revenue for themselves (Crow & Hoek, 2003). Ambush companies develop creative techniques to successfully ambush an event and avoid legal infractions, ensuring that they do not breach copyright agreements or misappropriate registered marks (Hoek & Gendall, 2002; Payne, 1998; Sandler & Shani, 1998). As a result, there are limited legal remedies available to sponsors and rights holders, making it challenging to argue illegal actions when no explicit breach of copyright or un-authorization of a trademark has occurred (Hoek & Gendall, 2002). In the end, not all ambush marketing is considered to be illegal and there is no consensus on what is deemed ethical or unethical (Crow & Hoek, 2003; McKelvey & Longley, 2015; Scassa, 2011).

In light of events' difficulty in enforcing legal rights historically, Meenaghan (1994), Payne (1998), and Crompton (2004) all discussed available remedies to prevent future attacks of ambush marketing, ranging from the managerial and marketing to more policy-based approaches. Within this discussion, McKelvey and Grady (2008) merged and incorporated other scholars' remedies to create more current and up-to-date remedies. Specifically, McKelvey and Grady (2008) identified four sponsorship program protection strategies that event organizers should be implementing for their events. These strategies are: (1) the creation of education and public relations initiatives intended to prevent or limit ambush activities; (2) the creation of on-site policing to create a "clean zone" surrounding events; (3) the indemnification of athlete participation agreements and on spectator's tickets through contractual enhancements, and; (4) the enactment and enforcement of special trademark protection legislation (McKelvey & Grady, 2008).

As part of McKelvey and Grady's (2008) educational and public relations strategy, organizations have often sought to use 'name and shame' tactics as a form of counter-ambush marketing. This is where the official sponsor attempts to publicly denounce the ambush marketer by exposing the ambush marketer to the consumers to inform them that they are not actually an official sponsor (Kelly, Cornwell, Coote & McAlister, 2014). An example of this is from the 2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games where Budweiser (not an official sponsor) ambushed the Canadian market and the Canadian Olympic Committee responded by mocking Budweiser within national newspaper advertisements (Krashinsky, 2014; Martin, 2014). In this case, ambush marketing was viewed in a negative light and ambushing companies were reprimanded for their ambushing efforts.

Although extensive, this list of combative strategies for ambush marketing may be outdated because event owner organizations, especially the IOC, the GOC and/or government officials have enforced new strategies to limit as much ambush marketing as possible (Crompton, 2004). These new policy-based enforcement strategies suggest that the phenomenon of ambush marketing has a negative connotation. For example, when Sydney was awarded the 2000 Olympics, the Australian government passed the Sydney 2000 Games (Indica and Images) Protection Act (Crompton, 2004). This act was created to protect the official sponsors against any ambush marketing; however, this and other acts are only confined towards the Olympics and not available for any other organization to use to restrict ambush marketing (Crompton, 2004).

This further goes to highlight the complexity of how and what to classify as ambush marketing, since different interpretations and perceptions are held through its multiple definitions, and counter-ambush marketing strategies have achieved only marginal success (McKelvey & Grady, 2008). Moreover, while the literature has explored the effects of ambushing on consumer memory and sponsorship returns, and different measures available to commercial rights holders and sponsors to prevent or restrict ambushers, the implications of ambushing for events and organizers have yet to be meaningfully examined.

2.4.4. Impact on Employees

Importantly, within this underlying limitation of the ambush research, to date no research has considered the effects of ambush marketing – and those counter-ambush efforts employed by event owners – on employees of the commercial rights holder. Employees of commercial rights holder have to implement the multiple remedies in

attempt to save the sponsorship, yet no consideration is placed towards understanding the role of employees' involvement in preventing ambush marketing from implementing the remedies and counter ambush marketing tactics (that have been listed above) to ensuring the sponsor stays satisfied. This is a significant gap in the literature given that employees are the individuals who must manage sponsorship deals, interact with sponsors, and enact counter-ambush efforts for their organizations.

2.5. Ambush Marketing and Employees

Employees are essential in managing successful sponsor - or even successful ambusher - relationships. Employees are the individuals executing and implementing the remedies to inhibit the ambush marketers' presence and to ensure the satisfaction of sponsors of the event. In so doing, employees deal with and strategize how to stop or prevent ambush marketing. This is particularly relevant given that literature suggests that it is the event owner's responsibility to inform the consumers about the external environment of ambush marketing, and to ensure they are educated and are aware of the official sponsors (Crompton, 2004; Meenaghan, 1996; Scassa 2011). In this respect, Doherty's conceptual model for managing human resources may present a valuable framework for understanding ambush marketing's effects on sport employees.

2.5.1. Doherty's Conceptual Framework

As noted above, Doherty's (1998) conceptual model (see Figure 1 below) identifies employee outcomes, which consist of affective, behavioural and group outcome categories, and are proposed as the main contributors towards organizational effectiveness. In particular, the model presents affective (i.e., individual, satisfaction, motivation, commitment, conflict, and stress/burnout), behavioural (i.e., individual/group,

entry/turnover, and performance) and group (i.e., cohesion and conflict) outcomes as critical aspects towards having a successful and effective organization (Doherty, 1998). These outcomes are determined and influenced by the internal work environment (e.g., individuals, groups, and the organization itself), which can be controlled by management through human resource management (HRM) policies and procedures (Doherty, 1998). Doherty's (1998) model also suggests that there are external environmental factors that have both positive and negative influences on organizational effectiveness.

For the purpose of this study, ambush marketing represents an external environmental factor within Doherty's model. Through observations and interviews, the impact of ambush marketing (external factor) on the affective individual (stress) and group (cohesion) outcomes were explored. As noted by Doherty, very little research has been conducted between stress and cohesion and "we must expand our understanding of this outcome..." (p.17). Therefore, the present study takes focus on very specific relationships within Doherty's larger model. Figure 2 represents the factors that were of focus from Doherty's original model.

Figure 1: Doherty's Conceptual Framework (1998)

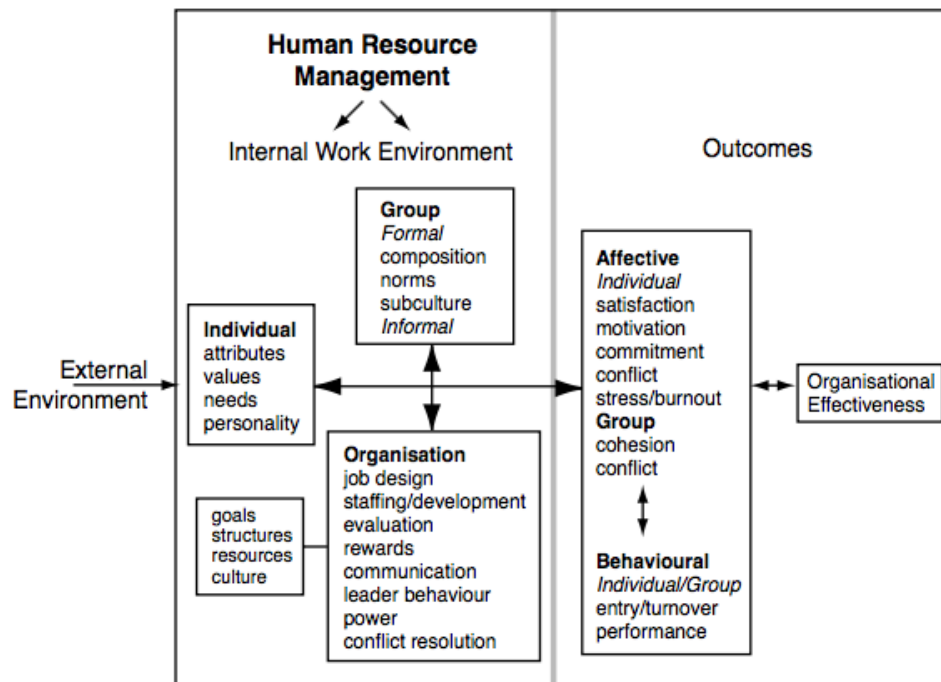
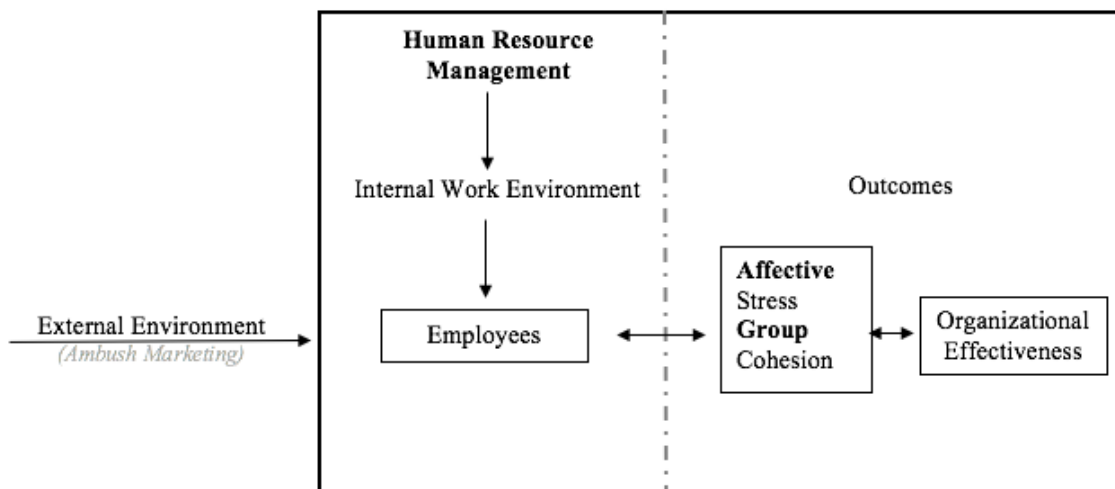


Figure 2: Focused Conceptual Framework



An example of how this framework applies to ambush marketing can be seen in the case of Budweiser attempting to ambush the 2014 Olympic Games. Budweiser was not an official beer sponsor of the Canadian hockey team - the official sponsor was Molson Canadian. In this instance, this external environmental factor (Budweiser's

marketing activities) placed increased pressure on higher management employees, the event owners, and COC employees as they attempted to mitigate the damage of ambush marketing for their official supplier sponsorship. This pressure may then impact employee outcomes such as stress and cohesion. Intuitively, increased stress would happen in that management may be on high alert to reduce the ambush efforts of Budweiser. Further, increased cohesion could occur because the sponsorship team will bond together to eliminate Budweiser's ambush marketing attempts. Although a relatively unexplored phenomenon, Shen and Benson (2014) and Tajfel (1974) found that social bonds were strengthened when SIT was used in managing a stressor (e.g., ambush marketing) towards their event, thus, supporting the implication that ambush marketing may influence important employee outcomes (refer to figure 1).

2.5.2. Social Identity Theory

In addition to the application of Doherty's conceptual framework, SIT can be used to explain how employees categorize themselves and others into social groups to develop and strengthen their self-concept (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2014), and thus provide a theoretical frame for exploring the association between ambush marketing, employee stress, and employee cohesion. Therefore, it is expected to be found that individuals working in the sponsorship department will share a stronger identity with that department and its members. Hence, when an external factor, such as ambush marketing, presents itself that factor will create a challenge and threaten the identity of the sponsorship department by challenging the sponsors of their event, property, and/or team, thus creating stress and/or cohesion to be experienced.

Tajfel (1974) states that social identity is a part of an individual's self-concept which derives from (1) the individual's knowledge of their membership of social group(s) together and (2) the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. The belief is that social identity is comprised of a personal identity that shares a perception of oneness and belongingness where there is a focus on idiosyncratic characteristics such as bodily attributes, abilities, and interests (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to SIT people categorize themselves and others into various social categories such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age, to enhance self-esteem (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Within the present study, SIT provides further explanation for the relationships in Doherty's model in that the presence of external factors/threats provides the catalyst for strengthening group membership (e.g., with the event owner) and enhances the commitment to group membership. This in turn increases stress when the membership is challenged by ambushers and potentially increases cohesion to protect the status of the membership (i.e., employees associated with official sponsors).

Ashforth and Mael (1989) argue that SIT is derived from three main themes that are applied to organizational socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relationships.

These themes are:

- (1) social identification being a perception of oneness with a group of persons, (2) the terms from the categorization of individuals, the distinctiveness and prestige of the group, salience of outgroups, and the factors that traditionally are associated with group formation; and (3) social identification leads to activities that are congruent with the identity, support for institutions that embody the identity, stereotypical perceptions of self and others, and outcomes that

traditionally are associated with group formation, and it reinforces the antecedents of identification. (p. 20)

Related to these themes, Kerwin (2013) examined individuals involved in a voluntary-based sport that had identified higher levels of interpersonal conflict. Kerwin (2013) used SIT to explore why and how individuals defined themselves in this sport context. The propositions in Kerwin's study were that individuals have an innate need to enhance their self-esteem within the group, and that need influences conflict or disagreement. Thus, individuals constantly compare and contrast themselves and others in their environment to achieve a higher level of esteem. Along these lines, employees involved in the prevention of ambush marketing may be making social comparisons among themselves and their peers to classify themselves and others into groups associated with counter ambush marketing strategies and loyalty to sponsors.

Ellemers, Kortekaas and Ouwerkerk (1999) examined the difference between self-categorization of commitment to group and self-esteem through SIT and the relationship between group member's social identities. The authors adopted SIT to explore how and why individuals were more inclined to join and identify with a specific social group. Using SIT, Ellemers et al.'s (1999) study suggested that group affiliation was a social cue that guided an individual's behaviour towards other participants, resulting in an increase of self-esteem.

Importantly, Hickman, Lawrence and Ward (2005) explored how SIT affects corporate sport sponsorship. Their study found a positive correlation between "sponsorship affinity, organizational commitment and willingness to satisfy customers" (Hickman et al., 2002, p. 148). Specifically, sponsorships aligned with company values

resonated with employees which resulted in creating a stronger bond between the front-line employees and customers. This was explained through SIT in that employees and customers share the same value towards the interest in the team (Hickman et al., 2005). Therefore, Hickman et al. (2005) suggested there is a positive correlation between employees identifying with the sponsor, which caused an increase in self-esteem, which resulted in better sales toward customers.

2.5.3. Impact of Ambush Marketing on Employees

It is clear from the above literature that when employees identify positively with a sponsor (external environment), both personal self-esteem and overall organizational effectiveness increase. However, when this positive identification is challenged by an external factor, such as an ambush marketer, employees will be affected, specifically their stress and group cohesion.

For the purposes of this research, stress is defined as the body's reaction to a stressor (e.g., ambush marketing) that creates a physical, mental or emotional response (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Group cohesion is defined as a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives (Steinhardt, Dolbier, Gottlieb & McCalister, 2003).

2.5.4. Stress

Stress has morphed and adopted into being conceived as a daily thing that individuals experience, especially at work (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Individuals experience and cope with stress differently (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). How a person responds to stress depends on how the person reacts to different levels of perceived threats to their well-being (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Steptoe-Warren (2013) claim there are

four levels of stress that an individual can potentially possess. These are hypo-stress, eu-stress, hyper-stress, and distress. Hypo-stress is where an individual feels bored or encounters a small amount of pressure that can present as depression, frustration and indifference (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Eu-stress is when stress is actually seen as a motivating factor that helps the individual perform better (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Hyper-stress is where an individual feels extremely stressed in that the person may feel out of control, panic, and feel like they are unable to handle the situation (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Finally, distress is where an individual feels they are under continuous stress (Steptoe-Warren, 2013). Distress can negatively impact an individual (e.g., by causing physical and mental health problems) and the organization (e.g., the individual might voluntarily leave the organization).

Related to these themes, Odio, Walker, and Kim (2013) examined employees in organizing committees working in mega-events. The proposition in Odio et al.'s (2013) study was to uncover specific stressors such as, work stressors (e.g., workload, time pressure, and role stressors) and non-work stressors (e.g., job insecurity and work-family conflict) along with coping strategies among individuals on an organizing committee working in a mega-event. Odio et al. (2013) discuss how multifaceted and dynamic work stress actually is for these organizing committees, such as dealing with the heightened stressors of workload, time pressure, and role stress. They also shed light on the fact that mega sporting events do reoccur on a regular basis; however, they are rarely held in the same location. Therefore, the presence of these stressors is constantly evolving.

Podsakoff, LePine, and LePine (2007) examined the differences between challenge stressors and hindrance stressors. It was found that challenge stressors

regarding individuals' personal growth and achievement were viewed positively, while hindrance stressors that constrained individual's personal development and work-related accomplishment were viewed negatively. Further, Podsakoff et al. (2007) claimed that stressors contribute to an individual's intentions of turnover and withdrawal behaviour. Therefore, in some cases stress can have a negative association with the organization's overall effectiveness and a higher rate of employee turnover.

Beehr, Jex, Stacy, and Murray (2000) explored employee stress and if there was any impact from co-workers support. They specifically looked at chronic generic stressors (role overload and workload variability) and job – specific (both acute events and chronic situations) stressors (p. 21). They claimed that chronic stressors directly related to the individuals' job were salient to the individuals and shared a connection to psychological strains, specifically depression. Further, Beehr et al. (2000) argued if individuals are in stressful careers social support actually contributes to their strains.

Driskell, Salas, and Driskell (2018) examined teamwork in extreme performance settings, such as settings where there is a significant task, social, or environmental demands, and found that where high levels of risk exist there is an impact on poor performance. Specifically, Driskell et al. (2018) examined high stress tasks and how these tasks may impact a group's behaviour. Driskell et al. (2018) stated that as stress becomes prevalent with an individual it can create "tunnel vision" thus decreasing an individual's performance (p. 436).

Driskell et al. (2018) discussed 'team stress' as a specific relationship between the team and environment where it encroaches becoming demanding, maximizing resources, and harming towards individual well-being. Teams in high stress environments are often

required to perform and switch between multiple tasks simultaneously, which can impair the individual's/group's performance (Driskell, et al., 2018).

Finally, Lanzetta's (1955) explored individual behaviours interacting in small groups and their level of stress. Lanzetta (1955) specifically was concerned with how stress may affect the interaction between group members during group tasks. It was found as stress increased a decrease in interpersonal friction occurred, and individuals increased their collaborations and cooperation with one another (Lanzetta, 1955). Thus, Lanzetta (1955) highlighted the connection between group work, stress, and cohesion.

2.5.5. Cohesion

Stein (1976) claimed external conflict, such as ambush marketing for sponsorship stakeholders, can increase internal cohesion, subject to a number of factors: (1) the external conflict must be a threat that affects the entire group and each individual must feel the threat, (2) the reward of staying with the group must be higher than if leaving the group, and (3) the threat must be seen as solvable.

Sanchez and Yurrebaso (2009) discussed that group cohesion is viewed as one of the most important determinants for success within groups. Group cohesion shares a positive correlation with job and personal satisfaction, along with the contribution made to the group. However, if individuals share different goals and understanding, this could potentially weaken group cohesion (Sanchez & Yurrebaso, 2009). Specifically, Steinhart, Dolbier, Gottlieb, and McCalister (2002) made claims that group cohesion was where the group "sticks together and remains united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives" (p. 383), highlighting the power of integrated groups. However, they argue that this integration can be viewed as both a positive and a negative where group cohesion can

lead to greater job satisfaction, or it can have a negative relation towards job stress, such as role stress, therefore restricting overall organizational effectiveness (Steinhart et al., 2002).

Group cohesion has been termed with “group spirit”, “sense of belonging”, “sense of we-ness”, “desire to remain in the group”, and “committed to the group” where these can all be categorized into believing that group cohesion shares positive correlation towards groups (Soldan, 2010, p.156 – 157). Soldan (2010) commented about the growing awareness towards group cohesion being categorized to increase group performance, effectiveness, and productivity. Soldan (2010) found that for group members to succeed they need to be able to cast support and rely on one another.

2.6. Theoretical Conclusions

Ambush marketing literature shares a number of key themes (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; Ellis, Parent, & Seguin, 2016; Hill, 2016; Nufer, 2016), including mechanisms to prevent and/or combat against any and all ambushing; however, the impact of responsibilities held by employees who are in charge of enforcing these mechanisms against ambush marketers has yet to be explored. Therefore, it is proposed here that ambush marketing may represent an external environmental factor that will affect the internal work environment outcomes of employees in a national sporting event, and thus may have a bearing on overall organizational effectiveness. Accordingly, this study explores the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees through the lens of Doherty’s conceptual framework, wherein ambush marketing represents the independent variable influencing employee behaviours. As such, the study will provide new insight into the effects of ambush marketing for sponsorship management and will aid in

understanding the impact placed on employee stress and group cohesion when being ambushed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Researcher's Paradigm

It is important for researchers to understand and acknowledge their own paradigmatic views of research, as it can inform assumptions and insights into “systems of ideas, or world view, used by a community of researchers to generate knowledge” (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002, p. 718; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The varied research paradigms that exist create multiple new and unique approaches of observing how the world operates, which allow researchers to pursue meaning and understanding when exploring a chosen phenomenon (Fossey, et al., 2002; Saunders et al., 2009). These paradigms place emphasis on creating and sustaining the viewpoints of those who are involved (Fossey, et al., 2002). The paradigm most meaningful to the present study is the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm allows the researcher to focus on exploring the main understanding and explanation from human experience (Fossey, et al., 2002). Interpretivism looks to “understand social life and describe how people construct social meaning” (Fossey, et al., 2002, p. 719). Thus, this research took the focus from an interpretive paradigm, because a deeper understanding and explanation of ambush marketing from an employee's perspective is being researched (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.2. Research Design

Qualitative research is viewed as a type of investigation conducted in a natural setting that focuses on obtaining rich information (Creswell, 2003; Glesne, 2015). As well, qualitative research focuses on exploring social or human problems which then are investigated to be understood to build a complex, holistic picture, where words are

analyzed (Creswell, 2003; Glesne, 2015). Given the focus of this research, a qualitative approach was adopted to better serve the purpose of the present study; it was determined that a qualitative approach would afford a better understanding of the underlying reasons and opinions of the participants regarding their stress and group cohesion when being ambushed.

There are multiple methodologies associated with a qualitative design, including but not limited to: grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, and case study design (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2014). Each of these methodologies allows the researcher the chance to explore a study from a different perspective or point of view. For example, phenomenology explores a specific phenomenon or lived experience (Jones et al., 2014), while case study explores a phenomenon that is a bounded system and answers "how and why" questions (Yin, 2014). To serve the purpose of this study, a case study methodology was adopted.

A case study is defined by Yin (2014) as "a study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and its real-world context" (p. 237). There are two forms of case study: a single-case study, and a multiple-case study. A single-case study allows the researcher to explore a chosen phenomenon this is considered a critical, common, unusual, revelatory, or longitudinal example. A multiple-case study explores two or more such cases (Yin, 2014). Both single and multiple case study methods explore different perspectives and phenomena within their natural context using multiple sources of data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). In order to qualify as a case, the phenomenon must be "fenced in," (Merriam, 2009, p 40); there must be a:

limit to the number of people involved who could be interviewed or a finite time for observations. If there is no end, actually or theoretically, to the number of people who could be interviewed or to observations that could be conducted, then the phenomenon is not bounded enough to qualify as a case (Merriam, 2009, p. 41).

This study qualifies as a bounded case due to the fact that there was only a limited number of people who qualified to be interviewed, as well as, the observations could only happen around the time of the event. Therefore, given the purpose of this bounded study – to explore the effects of ambush marketing on the sport employees and their stress and group cohesion during a national sporting event, and explain the how and why of these associations through the adoption of SIT – a single-case study methodology was adopted.

The methods adopted for the study were participant observation and semi-structured interviews. These two methods were selected to enable the collection and analysis of data to gain the most insight, understanding, and creation of a holistic view of how and why ambush marketing affects employee stress and group cohesion. An effective case study relies on multiple sources of evidence to help gain the most understanding of a phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Participant observation requires the researcher to assume a role and become involved in the activities of the case study (Yin, 2014), allowing the researcher to gain the perspective of someone on the “inside” rather than “outside” (Yin, 2014). Likewise, interviews can be a source of rich, personalized information from individuals, which allows for insight to be shared to gain a better understanding of personal views and experiences (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Yin, 2014). As such, the two methods selected were chosen not only because they are most

commonly used in case study research (Yin, 2014), but also because these two methods enabled the collection and analysis of data to gain the most insight, understanding, and creation of a holistic view of how and why ambush marketing affects employee stress and group cohesion (Yin, 2014).

3.3. Participant Recruitment

As such, this study sought to explore the effects of ambush marketing on employees involved with hosting a professional, national-level, sport championship event, specifically examining the impact of ambush marketing on event host employee stress and group cohesion. While also, the participants chosen to participate in the study add another dynamic in such that they have this unique situation of providing sponsorship satisfaction to multiple sponsors who may in turn be competitors, such as their telecommunication team sponsor and the telecommunication event sponsor.

To gain an understanding of how ambush marketing affects sport employees' stress and group cohesion, purposeful sampling was conducted. Specifically choosing individuals involved in the sponsorship and marketing process at this one national sporting event allowed for rich information that generated insight into the phenomena of ambush marketing's effects on employees (Jones et al., 2014).

Before commencing any fieldwork, research regarding participants, all documents, such as letter of invitation (see appendix A), letter of consent for participant observation (see appendix B), letter of consent for interviews (see appendix C) interview guide (see appendix D), and an overall ethics review for the research, were submitted through the Brock University's Research Ethics Board (REB). The main purpose for REB review was to ensure all researchers at Brock University comprehend and follow the

policies that are in place for Brock University research. After gaining approval from REB, fieldwork research began; initial contact with the organization and the gatekeeper occurred via email (see appendix A).

The process of gaining access to participants is rarely consistent; at times, it can be easy while other times it can be difficult (Jones et al., 2014). Jones et al. (2014) state gaining access is a process that involves an acquisition of consent for the participants, documents, and length of time that is necessary to reach satisfaction for the research. Gaining access is aided by the existing relationships, the care the researcher has taken to learn about the location, the participants, the gatekeepers, the key informants, and the trust and rapport that will be establish (Jones et al., 2014).

In order to facilitate participant recruitment, a gatekeeper was used to gain access with the national sporting event host organizing committee. Jones et al. (2014) explain a gatekeeper is an individual that has a prior relationship with someone involved with the research and can initiate organizational communication for the researcher. For the purpose of this study, a working relationship was established with a leading member of the national sporting event organizing committee, and this individual served as the gatekeeper. The relationship held between the gatekeeper and researcher established the researcher as a credible individual to the participant(s) (Jones et al., 2014), and afforded access to other participants, and access to the event. A trustworthy bond was created with potential participant(s), where an initial pre-research meeting was used to establish and build trust and rapport with a variety of the participants, and to share the purpose of the study. This was achieved through an approximate hour to an hour and a half meeting where the researcher prepared a PowerPoint slide indicating the focus of the study.

Developing and creating trust and rapport is an integral part of the research (Jones et al., 2014). As noted, the organization and the gatekeeper were contacted via email with the attachment of the letter of invitation. Once the letter was approved by the organization and gatekeeper the researcher contacted potential interviewees (see Appendices B and C).

Candidate screening was undertaken to ensure that the participants selected offered the best representation for the case (Yin, 2014). This was completed through a one-phase approach, where an extensive search of the employees occurred from the organization's webpage, it was ideal that individuals had titles that could be assumed they had to deal with ambush marketing. The criteria established for looking at specific department groups was if their title reflected any form of identification towards being affected by ambush marketing. For instance, an individual whose title says Director of Accounting was not considered because they were assumed to not share one-on-one interaction with ambush marketing.

The gatekeeper contacted approximately eight employees in the sponsorship department via email with the letters of consent (see appendices B and C) to participate in this study, six participants agreed to participate in the observations. Specifically, the individuals who have Directorial, Supervisory, Managerial, or Team Lead positions in the commercial rights holder's communications, partnerships, sponsorships, or operations departments were chosen. These positions were identified as employees that are most affected by ambush marketing.

The letters of consent explained the purpose of the study, the proposed methods of participant observations and interviews, the expected duration of the study, as well as the benefits of the study. Additionally, the letters informed the participants that they are not

obligated to participate, but if they wish to participate to send an email of confirmation. Reminders were sent to reach the target of approximately six employees for participant observation, and eight employees for interviews.

For participant observation, participants were required to sign the letter of consent for participant observation, and to scan and email it back to the researcher; however, additional letters of consent were brought for participant observation in case any employees forgot or changed their mind. For interviews, the six sponsorship participants and two participants from operations signed a second, separate letter of consent for interviews where they scanned and emailed it back, prior to their interviews. In terms of sample size, the researcher was not bound to an allotted number, as Tracy (2013) states it is an ambiguous action to find an adequate sample size for qualitative research. While Jones et al. (2014) noted that the researcher should continue to sample until saturation occurs. Saturation is when the researcher is no longer being presented with new insight in the interviews. Further, it was my goal to get as many participants as possible from the population of $N = 8$ employees of the commercial rights holder organization.

Table 2: Participant Overview

Position	Pseudonym	Gender	Years of Experience (approximately)	Observed	Interviewed
Director	Michael	Male	10	X	X
Director	Angela	Female	12	X	X
Account Manager	Dwight	Male	10	X	X
Account Manager	Jim	Male	6	X	X
Coordinator	Pam	Female	3	X	X
Senior Manager	Andy	Male	18	X	X
Manager	Phyllis	Female	4		X
Team Lead	Toby	Male	4		X

Due to confidentiality pseudonyms are used for the participants' names along with their positions and will be used in the findings chapter 3. While the years of experience is an approximation as this information was publicly found via LinkedIn.

3.4. Data Collection

Yin (2014) stated the researcher must properly prepare in order to guarantee data collection is conducted properly; if data collection is not completed correctly, it can jeopardize the entire case study (Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2014), good preparation consists of: (1) enhancing the desired skills of case study researcher; (2) preparing and training; (3) the nature of case study protocol; (4) screening of candidates, and; (5) pilot case study. Successfully completing these five steps of proper preparation will allow for a smooth and easy data collection (Yin, 2014). The first two components were addressed during the researcher's course preparation, and the latter three components will be addressed below.

Regarding case study protocol, there are four forms of protocol to follow while conducting case study research that will aid in increasing trustworthiness of the case study (Yin, 2014). The four protocols consist of (1) overview of case study, (2) data collection procedures, (3) data collection questions, and (4) guide for the case study report.

The first protocol of overviewing the case study ensures that an appropriate background and justification were established for the case study of ambush marketing. This was achieved in chapter two where the background of ambush marketing was discussed and then the chapter ends with the justification for the study.

Therefore, moving onto the second protocol of data collection procedures, this protocol emphasizes the major tasks in collecting data such as gaining access to the organization, having sufficient resources to complete data collection, implementing procedures to ask for assistance, creating a schedule of expected data collection activities, and finally being prepared for unanticipated events. These factors were all considered and implemented during data collection. For instance, gaining access was achieved with having a gatekeeper granting access to the organization, while also a laptop and notebook were brought along for the fieldwork resources, the procedure for calling for assistance and guidance was achieved through: (1) having constant contact with the research supervisory committee during the fieldwork; (2) a clear schedule of data collection activities was successfully completed by creating a schedule of with who and what time participant interviews would be conducted; and finally (3) preparation for potential complications or issues, such as an interview cancellation – this happened with one participant where they had forgotten the scheduled time and the interview had to be re-

scheduled for a later date. In the case of the canceled interview a voicemail was left, and an email was sent to address the missed interview and to see if they had just forgotten or wanted to withdraw – luckily, the respondent had only forgotten and rescheduled for a later date.

Moving onto the third protocol of data collection questions. Data collection question protocols main purpose is aided in helping the researcher stay on topic and may even serve as prompts during the interview (Yin, 2014). These questions are different than the interview questions, and rather are intended to assist the researcher with the interviews and conducting analysis. For example, a probe question aided in highlighting what the question was getting at when attempting to discuss the presence of ambush marketing with employees, such as asking individuals to expand upon or to clarify their answers to gain a stronger in-depth answer for the question.

Lastly, moving to the fourth and final protocol of case study is the guide for the case study report. The guide for the case study report protocol facilitates relevant data collection to reduce a return to the site (Yin, 2014). This protocol aided in facilitating collecting data by ensuring that the researcher did not have to make a returned visit to the fieldwork site (Yin, 2014). Therefore, a report was created and shared with the participants to show what the researcher uncovered and to gain feedback from them.

To finish, a pilot study for proper preparation was conducted, fulfilling Yin's (2014) fifth and final topic of good case study preparation. The pilot study was specifically designed to help for preparation for the participant interviews, wherein a single pilot study interview was conducted before the commencement of the case study. The individual involved in the pilot case study had vast experience in the sports world

and experience with ambush marketing. The pilot study was conducted a month before data collection began to practice conducting the interview and testing out the interview questions (see appendix D). By conducting a pilot study, the researcher gauged if the questions being asked were acceptable or needed further development. This process highlighted the need to adjust a few interview guide questions to meet the purpose of the study, such as asking if they view stress as a positive or a negative, and to help enhance the analysis and richness of results.

Once all the proper preparations and protocols were completed, the researcher felt adequately prepared to engage in data collection. Data collection began with participant observations in the week prior to the staging of the event, with the focus of observation on employee behaviours and interactions during and regarding event preparation and event delivery. As the study's initial form of data collection, participant observation was used in gaining a better understanding of the setting and the participants, along with their behaviours where the researcher makes the strange familiar and the familiar strange (Glesne, 2015). By observing participants, it grounded the researcher in the context of the issues that were being investigated (Glesne, 2015). Moreover, observations focused on how employees responded to, reacted to, or communicated through the presence of ambush marketing throughout the time frame. For instance, conversations amongst employees, conversations between employees and ambushers (event stakeholder sponsors and the sponsor's competitors), activations on-site (pre-event and during event), and the overall group dynamic before, during, and after the event were observed (see Table 3). These observations were used as a framework for comparison when conducting and analyzing the interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of if and how observed

behaviours contributed to understanding the presence of stress and group cohesion when managing ambush marketing.

Table 3: Summary of Observations

<i>Going to Observe</i>	<i>Expectations from the observation</i>
Employee interactions with other employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tone of language ● Body expression ● Facial expression ● Any tension
Employee interactions with sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tone of language ● Facial expressions (specifically if looking stressed or anxious, or even relaxed)
Employee interactions with ambushers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tone of language ● Facial expressions (specifically if looking stressed or anxious, or even relaxed)
Activations on-site (ambush marketing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Looking to see if there is an ambush marketing presence during the events' time frame ● Observe how the employees react and respond to this, if any
Group dynamic (before, during & after event)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observe group tone, dynamic, and language before the event ● See if anything changes during the event, such as maybe an employee's personal sponsorship account ambushes the event ● Observe the employees' interactions once the event is completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specifically looking at their tone, facial expression, language, and body language to one another

The secondary method employed for this case study was interviews. There are four different variations of interviews; structured, semi-structured, unstructured, and conversational (Jones et al., 2014). For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted, as semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewee to openly express and define their perspectives about the phenomenon being studied (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). Indeed, many scholars state that semi-structured

interviews are an area of strength for case studies because the researcher is able to go into multiple layers and understanding of the phenomena of interest (i.e., ambush marketing) (Glesne, 2015; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011).

The interviews were conducted upon conclusion of the event to explore how employees viewed ambush marketing, their perceived level of stress during the event, their perceived level of group cohesion during the event, and how they felt ambush marketing may have influenced their work performance. The interview schedule included questions that were established before the interview took place but allowed time for probing follow-up questions to emerge throughout the interview process (Glesne, 2015). The selected individuals were asked to read the letter of consent before the interview commenced to ensure they had a strong understanding of the purpose of the study and were aware they were not obligated to participate and were able to drop out of the study at any time with no repercussion. The interview ended with the researcher thanking the participant, reassuring confidentiality, and restating that withdrawal from the study is allowed at any time, if desired with no repercussion.

Interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to 55 minutes to ensure the collection of as much in-depth, informative data as possible (Glesne, 2015). A recording device was used for all interviews to allow for a verbatim transcription that allowed to have an in-depth analysis and ensure the participants were represented accurately. The interviews were conducted over the telephone due to the time and availability after the event from both the researcher and the participants. Telephone interviews allowed the participant to feel more at ease and relaxed, while also participants' potential shyness and concerns about potential bias were reduced. This is supported from Neuman (2000) who

stated, “interviewer bias is...greatest in face-to-face interviews. The appearance, tone of voice, question wording, and so forth of the interviewer may affect the respondent” (p. 273). As well, telephone interviews allowed easier access to participants due to the distance between the researcher and the participants.

Another form of interview that was used was informal interviews. Patton (2002) describes this as the free or unstructured time between activities, such as talking with the participants and following them around, as well as asking follow-up questions to clarify a topic observed. Other information might develop around informal unplanned activities that would have been missed with an organized observation or interview. Patton (2002) states that it is very important for the researcher to be willing to be open towards opportunistic sampling, because it is impossible for the researcher to anticipate things that would emerge from unplanned activities. Therefore, informal interviews created an opportunity to deepen the observations and the nature of informal interactions that occurred among the participant’s free or unstructured time. This was incorporated by asking participants about emergent and unanticipated topics pertaining towards ambush marketing during the interview or a structured time of observation.

3.5. Data Analysis

Patton (2002) and Creswell (2013) describe data analysis as organizing and explaining the data by specific settings for an in-depth study and comparisons. Yin (2014) states that the best way to conduct a case study analysis is to use a general analytic strategy. There are four general strategies to choose from to guide the researcher through their analysis to aid in creating a sense of direction with the initial steps of analyzing data specifically for case study research: (1) relying on theoretical propositions, (2) working

with your data from the ground up, (3) developing a case description and, (4) examining plausible rival explanations. Not all four are needed to be used at once, since some strategies contrast with one another (Yin, 2014).

Relying on theoretical propositions strategy is where the objective is to help design the case study by having an influence on the literature review, questions, and future research (Yin, 2014). These proposition help shape the data collection procedure and help guide the analysis (Yin, 2014).

Working with data from the ground up is the second analytic strategy where there is no thought of a theoretical proposition, but rather have the researcher “play with the data” or find patterns (Yin, 2014). This strategy is deemed for more experienced researchers, since they have more experience and knowledge with concepts, therefore resulting in them having a better grasp at what to be looking for while “playing with the data” (Yin, 2014).

Developing a case description is the third analytical strategy where the researcher organizes the case study using a descriptive framework, where it can aid in identifying an appropriate explanation to be analyzed (Yin, 2014). This strategy serves as an alternative if the researcher has any difficulties using either of the first two strategies (Yin, 2014).

Finally, examining plausible rival explanations is the fourth analytical strategy where the researcher is trying to define and test any plausible rival explanations (Yin, 2014). This is the only strategy that is able to work with all of the other analytical strategies listed above (Yin, 2014).

For the purpose of this case study, the analytic strategy that will be used is relying on theoretical propositions. The reason behind this is because there are two theoretical

propositions being used in this study Doherty's (1998) Conceptual Human Resource Model and SIT, these were the starting foundation of this case study and were reflected throughout the research, especially in the areas noted above. While also, the researcher is novice in terms of research acumen, and was confident with understanding Doherty's (1998) framework and SIT. Therefore, relying on theoretical propositions best suited this case study because it aided in the preparation and direction of how to analyze the data.

Furthermore, Yin (2014) describes five analytical techniques for conducting a case study: (1) pattern matching, (2) explanation building (3) time-series, (4) logic model, and (5) cross-case synthesis. As noted by Yin (2014), the researcher chooses one of the five techniques to be effective at creating the foundation for high-quality case studies. For the purpose of this study, the use of pattern matching was used.

Pattern matching – one of the most popular techniques used in case study research - consists of comparing or matching emerging themes throughout the data (Yin, 2014). Patterns are generated in the collected data, for example an unexpected pattern found from the observations and interview was the reoccurrence of the participants referencing to their own age and experience in the field. Another pattern found in the data was the importance participants placed on ensuring their sponsors were effectively and efficiently serviced.

Throughout the process of finding patterns or themes, the researcher also engaged in memo writing (Yin, 2014). This was done throughout all stages of data collection (participant observation and interviews) to explore the similar patterns or themes emerging from the data. For example, after a day of participant observation the researcher would write in their journal and make comments of the presence of any of the patterns of

stress, group cohesion or ambush marketing arise and if so, what did the observation show. As Glesne (2015) states, memo writing helps a researcher “develop, organize, modify, critique, and remember ideas” (p. 229).

3.6. Data Representation

Sparks (2014) claim that inputting narrative texts exposes “raw data” within the study and brings the results to life for the reader, allowing them to understand and support the themes and analysis. The narrative text is said to be one of the most common forms of display for qualitative research (Creswell, 2003). As such, Creswell’s (2003) narrative data representation strategies were adopted in conducting the study’s analysis. This strategy was incorporated to help the reader grasp a better understanding of what ambush marketing is and how it has or has not affected the employees at the national sporting event, by using a variety of lengths of participants’ quotes that were transcribed verbatim.

3.7. Trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness is an important part of qualitative research because it enhances the quality and credibility of the study (Jones et al., 2014). Triangulation, in-depth description, member checking, and reflexivity were the measures used to ensure credibility for this single-case study. Each of these measures improved the trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis stages.

3.7.1. Triangulation

Yin (2014) and Stake (2006) state the importance of achieving triangulation as a staple of any form of case study methodology. Specifically, triangulation enhances trustworthiness by using multiple methods (i.e., participant observation and interviews)

where analyses incorporates the findings and perspectives from each method to see how and if data from each method relate to one another. Per Yin (2014), this process shed light to further explain the attitudes and behaviours of the employees being ambushed. The observations and interviews data were compared and contrasted, the data that was in contrast was explored for meaning and influence. For instance, a contrast was found between how participants defined ambush marketing and what they classified what ambush marketing was, as well as, there was even some contrast between what event sponsors believed was ambush marketing compared to the participants beliefs.

3.7.2. In-Depth Description

In-depth description allows for the reader to make their decision about the collection, analysis, and results based on the detail that is shared, allowing the reader to have a shared experience with the researcher (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). In-depth description enhanced the trustworthiness by ensuring the information presented provided specific details when describing the case or themes, allowing for the readers themselves to reflect and make connections around how or if ambush marketing may affect employees (Creswell, 2013). In-depth description was used by ensuring the information presented provided specific details when describing the case and themes, allowing for the readers themselves to reflect and make connections around how or if ambush marketing may affect employees. This was done by incorporating the participants' quotes that were transcribed into my document.

3.7.3. Member-Checking

Member-checking refers to how the researcher will enhance the accuracy of the findings by sharing a copy of the final report, specific descriptions, or themes with the

participants to allow the participants to express how accurate the findings are (Creswell, 2003). This is one of the most dominant strategies of trustworthiness in qualitative research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). As such, member-checking enhances trustworthiness by sharing the patterns/themes that are found with the participants to gain feedback to gather their perceptions and interpretations of the stated patterns/themes to ensure they believe patterns/themes uncovered by the researcher best reflects them (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). Member-checking was completed by sharing a final report with the organization that outlines recommendations, while also they were given a copy of the findings chapter to review and provide any necessary input regarding if they believed they were represented accurately – a copy of the thesis was also supplied for them in case the participants needed more context regarding the study.

3.7.4. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a trustworthiness strategy which encompasses how the researcher critically monitors and understands his/her role during the research process, intended to further aid in the synthesis of the data collection by critically monitoring and understanding the researcher's role during data collection (Daley, 2007). This process can influence the researcher to reflect on each experience and perception during the study resulting in a powerful connection that is created for the readers and participants (Glesne, 2015). If the researcher can connect his or her experience with the participants, it constructs a form of credibility that creates a powerful story; therefore, reflexivity enhances trustworthiness by ensuring the researcher reflects on each experience, thought, or perception during the investigation process to further aid in creating a powerful connection for the readers and participants.

This process of reflexivity aided this study due to the fact that its enriched data collection methods of observations and interviews by making myself more critical towards what the researcher was observing and asking during the interviews, as well as, to ensure that the study's findings accurately represent the views and of participants, providing breadth and depth for the research questions.

Throughout the observations and interviews, the researcher would reflect on what had occurred that day or how data collection was going. This internal reflection process would similarly be conducted while analyzing the data, affording an opportunity to reflect while completing data analysis. Throughout this process, three main themes emerged which best represent the researcher's reflexivity to aid in a stronger synthesis and understanding of the role of the researcher. These three themes are: challenges and triumphs between observations and interviews; prior expectations and thoughts before data collection; and finally, positionality – specifically with the theme of age and experience.

3.7.4.1. Personal Challenges and Triumphs

In taking an introspective, reflective view, the research that I conducted was of mixed methods including observations and interviews. I will acknowledge that I favoured conducting and experiencing one method slightly more than the other, but still appreciated the research process and would still use both methods to serve the purpose of this type of exploratory study in the future. With observations, I was able to be at the organization, where I immediately was immersed in their culture. It was a fantastic experience, and I fed off the atmosphere and participants' levels of excitement for the event. Observing became, what felt like, second nature to me: I did not have to think or

question what to write down, but rather would automatically note and record how the participants' tone sounded and/or how the participants portrayed themselves (e.g., if they fidgeted, facial expression, or body language/positioning). I became incredibly fascinated by the participants while conducting the observations, and asked myself questions such as did the participants know that they were fidgeting? Was their fidgeting a coping mechanism or something that they subconsciously do daily?

A big moment with my research was when I felt I was accepted into the group when I was asked if I would like to join them to go out. I no longer felt like an outsider to them anymore. However, a struggle I found with my observations was the participants were highly focused on ensuring I saw ambush marketing or got the full experience of the national sporting event. It was almost as though they forgot that I was there to observe them and how they perceived and experienced ambush marketing during the event.

By contrast, due to the location of the event, I unfortunately was unable to conduct the interviews in person. Neuman (2000) states that phone interviews are better for participants because they feel more at ease and less concerned about bias; however, I personally found it difficult to go from interacting face-to-face and building a relationship with participants, to conversing strictly over the phone where I found it to be less personal and interactive. I felt that my connection and relationships that I worked so hard to establish had disappeared, and I was no longer an insider. While I was conducting the interviews, I was pondering what the participant was doing while being interviewed, such as fidgeting or doodling. Interviewing via phone also made me very mindful of the participants' time. I likewise was aware of the fact that the majority of the participants gave their work phone number for the interviews; while some participants had their own

office, others shared a common area where everyone could hear their responses.

Therefore, I felt the participants might not feel able to answer honestly due to the fact their other colleagues might overhear and could result in less desirable work environment for them. Also, the interviews were during the work hours, therefore I knew they did not have a significant amount of free time to give me for the interviews. This all made me feel like I had to rush the interviews because I did not want to take them away from their work for too long, especially after the observations I knew how busy the participants were. Nevertheless, the participants were extremely kind, and all insisted to contact them again if I had any further questions, which I did I sent each participant follow-up questions regarding their interviews. As well, I felt I was able to gain a lot of insight and information from these interviews that the observations were not able to uncover, especially once the dreaded transcription of them was completed.

I was so grateful to have been able to complete both methods for this study, for one method would not have sufficed due to the fact the observations uncovered how employees interact and how I perceived whether or not stress was present during the national sporting event. Whereas interviews gave great detail into how the participants portray themselves and their group during the national sporting event, while also giving strategic views of ambush marketing and stress. Combining the two methods allowed me to gain deeper insight and understanding of the participants and their perspective on ambush marketing.

3.7.4.2. Prior Expectations and Thoughts

Before I collected any data, I went through and answered the interview guide in an attempt to predict how the participants were going to answer. I also imagined what I

might observe while I was there. In both cases, it became apparent that I was influenced by the research articles that I read about mega-sporting events and their interpretation of ambush marketing. Also attending the national sporting event the year before my data collection, where there were some slip-ups of more serious ambush marketing that I would categorize as a similar ambush attempt to the Olympic and FIFA World Cup level, I may have come with some bias to what may happen with ambush marketing during my data collection. Specifically, this left me anticipating ambush marketing to be this major concern, where there would be multiple big ambushers at the event. The participants would have no mercy on any ambush marketer, just like the Olympics. However, that was not the case, as found in both the observations and interviews. The participants focused their concerns more towards servicing their team sponsors and the event sponsors, and if another company who was not affiliated with the event encroached on their sponsor's category and their sponsor became unhappy, then the participants would quickly act to limit the effect of the ambushing. Aside from these concerns, ambush marketing as more commonly understood in the Olympic or World Cup context, was almost a second thought for these employees and would accept that some companies were going to strategically leverage the event because that is what they have done before.

Therefore, I quickly became aware of how I had to change my perception of how the participants perceived ambush marketing and how it may affect them. It did become concerning at the beginning when ambush marketing did not play a dominant role in the participants' focus. However, due to the fact that the participants have such strong relationships with their sponsors – which was something I never truly considered how strong the bond between the sponsor and the employee would be – this is where I came to

the realization that the sponsors relationship was the connection between how the participants perceive and view ambush marketing.

3.7.4.3. Researcher's Own Age and Experience

After I finished coding the multiple pages of data and finding a unique code of age and experience it dawned on me how my own age and experience may have played a factor in how I perceived the participants' levels of stress, and how they dealt with ambush marketing. Because I have never truly experienced ambush marketing first-hand, I relied heavily on my knowledge from the research articles to create my vision of ambush marketing and how one should interact with it. This bias or predetermined hypothesis then also transferred to my perception of stress for these employees. Because of my limited experience in working for any professional teams and events, the stress that I observed could have been different from the participants, especially the ones who have been employed longer in sports.

As a result, this meant that what I observed and perceived as a stressful situation for some participants, might not have been a stressful situation for them, or as stressful as I believed it to be when I observed them. There were times when I made a note about the environment feeling chaotic, yet it did not seem to faze the participants, and they seemed to continue working no matter what the environment. Therefore, the theme of age and experience as outlined in the findings to follow is not only relevant for the participants, but it also transfers to the researcher.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

This case study was approved by the Research Ethics Board, with the file number 17-042-Kerwin, where ethical consideration was reflected in areas such as,

confidentiality, do no harm, informed consent, and voluntary participation. As Yin (2014) discusses ethical considerations are needed with research that involves human subjects. While Jones et al. (2014) argues that it is in the researcher's best interest to anticipate any ethical concerns that might arise.

3.8.1. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is described by Yin (2014) as a preventative measure to protect the participants of the study to ensure they will not be placed in any "undesirable positions" that could affect them (pg. 78). Confidentiality was used in this study as a way to enhance what information the participant shares and not be able to be traced back to them (Jones et al., 2014). Pseudonyms were used in this study for both the interviews and observations to achieve participant confidentiality by disguising the participant's identity as well, the participants job description was also changed to the pseudonyms of Director, Manager, Supervisor, or Team Lead to further protect the participants' identity (Jones et al., 2014). This put the participant more at ease to express and share information knowing what they say will not have their name labeled on it.

3.8.2. Do No Harm

The second ethical consideration used in this study is do no harm, which means the researcher does not use deception with the participants (Yin, 2014). The researcher protected the participants who partook in the study to ensure no harm was done to them. The researcher was mindful of the potential for inadvertent acts of harm, such as a data collection process that conflicts with the participant's other responsibilities and duties. The researcher was attentive and communicate with the participants, such as how they are feeling during the research, while also scheduling interviews around a time that is most

convenient to them to ensure they are not distracted from their job. The researcher enhanced the protection of her materials (journals, computer, and USB documents) by having all electronic devices protected with a password, having journals with locks and securing them in a safe.

3.8.3. Informed Consent

Informed consent is the third ethical consideration used in this study. It is an important component in protecting and informing research participants of the nature of the study, potential sources of harm or conflict, and opportunities for withdrawal or abstention from the research at any stage. Each participant was given a statement of informed consent before the researcher started conducting any research (see appendix B). At the beginning of the interview the researcher went over the letter of consent with the participant to ensure they had a good grasp of the study, and reiterated to the participant that this is voluntary and they are allowed to leave the study at any time. Once the participant signed the form it signaled to that the participant is aware, understands and agrees with what has been communicated to them (Jones et al., 2014). It is very important that participants to know they can leave the study at any time and no consequence would occur from leaving the study; as stated in the statement of informed consent (see appendix B).

3.9. Methodological Conclusions

The outcome from this research project is to construct insight towards the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees through the lens of a single case study and the adoption of observation and interview methods. These methods allowed rich insight into the participant experiences and perceptions around the type of impact ambush marketing

has on their levels of stress and group cohesion, thus crafting a new area of ambush marketing that has yet to be explored. This study looks to address a fundamental limitation of ambush marketing research and examine the effects of ambush marketing on employees' stress and group cohesion during a sporting event.

Chapter 4: Findings

The previous chapter was a discussion of the research methodology and methods used to collect and analyze data while conducting this single case study. Each of these methods was conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between sport organization employees and ambush marketing in the national sporting event context, and more specifically, to help answer the following research questions:

1. How do employees interpret ambush marketing?
2. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress?
3. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion?

Here, the findings that emerged from the analysis of data are presented. Themes emerging from the analysis of both observations and interviews are presented below, with similarities and differences noted to assist in answering the research questions.

4.1. RQ1: How Do Employees Interpret Ambush Marketing?

The themes uncovered from the interview and observational data highlight that participants shared complex interpretations of ambush marketing, and if or how this marketing practice affected them. This complexity of interpretation highlights the crucial role triangulation plays in establishing the trustworthiness of research (Jones et al., 2014; Yin, 2014).

Defining ambush marketing has been difficult in the academic literature, with different definitions being proposed based on multiple perspectives, contexts, and applications (Burton, et al., 2018). Therefore, defining and delineating what specifically

“is” ambush marketing presents a challenge for both academics and practitioners. Within the current context, participants cited a more classic “textbook” or Olympic ambush marketing definition when asked to describe ambushing, however from their experiences and from the observations other forms of ambush marketing were more prevalent and of greater consequence. Both observation and interview data highlighted that participants shared a complex perception of ambush marketing asserting that ambush marketing was unwelcome (e.g., if an organization who was not an official sponsor attempted to associate themselves with the event, the initiative should be shut down immediately).

However, the findings below highlight the notion that ambush marketing may also have a complex strategic element (Chadwick & Burton, 2011), in that participants described a number of cases of on-site ambushing as unproblematic and in fact at times encouraged, and recognized the benefit of leveraging the event for non-sponsors (e.g., local team sponsors). Team sponsors and local businesses engaged in event-related marketing prior to and during the event, activities which could be construed of as ambush marketing, yet were not actively policed by the organization’s employees given the brands’ unique relationship with the team and local commercial area. The data suggests therefore as a result of ambush marketing’s highly complex nature, and the intricate stakeholder relationships involved, it was not always clear to participants how to define and classify ambush marketing.

This complexity is perhaps reflective of the sporting event under investigation, which represents an interesting case as there were essentially two sets of sponsors implicated in the staging of the event: the host team’s own corporate partners, who sought to leverage against the presence of the championship event in their city; and league/event

sponsors, who owned and assumed the official marketing rights for the championship game. Throughout the data, the host team study participants exhibited and expressed an obligation to serve their own sponsors; however, the league/event had their own portfolio of sponsors that were in most cases distinct from the host team sponsors, and who required respondents' attention and fulfillment. As a result, the host team participants had to 'play both sides' in that they had to focus on their own team sponsors, which were the source of the majority of their revenue, while also ensuring that league/event sponsors were happy and content during the event.

Given this juxtaposition, the participants acknowledged that ambush marketing may not always be as bad as suggested in their textbook definitions, and highlighted the complex strategic nature of ambush marketing defined in this context. For instance, local businesses and home team sponsors that were actively leveraging their brands around the event were effectively, albeit in some instances inadvertently, ambushing the event. Some local businesses and team sponsors strategically utilized their location and/or connection to the city/team to promote themselves during the national sport event, where they did not use any trademarks or logos in their promotion. Others sought to be associated with the event by using social media posts, outdoor advertising or storefront posters, or food promotions.

Such activities by local brands and team sponsors proved challenging for the study participants in their role as sponsorship executives. Given their relationships with sponsors and adjacent business, the team's employees were forced to both enforce any restrictions of ambush marketing and potentially be cast in a negative light to the public eye, or to turn a blind eye to such attempts and risk harming their reputation with the

event and angering the official event sponsors. As well, if they informed one of their own sponsors that they were not allowed to have any association with the event, the sponsor could potentially become disgruntled and not want to stay on as a team sponsor for the following year. This situation could create an inner conflict for participants, as they try to find a balance between pleasing their own sponsors and the sponsors of the event.

This internal discord between responsibilities to their own team sponsors and those of the overarching event ultimately informed three central themes which emerged from the data analysis regarding participants' understanding and perspectives of ambushing: *Complex Views of Ambush Marketing; Sponsor Servicing and Relationships*, and finally; *Age and Experience*.

4.1.1. Complex Views of Ambush Marketing

The data indicates that participants had a clear impression of what ambush marketing is and that it consists of different context and applications; for instance, participants consistently gave a 'textbook definition' of ambush marketing when asked how they would define the concept. Specifically, the participants recognized that ambush marketing in general should be restricted, however, they also acknowledged the utility of ambush marketing as a strategic marketing alternative for local brands and team sponsors around the event. This multiple perspective view towards ambush marketing highlighted and defined the theme of ambush marketing being a complex phenomenon in this case.

For example, within the interviews Angela defined ambush marketing as:

... You have a partner who does not have rights to the event to help promote it and are tied into the event that kind of come in and start promoting their goods

and services at the event without really anyone's knowledge or approval and without paying the rights fees.

Similarly, Dwight added to the notion of ambush marketers taking advantage of the event when he stated:

...Basically a partner that takes advantage of something taking place and tries to amplify their brand image within that property without again...being the rights. Creates frustration from an organizational standpoint that is delivering the event. Also, from a standpoint from a partner that is paying the rights to be a part of that group.

However, throughout the observations conducted, the participants' interpretation of ambush marketing had a more strategic sponsorship angle. For example, 'textbook definitions' of ambush marketing attempts that were observed to be happening onsite during the event (e.g., for instance local restaurants inviting patrons to "come in watch the game" with relevant event imagery and motifs in their marketing or promoting team-specific soups for lunch) may not have been viewed by participants as ambush marketing but as a way for these businesses to capitalize on their surroundings during the event. Of note, a number of restaurants occupied space in the facility where the sponsorship department is employed, further complicating the relationship between the participants and retail stakeholders. Moreover, during observations the participants discussed knowledge that some of the on-site retail stakeholders were going to strategically leverage their location since they have been strategic in the past, either for a regular season game or a different event.

Some participants expressed a tone of annoyance and defeat when discussing the retailers' ambush marketing attempts and referred to this as an on-going battle that they know is going to occur. As Jim stated: "this creates conflicts not just with our relationship with them [the retailers], [but also] with our sponsors who paid a lot of money". However, despite these concerns the retailers on-site maintained their presence for the duration of the event, with minimal outward concern expressed or communicated by the sponsorship team.

This level of concern regarding internal stakeholders associating with the event was perhaps indicative of the unit's overall view of ambushing as it is traditionally conceptualised of during the event. Throughout the observations and interviews, it was clear that participants did not perceive ambush marketing as a significant threat. For instance, Pam said, "Honestly I don't think ambush marketing is top-of-mind with me with any of my partners". Angela concurred, "Yeah it's not on our radar too much, I think we're good. Everyone knows who our sponsors are now...I wouldn't say we're always looking out for it because they can't really get into the stadium." And Andy commented that, "...our group isn't specifically dedicated to looking for it; however, I think our group knows what it is... I'm not out searching for it [ambush marketing] I have bigger concerns to look after my own partners." These quotations show that while ambush marketing was not a major concern for the participants, they knew it was out there. This is further supported through Dwight's quotation:

...Ambush marketing at the end of the day takes place because people do it until they get their hand slapped, it is successful for them because they got through it.

It's a very grey area it's obviously very frustrating at times because you do have to deal with a little bit of extra work to ensure your partner is totally taken care of...

Interestingly, the national sport event also included a festival where sponsorship activation occurred. Toby mentioned that there was a perimeter established by the festival and that employees were more cautious about ambushing within this perimeter, thus, supporting that ambush marketing was present and a sponsorship issue that participants had to address.

Participants also noted that local companies who were engaged in ambush marketing believed they were helping by bringing awareness of the event. This is supported by Andy's statement that, "in fairness they say they don't [know they're ambushing]. In their minds I believe more often than not they believe they are doing us a benefit by having our name mentioned...". This point of view was also supported by the observation data, as one participant mentioned that some ambushers (i.e., local sponsors) might increase awareness of the event for individuals who are not typically fans of the sport. For example, a company posted on social media promoting the national sporting event and promoting a parking deal for their parking lot. Therefore, anyone who follows them on social media became aware of the national sporting event. Another example was a music store hanging signs in their window, thus creating attention towards people who walk by and their own customers who entered their store. In these cases, Andy suggested the ambusher could become one of the event partners if the sponsorship category was not already filled:

If it's somebody that doesn't affect one of our partners it's a category that you know we don't have a corporate partner in then one of the two of us will reach out

and say, “listen we have an opportunity if you want to be a partner and want to use our marks and logos we’d be happy to find a creative partnership with you.”

However, as Andy noted, this attempt to get the ambusher to come on as a sponsor rarely works:

There's a lot of mom and pop stores where they say yes, however, once they find out the dollars that are required to be involved with this they immediately say that that's just not in their budget. Which is why they were doing what they were doing - it's a cheap way to advertise.

This sentiment was echoed by a participant who, during observations, made mention of how it was unfair for local businesses to become sponsors when they do not have the resources to rival larger corporations when it comes time to sponsor the national sporting event.

Another dynamic that was caused by servicing both team and event sponsors was that participants had to work two different angles, making sure the event sponsors were satisfied, and then ensuring their own team sponsors did not feel neglected. This is supported by Angela:

I think as one of my largest sponsors [company B], I want the best for them but also have to take into account that they don't have rights to the event. I also wouldn't encourage ambush marketing with any of my partners. Company B was able to leverage being a partner of the team as we planned for the national sporting event festival, so they were able to be in the city market due to that.

While Michael commented:

... I think at the end of the day sometimes there are potentially conflicting interests when it comes to sponsorship and I'd say maybe the overall goal of the organization. So including the relationship with our tenants...you know at the end of the day part of our decision-making process is what is good for the overall company, so what is good for the organization as opposed to what it's good for partnership because those answers may be different.

It was evident that the participants felt conflicted, and potentially stressed, while hosting the event. This could be because they more strongly identified with their own sponsors and organization as opposed to those of the national sporting event, therefore, causing internal conflict.

As further evidence of the complex strategic view of ambushing marketing, Dwight noted that 95% of the time ambush marketing was defined as a negative, however 5% of cases might actually challenge event sponsors to make the most of their sponsorship (i.e., enhanced leveraging and activation) – a sentiment echoed by others. When asked about this 5%, Dwight was quick to then add, “It’s always a negative, it’s always going to be a negative. No matter what it does it’s a negative”. Other participants however, voiced more nuanced, complex views of ambush marketing. For instance, when asked if they viewed ambush marketing as a positive or a negative, Phyllis commented, “I think there is a time and a place for it.” Also, Angela seemed to go back and forth with her opinion of ambush marketing:

I think in my world we would view it [ambush marketing] as a negative. I get it and some people are really smart about how they do it which is okay because

there is a fine line to walk by all means if you find that fine line and you can do it without causing any issues they aren't doing anything wrong by all means, right.

You have the rights to do it and you're actually being quite clever with it. But for us...we don't like when their [sponsors] competitors come into the space it causes a lot of havoc and those are the companies that are really watching out for that.

It was clear that participants knew ambush marketing was an unwelcome presence for event sponsorship, yet they understood the reasoning behind it and accepted that some companies will be conducting ambushing because they know how to walk that “fine line.” For example, Dwight commented, “I always say in the back of my head I say hats off to them because they were able to sort of pinpoint that target market and attack it.” These statements by participants suggested that ambush marketing at this national sporting event level were complex in that there are strategic elements that were appreciated by participants.

Interestingly, when asked about ambush marketing within the interviews, none of the employees made mention of the ambush marketing that occurred on/near the site. Many participants outlined past examples of dealing with ambush marketing, rather than discussing ambush marketing attempts for this particular national sporting event. This further supports the complexity of ambush marketing, in that it is viewed as strategic and often hard to define.

4.1.2. Sponsor Servicing and Relationships

The data uncovered around sponsor servicing and relationships highlighted that participants had a substantial focus on their own team sponsors, and thus, these relationships seemed to shape their views and understanding of ambush marketing this

was supported above under the *Complex Views of Ambush Marketing* theme, where Pam discussed her support for her sponsors. As a result, participants were less apt to define local organizations such as nearby restaurants as ambushers; they were most concerned with enhancing the experience and the event for the local fans. Attempting to please host sponsors appeared to be the largest cause of stress for these participants due to the fact the participants' perceptions of ambush marketing may be different than the host/league representatives. These further highlights that different stakeholders may have unique relationships or perceptions of ambush marketing. This can be seen through Michael's quote where he mentions that there are:

Sometimes conflicting interests when it comes to sponsorship...at the end of the day part of our decision-making process is what is good for the overall company, so what is good for the organization as opposed to what is good for partnership because, those answers may be different.... it wasn't really intrusive, it wasn't conflicting in many cases with another brand or category. At the end of the day our ultimate goal is creating a fun fan experience then that's where we would kind of just let that go.

Another theme that emerged was the apparent empathy employees felt for their team sponsors who were not able to sponsor the event. It is evident that these employees build and develop a strong rapport with their team sponsors. For instance, Dwight claimed that “[there is] an emotional attachment to that property”, while Pam commented, “you have to preserve the relationship with your partner and preserve the relationship between your partner and your brand...”. Indeed, both Angela and Michael's team sponsors were supplied with their personal cell phone numbers to ensure the best

customer service. Angela implied that it was more convenient to have direct contact and responding to the sponsors immediately was their top priority. Given these close relationships with team sponsors, when team sponsors were denied event sponsorship or marketing opportunities, some participants felt empathy with their sponsors.

For instance, when Pam had one of her sponsors ask her if they were allowed to do a ticket giveaway Pam had to inform them that they were not an official sponsor therefore they were not allowed to do any promotional activities with their tickets for the national sporting event. Pam said, "I felt bad, I wanted her to be able to do it", evidence of the personal relationship that employee and sponsor have developed. This was also supported through Michael's statement:

You feel empathetic for them [the team sponsor], because obviously you understand why they want to be a part of the event... You feel disappointed for them because they aren't able to and...you also feel, I would say maybe slightly paranoid in the sense that you wonder how upset are they. Is this going to affect our relationship from the team perspective...

Further, within the observation data, one representative from an official sponsor was witnessed pointing out to one of the participants that they believed activities on site were conflicting or "ambushing" their brand. In this case, the participant did not believe this was an ambush attempt, however the participant did have to deal with the event sponsors' concerns. Therefore, in this example, it was clear that the sponsors' and the participant's definitions of ambushing differed, however, as described below, how the participants viewed ambush marketing was also a function of the participants' age and years of experience.

4.1.3. Age and Experience

Notably, when assessing respondents' views of and interaction with ambushing around the event, multiple participants made mention of age and experience when discussing dealing with hosting an event and/or ambushing. Some suggested their younger employees would not be able to calmly handle the event set-up and/or 'hiccups,' while others specifically talked about how their age and experience had actually aided their ability to deal with situations such as ambush marketing more effectively. This is supported through a quotation by Dwight regarding how his experience has assisted him in learning how to deal with stress:

I learned in the past, when I was at a young age just coming into the sport industry, I used to take things very personally. But I was taught by somebody that we aren't curing cancer... it's just a matter of taking that perspective and not emotionally getting to attached...

These employees are aware of their experience in the field and understand how it may affect their performance.

Andy commented about the different perspectives of the older employees and the younger employees regarding their commitment and dedication to ensuring their clients are satisfied:

I am stressed because I feel a difference between old school and the newer employee... we need to always be doing more to make sure we keep them happy. It is MUCH easier to renew a client than it is to find a new client and for those that don't sell, it is difficult for them to understand the difference.

Andy's quotation highlighted that with age and experience comes an appreciation of the needs of sponsors of teams and/or events, therefore acknowledging why sponsorship and sponsor marketing tactics may have more or less stress on participants.

As one can see, for research question one, how do employees interpret ambush marketing, the main themes that became present were complex views of ambush marketing, sponsorship servicing and relationship, and age and experience. When examining the impact on employees, the external factor of ambush marketing was intertwined with sponsorship relations that placed an impact on the outcomes. This is seen in the following research questions themes. A summary of each themes main findings is provided below in Table 4.

Table 4: 4.1. RQ1 Summary of Findings

RQ1 Summary of Findings

<p>Complex Views of Ambush Marketing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participants know ambush marketing is negative and shouldn't be present at the event because that is how it has been depicted for events; however, some of their actions and interview answers challenge ambush marketing as a negative</i> • <i>View their ambushers as smaller organizations, and gave them the benefit of the doubt that they don't know what they are doing</i>
<p>Sponsorship Servicing and Relationship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connection to own sponsors supersedes their views and understandings of ambush marketing</i> • <i>Event sponsor increasing participants stress due to the fact that their perception of ambush marketing is different than the hosts</i> • <i>Unique relationship with stake holders</i>
<p>Age and Experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Less stress associated with ambush marketing with employees who have been in the industry longer</i> • <i>Participants who have experience with sponsor relationships may understand the complex strategic nature of ambush marketing to a larger degree</i>
<p>Contribution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brings awareness towards the different perspective held by employees regarding ambush marketing from a national sporting event rather than a mega sporting event</i> • <i>Explores the dynamic relationship held by an individual sponsee and sponsor, and the stress associated with serving and pleasing two different sets of sponsors</i>

4.2. RQ2: To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress?

Three themes from the data regarding ambush marketing and stress emerged. First, participants' lack of verbalization or acknowledgement that they were experiencing stress; second, participants experienced three (eu-stress, hyper-stress, and hypo-stress) of the four levels of stress described by Steptoe-Warren (2013); and third, a limited level of acknowledgement or self-awareness of coping mechanisms participants used to deal with the stress experienced.

4.2.1. Limited stress

Steptoe-Warren (2013) defined distress as "...a symptom of continuous stress. This can have a negative impact [e.g. on physical and/or mental health] on both the individual and the organization" (p. 97). Majority of participants' definition and personal view of stress shared a similarity with Steptoe-Warren of viewing stress as a high tension and pressure situation that can have an effect on their mental and potentially physical state. This was supported through Jim's definition when asked to define stress:

Broad-sense it is when your day experiences are affecting your mental health and making you feel negative kind of contexts or negative feelings or in that sense I guess. And then in a more work specific kind of terms basically anything that you do and your duties and responsibilities and a day-to-day making you feel whether it's the quantity of it or the actual specifics of it that make you feel uncomfortable or make you feel have negative emotions.

Angela also commented:

I think of it in an emotional way. Like you are getting all worked up about something, your heart's racing, you are kind of frazzled. Just kind of out of sorts.

I'm not calm. I think stress - I feel more of an emotional meaning to it.

Indeed, no one wanted to express that they experienced stress; participants frequently stated throughout the observations and interviews that they were not stressed during the event, in some cases going so far as to deny feeling any stress at all. When asked if they view stress as a positive or a negative, Pam downplayed the role of stress and the significance of their work, suggesting that: "We always say that we aren't curing cancer, sports is like a luxury not a necessity...". However, during the observations it became very apparent as the event neared that these employees were beginning to exhibit signs of experiencing stress. Some participants would fidget by twirling a ring on their finger, spinning their phone in their hand, or even biting their nails, while other participants' language changed; they began to use more vulgar language to express their frustration and/or annoyance.

It also became evident in both the observations and the interviews that some employees believed that their own team sponsors might strategically leverage their team sponsorship at the event. It was observed that participants had prior knowledge that some organizations near the perimeter of the event would leverage a connection to the event, knowing that they done so in the past. The employees seemed calm and relaxed while discussing these organizations: their tone of voice was mellow and there was no tension in their facial expressions, it was as if it was the norm. As Dwight stated, "partners will push until they get their hands slapped at the end of the day, it's just a matter of managing

that properly.” As well, during an interview when Angela was asked, “does that stress you out a little bit knowing that company B is trying to ambush...?” she responded with:

Not with company B because they are so good at it like they're smart they know exactly what they can do. They don't come out and say that they are ambush marketing, but you know what it is... Company B doesn't stress me out because company B knows what they're doing, they're experts and doing stuff like that. I don't say ambush marketing... they know the line to walk. They know how to do it with being clever and not causing any issues...

This highlights that participants were aware of their own team sponsors strategically utilizing and leveraging a connection to the event. Since the event included both team and event sponsors, the participants discussed no added stress because a mutual respect and understanding existed between participants and team sponsors.

Furthermore, it was evident that Dwight had to deal with an event sponsor that was demanding at times. During the observations this event sponsor, company E, seemed to be challenging and took up a great deal of Dwight's time. There were multiple phone calls to his personal phone. There were also times while observing Dwight that he demonstrated signs of potential stress in dealing with company E: on multiple occasions, Dwight took multiple deep breaths and would release a sigh; facial tension was expressed when talking about a specific negative situation with company E; there even was a brief moment during which Dwight seemed defeated while trying to please this event sponsor. This was expressed in the words he used and his tone of voice when talking. However, when asked if he liked dealing with company E as a sponsor, he replied:

It's one of those short-term relationships [company E]. It's basically you've obviously been put on the job to perform and ensure they are being taken care of and stuff and that was always my end goal with them. More of the matter of the frustration more than anything on my side of things was the league partnership and it was one of those that there is stuff they were coming to me that had nothing to do with me. It was more of a league issue. It was more just managing that side of things. I think if I were to in turn restructure that kind of partnership, I would have definitely had more involvement from the league account rep as well too. They weren't a bad partner they are just somebody that had a particular agency working for them that was very aggressive brand agency, so they will basically do anything and everything to get their client the brand exposure they want. That's where you just have to have a thick skin and push back on them and say let's be realistic here.

It is clear from these findings that there was a disconnect between how participants defined stress, and how they physically presented and experienced stress. This is supported through Pam's definition of stress as "a negative emotion filled with tension and, I don't know, pressure, and whether or not you are meeting expectations or deadlines." However, Pam's comment when she and Dwight were asked what if there were times, they felt stressed during the event, "Yeah go for it, I know when you were stressed" and Dwight replied with "Would I say I was stressed? No...." This further goes to show that even participants believed that their colleagues were stressed, yet they themselves would not admit they felt stress.

Lastly, during the interviews a majority of participants discussed being slightly relieved that their own team did not qualify for the national sporting event from a combat of ambushing perspective. Specifically, they believed that since their team did not qualify for the national sporting event, it lessened the intensity of stress that they felt from local ambushers. Also, some believed that it reduced the number of ambushers as well. As Toby suggested:

I mean I shouldn't say it out loud but I'm kind of happy they weren't in it, just 'cause the whole site would have been that much crazier with people. There might have been more ambush marketing as well. I don't know... from my perspective it was a little bit more manageable for people on site...

Michael likewise suggested that the home team's absence may have benefitted the sponsorship unit:

I don't think it was ever a matter of stress. I just think we knew there were some levels of complexity that we did not have to deal with because the team wasn't in it. If the team was in it there would have definitely...been a few added layers of planning logistics and complexity that would have added to probably the pressure and stress of the event.

Ultimately, the data suggests that employees felt limited amounts of stress as they perceived of it over the course of the event. However, as the following sections show, there were examples of eu-stress, hyper-stress and, hypo-stress, documented throughout the observations, further indication of the complex nature of stress and its component forms.

4.2.2. *Eu-stress*

The most common level of stress observed during the week prior to the event was eu-stress, defined by Steptoe-Warren (2013) as: “when an individual feels optimum pressure [e.g. increase in motivation and performs to their highest ability] they can thrive in the work situation” (p. 97). Even though the atmosphere was filled with tension and anxiety, the participants seemingly thrived in these work situations. For example, when Jim was navigating company C to their assigned area for the event festival, a small challenge regarding power arose and immediately Jim became motivated to get an explanation and find a solution for company C. As the event date drew closer, these participants did not let their stressors get in the way of their performance for the event. One participant, Michael, even welcomed stress:

I welcome stress to a certain level I think I'm more productive under pressure and stressful situations...I think it's probably kind of a nice grey area or a nice balance which at some point it becomes probably too much, too much stress or pressure.

Even though ambush marketing was commonly known and acknowledged, it was not the primary concern of participants. Rather, it was clear that the participants' first and foremost obligation was to ensure the event sponsors and their own team sponsors remained satisfied for the duration of the national sporting event. Nevertheless, as the event approached there was a noticeable connection between ambush marketing and employees' servicing of both the team and event sponsor relationships. Andy's statement supported this claim:

I guess it's easier because they know [company E] that we are protecting them against any ambushing. You know very similarly company E is the league partner

that no way no how we can sneak them [company Z] in somehow you know to even have a little piece of the support. Their mind wasn't so much an ambush marketing piece it was more they were so proud of the team and they wanted to be affiliated with them.

Thus, the strong, positive relationship that participants had with their team sponsors was a factor that influenced how they dealt with and managed the potential stress of ambushing.

Many of the participants viewed stress as a negative and did not realize how the stress they were experiencing during the event could potentially be a motivational factor, resulting in their improved performance. An example of this potential is seen in Jim's discussion of his most stressful situation at the event:

On game day when I was trying to find a bottle of wine. Legitimately trying to find a bottle of wine the specific bottle of wine for a partner and I couldn't find it. Thinking that that was going to make or break their happiness that day.

Similarly, Andy strongly believed that, "We need to go above and beyond so that our clients not only receive an ROI [return on investment], but also feel special as they can probably get an equal ROI with another partnership." Therefore, there is evidence supporting the claim that stress is important to push employees to represent and service their sponsors well. However, in situations where participants felt obligated to go above and beyond for sponsors, even if they were not official event sponsors, the potential existed for participants to experience hyper-stress.

4.2.3. *Hyper-stress*

Hyper-stress, as defined by Steptoe-Warren (2013) occurs when, “stress becomes so extreme that stress reactions [e.g. feeling out of control, panic, and inability to cope with stress] occur” (p. 97). Again, hyper-stress was captured more in observations than interviews.

As the event date drew closer the level of stress in the atmosphere grew along with it. Participants began to fidget more, their walking pace became quicker, and the speed and tone of their voice started to change with either participants talking faster, sterner, or even on some occasions even resulting in the loss of voice. They also started to sigh and curse multiple times throughout the day. One participant cursed 11 times in one sitting with another employee about the conference call they just had with a sponsor. This seemed out of character for this participant during the week of observation. As well, there was an increase in participants’ speed of voice when talking to one another.

The data clearly indicates that sponsorship relationships, and maintaining sponsor satisfaction, was stressful for participants at times. This stress is highlighted within Angela’s interview:

Angela: Sponsors depending on who they can be, can be very nitpicky about it [ambush marketing] and anal they can get very worked up about it...it's hard because you're trying to manage expectations and you always have to be nice, even if they are yelling at you and mad, you always have to be positive.

Interviewer: Why do you have to be nice?

Angela: because you're the one that's building that relationship with them, you can't be jerks to your partner...they're spending a lot of money you have to maintain that good relationship with them and the customer is always right.

Here it is clear that hyper-stress was not directly connected to ambush marketing for the participants, but instead it was connected to the maintenance of sponsorship relationships in general. The hyper-stress experienced by participants in balancing these relationships presented significant challenges for the employees studied and reaffirmed the disconnect found between respondents' verbalized stress and experienced stress.

4.2.4. Hypo-stress

Defined by Steptoe-Warren (2013) as "stress can be caused by boredom or too little pressure being felt by the individual" (p. 97), hypo-stress captured predominantly during the study's participant observations. This is primarily due to a disconnect between participants' stated perceptions of their level of stress, and how those levels were interpreted by the researcher. In turn, there is an apparent connection between hypo-stress and the minimal concern placed on ambush marketing by the event's employees which merits mention.

At the beginning of the event week the researcher observed the atmosphere of the event to be calm. The employees dressed casually, wearing clothing such as leggings, sweaters, Uggs, and toques. At one point on day three of the researcher's timeline of observations there was an employee who was casually sitting at their desk stuffing envelopes - they did not seem stressed or really have anything troubling them, they looked calm. It was also observed in the first couple of days that the participants would gather around one another, gossip, and laugh. The impression of them not being too

stressed was perceived, which may have been a product of their age and experience with the event.

4.2.5. Coping Mechanisms

Throughout the duration of the observations the researcher observed different levels of stress each participant experienced, as stated above under eu-stress, hyper-stress, and hypo-stress headings. The researcher also perceived the employees' coping strategies, such as using each other for guidance and support, making each other laugh, or even going out for lunch or beers after the long day. These strategies were also supported through the interviews.

When asked if they have any coping mechanisms for stress, the majority of participants said no. For example, Phyllis's response to how she copes with stress was, "I can tell you I'm not very good at it" while Jim's response was, "to be honest I just ran around and didn't think about it." These responses were a little concerning, especially Andy's when he stated, "I tr[y] to ignore [stress] to be honest." However, during analysis of the interviews it became clear that some of the participants cope with stress without even knowing it, either taking a moment for themselves, going and talking with their fellow colleagues for advice or support, or even using their family. These coping mechanisms are positive steps to reducing participant stress. As Angela noted:

I go home, and I see my kids and my family is a change of scenery and you really have to put work aside and focus on other things in your life that helps me because it kind of gives you some clarity and you can be away from it for a couple hours and then you can maybe think about it differently and refresh after having a break from it.

While Michael discussed coping with stress by taking a minute:

I have an office that I can close the door if needed to just catch my breath take a moment write down any thought's notes that sort of thing. I think just being able to step away or get some fresh air walk around. Turn your attention to something else if you can that's usually how I can in that moment, so I can refocus with solution-based thinking.

Toby, similarly, suggested that taking a mental break from certain situations was important, noting that he also needed to “take five minutes” to step away from the situation to regroup.

Such coping mechanisms also seemingly reflected the relative experience of those involved in dealing with sponsorship relationships and partnership ambushing. From both the interviews and observations it became apparent that age and industry experience played a role in how these participants were able to cope with stress. Dwight stated:

Going back to my young days I did let stress kind of takeover myself at one point and...back to what I mentioned it impaired me to make the right decisions and that was when I really learnt...you're just one person, so you got to figure out who your support cast is, and you got to lean on those people.

Through the analysis of the observations and interviews it was clear that the primary coping mechanism for these participants was talking with one another to express their thoughts and feelings. As Pam noted, “my team is very supportive and if I was stressed about anything I would definitely ask for their help.” This was also observed when participants dealt with a challenging sponsor: they would use each other for support and guidance to respond to the sponsor appropriately, or even just to vent about another

employee who might have been adding to their stress for that day. These strategies created team unity in an already pre-existing cohesive unit, which then represented a strong sense of cohesion, specifically among the participants in the sponsorship department, therefore stress was not a direct link in creating team cohesion.

Therefore, for research question two, to what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress, the main themes that became present were limited stress, eu-stress, hyper-stress, hypo-stress, and coping mechanisms. A summary of each themes main findings is provided below in table 5.

Table 5: 4.2. RQ2 Summary of Findings

RQ2 Summary of Findings	
Limited Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participants downplayed their levels of stress they experienced. Where a disconnect between how participants defined stress and how they physically presented and experienced stress was present</i> • <i>Relief was expressed when their own team did not qualify for the event, lessening the intensity of stress present at the event</i>
Eu – Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Eu – stress was a prominent stress experienced by participants</i> • <i>Eu – stress was mostly associated with ensuring their sponsors (team and event) were content and satisfied</i>
Hyper – Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sponsorship relationships and maintaining sponsor satisfaction, was stressful for participants at times</i> • <i>Ambush marketing was not a primary concern for participants rather the maintenance and balancing of these relationships presented significant challenges for the employees</i>
Hypo – Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stress did not seem to be present the days before the event</i> • <i>Ambush marketing was not specifically associated with any levels stress</i>
Coping Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Majority of participants did not believe they actually coped with their stress</i> • <i>Communication among participants was the most sought over coping mechanism</i> • <i>The participants age and experience came into play resulting in the older and more experienced participants being better adept to cope with stress, even if they were unaware, they were doing it</i>
Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ambush marketing indirectly affected participants stress due to the strong sponsor relationships held by employees in the sponsorship department; resulting in an exploration of how individuals deal with sponsor relationships</i>

4.3. RQ3: To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion?

Based on the observations conducted prior to the event, it was clear that there was strong cohesion between the participants existing prior to the championship, and there was clear evidence of a healthy support system throughout the team. However, through the data collection and analysis there did not appear to be a direct link between ambush marketing and the group's degree of cohesion. Rather, three central themes emerged from data analysis regarding the perceived ambush marketing of the participants' perception of group cohesion. *Stakeholder Relationships* – cohesion did not appear to be directly linked to ambush marketing, yet sponsorship relations formed a common bond; *Strong Cohesion* – strong communication throughout the group enhanced the strength of the group cohesion; *Evidence of a Support System* – multiple relationships existed throughout the group that aided in the participants feeling safe and less stress.

4.3.1. Stakeholder Relations

It is clear from the observations that there was no explicit connection between how participants perceive ambush marketing and their perception of group cohesion. However, it did become clear that participants were pursuing similar goals for both their own team sponsors and event sponsors – ensuring they were satisfied through such measures as protecting sponsors from ambushers, getting sponsor representatives a bottle of wine, or understanding that team sponsors might potentially ambush the event. Andy provided support for this:

I think I have an amazing relationship [with my clients]. My number one goal here is customer service. Nothing means more to me than providing over and

above amazing customer service. First of all, that's just my nature, but secondly, it's much easier to keep a client than to sign a new one. I don't want to just checkboxes, I don't want to just say okay you asked for this and that here you go. I want to make sure that I'm in communication with them verbally and personally face to face as much as I can throughout the year. I would also add to me it doesn't matter the level of partnership they are all the same. Someone could be a 10,000 and someone could be a 200,000 and to me I am going to treat them exactly the same way.

At the end of it all there is only one goal, and it is ensuring that the sponsor is completely happy, no matter what. It was clear that ambush marketing specifically did not bring the participants closer together; however, ensuring team sponsorship relationships were successfully delivered upon – even when those team sponsors were ambushing the event - was the catalyst to group cohesion in this context.

4.3.2. Strong Cohesion

The observation and interview data highlighted that the participants shared a powerful cohesive bond with one another particularly in their own departmental unit. One of the biggest takeaways from both data collection methods was how vital communication was among participants.

During observations, the sponsorship department in particular was a 'well-oiled machine', where they had an environment of open communication and dialogue. They (particularly younger participants) sat in an open floor concept without walls separating them. They were essentially forced to bond and develop a cohesive relationship with one another. This did not seem to be a problem for them; participants in the sponsorship

department were very close to one another. Whenever one of them would be struggling, the others would come for support, guidance, gossip, or clarification. The bond between the participants was so strong that one participant, Pam, even made mention about missing it once the national sporting event finished: “I think at the end of the event we were all going through withdrawal from each other because we saw each other so much...It was like, ‘oh we're not going to spend tonight together what!?’”

Throughout the interviews it became clear how big a role communication played in the department being cohesive. This role seemed stronger intra-departmentally rather than inter-departmentally. This is seen in Pam’s quotation, “I think for sure different departments; the communication can fail to reach us...I think it's harder to have cohesion between departments...you don't see those people as much...” while Andy also supported this claim when asked about cohesion among other departments, “I believe that every department is cohesive within their group, however I don't believe that they are always you know cohesive....” There may be a stronger level of cohesion within departments; however, organization-wide, everyone is working towards the company “motto” and make sure to take care of their employees. This care for each other was supported by Dwight who stated, “...it's just a great culture, they definitely take care of employees, and they make sure that everyone is enjoying themselves.” Cohesion was clearly a value within the culture of the organization.

4.3.3. Evidence of a Support System

This level of cohesion manifested throughout the observations, where the sponsorship department appeared to be a strong unit. For example, the close relationship that existed between Michael and Dwight was evident. They exchanged multiple

celebratory fist bumps, jokes and smiles, and even planned to consume a few alcoholic beverages together the day after the event. They were there for one another for the duration of the national sporting event. For instance, when both Michael and Dwight had to deal with a complicated sponsor, they called the sponsor together and supported each other through the phone call.

Another example of a strong support system was Angela providing support to her team: Pam, Jim, and Dwight. Whenever an issue would arise, she would be in their office area to talk it through and provide support. On one occasion when Dwight had to send an email to a difficult sponsor, he had Angela review it before he sent it. Jim and Pam also shared a strong support relationship. First, they were roommates, and both were younger than the rest of the team. They seemed to use each other as ‘sounding boards’ to talk through situations and ideas and would frequently choose each other to go with to deal with sponsors or ambush marketers when issues would arise. This was also present in Pam’s interview; when asked how closely she worked with colleagues when addressing ambush marketing, “...If I was stressed about anything I would definitely ask for their [colleagues] help or ask Jim to go have the conversation with me, so strength in numbers...”

It was also interesting how the participants expressed how if they were to make a mistake the Vice President approached the situation in an understanding manner and mindset. The Vice President would stay calm and allow the employees – especially younger individuals – to try and resolve it and have them think of their own solution for the issue. Pam’s quote supported this:

The Vice President is a very calm person and understands some people make mistakes and doesn't shame you for them which is great... He gives everyone the ability to be like, "Okay you messed up. Now how are you going to fix it."

From this, it was clear that the Vice President took into consideration their experience and age and rather than punishing younger workers, he provided a positive safe environment for these participants to work in; he allowed them to further develop and enhance their skills and techniques within the sponsorship department.

Lastly, what became evident from the interviews was that because the sponsorship group was so cohesive it helped to limit or mute the amount of stress felt among the participants. This was seen in a quotation from Michael, when asked if being cohesive lowers his stress:

Yeah, I think for sure I think if you know you're operating with the team that's not cohesive I think it would just add another stress or another level or type of stress to our job but the fact that we don't have to worry about managing interoffice politics or interoffice dynamics... It's one less thing we have to worry about.

Jim supported this claim as well:

... It's a comforting feeling to know you can [rely on others]. I think we're all feeling like we can do the best job with our clients because we know that relationship. It's a comforting feeling knowing that you can put that in someone else's hands and do a great job as well.

It was thus evident from observations and interviews that the sponsorship department itself, as well as the culture of the organization, were the driving forces behind cohesion for these participants.

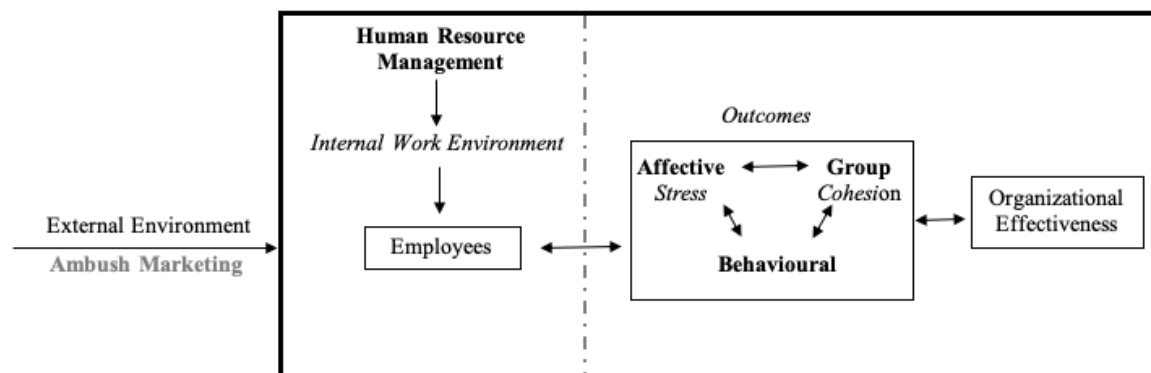
Therefore, for research question three, to what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion, the main themes that became present were stakeholder relationship, strong cohesion, and evidence of support system. A summary of each themes main findings is provided below in table 6.

Table 6: 4.3 RQ3 Summary of Findings

RQ3 Summary of Findings

Stakeholder Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants pursued similar goals for both their own team sponsors and event sponsors – ensuring they were satisfied through protecting sponsors from ambushers
Strong Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was evident that the participants were a very cohesive unit Cohesion was stronger intra-departmentally (sponsorship department) rather than inter-departmentally (i.e., between operations, communications, and finance departments)
Evidence of Support System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant’s relationships with their peers were viewed more as friendships than colleagues, resulting in reducing their stress The participants created a strong support system among each other
Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggests that a mediating relationship between stress and group cohesion may be present in Doherty’s Conceptual Framework, as employees outlined how ambush marketing (managing sponsor relationships) caused greater cohesion in the group, which then reduced stress (see figure 3 below)

Figure 3: Proposed Mediation between Stress and Cohesion



4.4. Findings Summary

Ultimately, in analyzing the observation and interview data, it is clear that participants had an appreciation and understanding of the presence and utility of ambush marketing for local business and team sponsors, as well as complex relationship between the team's own sponsors and those of the event. In turn, the employees experienced enhanced local sponsor relations which helped to create a strong social identity between participants and their own sponsors, who may or may not engage in ambush marketing. Importantly, the age and experience of participants lead to a greater understanding of the strategic nature of ambush marketing, and in turn coping mechanisms for dealing with the stress of partnership and rights management during the course of the event. This was further informed by the group's existing cohesion within the sponsorship department and influenced the amount of stress felt among the participants.

These findings highlight the strategic and complex nature of ambush marketing, and the dynamic influence of sponsors and sponsor relationships on these employees of a national sporting event. Theoretically, this work provides the foundation for understanding the complexity of the social relationships that exist within and between employees and sponsors of national sporting events where the host city may have unique sponsors that differ from those of the league or event.

Chapter 5: Discussion

As discussed, prior in chapters one and two of this thesis, ambush marketing arose through the evolution of sponsorship exclusivity. This helped to create a new dynamic between the sponsor and the event owner, where a shared main focus towards promoting and protecting sponsorship in regard to generating mutually beneficial revenue sources is the main focus of these partnerships (Crow & Hoek, 2003; Meenaghan, 1996). Given the crucial role of sponsorship in sport event success (Crow & Hoek, 2003; Nickell, Cornwell, & Johnston, 2011; Meenaghan, 1996), the role of employees is an essential part in managing a successful sponsorship due to the fact they are the ones strategizing and implementing the preventative tactics against ambush marketing. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the effects of ambush marketing on employees who host a national sporting event. Of particular interest was the impact of ambush marketing on stress and group cohesion during this national sporting event.

In this respect, Doherty's conceptual model for managing human resources provides a window through which to look at the influence of ambushing on employees, as explored here. As evidenced here, ambush marketing presents an external environmental factor impacting upon internal work environments and outcomes. Doherty's (1998) framework highlights the importance of these group and individual outcomes by demonstrating their association with organizational effectiveness: as employees come from the external environment and enter the organization with their values and expectations about ambush marketing, ambushing will inevitably influence these human resources (Doherty, 1998). SIT further emphasizes the impact of external factors on

individuals and groups. This theory highlights the importance of understanding how individuals categorize themselves and others to further gauge and understand their commitment to their group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

The findings provide an understanding from the participants' unique perspectives and understandings of ambush marketing. The following discussion will further highlight and explain Doherty's conceptual model for managing human resources, along with SIT to gain a deeper understanding into the employees' perception of ambush marketing, and the participants' perceived perceptions towards stress and group cohesion.

5.1. RQ1: How do employees interpret ambush marketing?

The use of counter-ambush marketing measures such as those educational and public relations strategies discussed by McKelvey and Grady (2008) is complicated when employees of the host committee still have to work with their team sponsors. If the team sponsor feels neglect, this can upset them and potentially harm future revenue for their organization (Chadwick, 2002; Megan & Hunt, 1994; Farrelly & Quester, 2004). Therefore, event employees may have to 'play both sides' of the sponsor-ambusher relationship, which can become stressful for the employees as there could potentially be a conflict with where their affinity rest.

Intuitively, the participants in the current study could potentially have aligned more strongly with their team organization and team sponsors because they share the same values and goals. As discussed by the participants, they have built a strong relationship with their current team sponsors over time, and in some cases the sponsors represent more than just a standard sponsor-sponsee relationships: they are partnerships with strong inter-personal and inter-organizational components (Chadwick, 2002;

Farrelly & Quester, 2005; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Tajfel, 1974). Therefore, for example, if participants' local sponsors were to strategically market their brands during the event, the participants may not classify their marketing activities as ambush marketing, as it does not fit their definition or perception of ambush marketing. Indeed, participants here positively identified with their team sponsor, and therefore their definition of ambush marketing may have been viewed more strategically and forgivingly as the event unfolded. This identification is supported by Ashforth and Mael (1989), who argued people identify more with groups who share the same attributes, abilities, and interests, thus, explaining why there is a stronger connection between participants and their team sponsors.

5.1.1. Complex Views of Ambush Marketing

Participants knew that traditional ambush marketing is negative and should not be present at the event; this traditional view of ambush marketing as unethical (Hoek & Gendall, 2002) seemed to frame the participants' discussion of ambush marketing in general in that it was apparent that the mega sporting event perceptions and beliefs about ambush marketing informed definitions of ambushing by the participants at the national sporting event level. However, one possible explanation for this less negative view of ambush marketing in this context may lie in the contemporary view of ambush marketing as strategic. Respondents interacted with sponsors in a way that highlighted the strategic marketing focus of the more contemporary definition of ambushing (Chadwick & Burton, 2011). Indeed, this more contemporary view of ambush marketing as strategic (Chadwick & Burton, 2011) was noted by participants in interview and observation data. Moreover, as suggested by Hoek and Gendall (2002), it is a matter of opinion how one perceives

ambush marketing as either an unethical or immoral tactic; this opinion creates a large bias towards research that is conducted when questioning the ethical approach of ambush marketing, an argument seemingly reinforced here.

The multiple perspectives shared by the participants' further supports the notion that ambush marketing is a complex phenomenon. Whereas everyone has a general idea of how to define ambush marketing, how the participants actually classify ambush marketing activities varies. Local restaurant's promotional signs and event-linked lunch offerings, for example, might not be clear cut examples of ambush marketing to the participants, as prior and more high-profile examples are based off the Olympics, FIFA World Cups, and the Super Bowl, where ambush marketing has a stronger presence, and ambushers clearly leverage the event in hopes of making a profit. Therefore, some organizations who might be accused of ambushing might not believe their actions classify or can be categorized under ambush marketing; rather than they might believe they are just supporting the event, athletes. Ambushing is "in the eyes of the beholder" and is seen from the point of view of the event committee and/or event sponsors (Meenaghan, 1994, p. 85). Hill (2016), similarly supported this claim, suggesting that not all ambush marketing should be cast in a negative light, given that smaller or local organizations do not have the revenue resources to compete with larger wealthy organizations, and seek to capitalize on the local benefits of hosting an event rather than to rival official sponsors' marketing efforts.

This on-going battle over what constitutes ambush marketing, and local retailers and restaurateurs engaged in ambush marketing was a source of some stress for participants. Driskell et al. (2018) supported this by saying annoyance is a subjective

feeling of stress, which can result in a decline in performance. This then relates to Doherty's (1998) conceptual model where if there is a decline in performance it will result in the organizational effectiveness to decrease. However, it is important to note that participants did not deem the threat of ambush marketing significant enough to overcome their focus on servicing their team and event sponsors. This again is supported by Doherty's model, where the team and event sponsors were the external environment factors that participants identified most frequently as impactful. However, it could be argued that there could be an additional external environmental layer, in this case ambush marketing, which affected the original external environment, whereby if ambush marketing were to impact the original external environment of sponsorship it then would interact with the participants and have an impact on their stress and cohesion.

Local companies' lack of knowledge about ambush marketing further contributed to this complex understanding of ambush marketing. Participants gave these companies the benefit of the doubt that they were not aware of the contentious nature of their actions, resulting in a mixed interpretation of what ambush marketing is again for these organizations and the participants. Smaller companies or local businesses are often unable to experience the same opportunities and benefits from sponsoring an event, due to the high cost and competition from larger more wealthy corporations (Hill, 2016). Doherty's (1998) framework helps to understand this relationship as external environment factors (e.g., sponsors and ambushers) have a direct impact on employee and group functioning; both positively and negatively.

In sum, the data showed that participants were aware of ambush marketing and made attempts to limit its interference with the event, yet it was not a big priority or concern for them.

5.1.2. Sponsor Servicing and Relationships

Instead, it was clear that servicing sponsorship relationships was at the forefront for these participants: the connection to their own sponsors superseded their views and understandings of ambush marketing. This was highlighted throughout the interviews and observations as participants shared a strong relationship with their team sponsors, yet had to create and build new, shorter relationship with the event's sponsors. As Chadwick (2002) stated, commitment is a big factor in keeping a sponsorship; therefore, the participants needed to prove to their team sponsors that they are still committed while also pleasing these event sponsors who are only there for a short duration. This could be considered a stressor for participants, due to the fact that if their team sponsor felt that they are being neglected and not having that promised commitment they could withdraw from the sponsorship, a resulting economic problem that could occur for the participants.

A unique relationship was thus held with the participants' stakeholders where multiple participants made mention about feeling empathetic towards their team sponsor because they were not able to sponsor the event. This created an inner conflict when having to try and face with their own sponsor and when concerned that they might 'ambush' the event. This could have had a negative effect on their organization's outcome (as seen in Doherty's (1998) conceptual model), because of the inner conflict between having to host and maintain a prosperous event, yet still have to think about the upcoming season and make sure they have sponsors who still will sponsor their team.

This also relates to SIT (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1974) because the participants identified more strongly with their team sponsor rather than the event sponsors, which put strain on how to define the in-group of the relationships being addressed during sponsorship activation. This is consistent with Hickman et al., (2005), who found a positive correlation between “sponsorship affinity, organizational commitment and willingness to satisfy customers” (Hickman et al., 2002, p. 148), suggesting that participants in the current study identified strongly with the sponsors, however the environment (both local and event sponsors) made the nature of that identification complicated.

Furthermore, event sponsors may have increased participant stress due to the fact that each party shared a different understanding and perception of ambush marketing. This further supports the complexities that surround ambush marketing (Burton et al., 2018; Meenaghan, 1994). While it is understandable why the participants and the event sponsors share different perceptions towards ambush marketing, this does pose a problem for sponsorship relations. As Chadwick (2002), Morgan and Hunt (1994), and Farrelly and Quester (2004) argued, to create a successful sponsorship commitment and trust must be created, and this is through sharing similar goals, values, and beliefs. It was clear that the participants made every effort to connect the relationship between their department and each sponsor; given their identification with the sponsorship group as a whole.

5.1.3. Age and Experience

Age and Experience was an unexpected theme that arose in both the interviews and observations where participants made multiple references to either their own age and experience or their fellow colleagues’ age and experience. Why this then is important is

because it can add another level of complexity towards participants stress and cohesion at work. The younger employees might experience stress more while the more mature employees are able to handle these situations in a calmer matter. This then can be related to Doherty's (1998) model in that an individual's values and personality directly mediates how the external environment affects outcomes such as stress and cohesion. Specifically, some participants who have prior experience with event management discussed less stress, and because the department is cohesive and supportive, younger, less experienced participants also discussed less stress.

From multiple participants it was brought up how their own age and experience may affect their perceptions and understanding of ambush marketing. Those who have been in the organization, and in the particular sponsorship department, longer may have a stronger identity with the goals of the sponsorship team which would allow the strategic definition of ambush marketing to be more evident to them. Therefore, the older and more experienced participants may have more training and development (formal or informal) around how to deal with those dynamics of ambush marketing and sponsors, where people have real life experience with having to deal with ambush marketing and actually implement what they have learned about strategically managing partnerships to benefit the organization. This is supported by Taylor (1974), who stated that the older one is actually becomes a contributing factor towards how decisions are made and the quality of decisions. Taylor (1974) found that the older an individual the longer it is for them to reach a decision, therefore, being able to diagnose the situation more accurately and thoroughly. Taylor (1974) also found a correlation with years of experience and decision making, this was positively correlated with managing coming to an appropriate decision.

It was also stated that there was a strong connection between age and experience in developing accurate decisions (Taylor, 1974).

5.2. RQ2: To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress?

5.2.1. Limited stress

Participants seemed to downplay their stress to minimal levels or even non-existent or even comparing their stress to others and say they are not “curing cancer”. This could be a result the participants themselves identify as being a consumer of a sport and have the backlash of the social world to say that working in sports is not that stressful, or because sports are seen as an escape for consumers where they get to release their stress while enjoying a sporting event (Segrave, 2000).

As stated by Odio et al. (2013), the dynamic of event employee participants’ work stress is multifaceted due to the fact their roles are unique situations of heightened stressors for each individual. As well, SIT can explain the reduced discussions of stress in that the participants share a similar understanding/perception of ambush marketing with their organization, where the event sponsor perceived and defined ambush differently due to the fact they identify differently towards the event and ambush marketing.

Relief was expressed when the participants own team did not qualify for the event, lessening the intensity of stress present at the event. If their own team would have qualified for the event it would have added another stressor for these participants to deal with and make their environment become too demanding for them. This is supported through Driskell et al. (2018) when they stated that when ‘team stress’ becomes too demanding it can harm the participants’ well-being. Therefore, emphasizing the increased

impact of external factors (e.g., whether a host team and event sponsor conflict) on participant outcomes (Doherty, 1998).

Participants felt limited amounts of stress during the course of the event, this could be explained through the participants' strong group dynamic. Lanzetta (1955) supported this idea, stating that when stress was increased so too was group cohesion. This connection was latterly explored within Doherty's (1998) conceptual model where an external threat was theorized to affect an individual by increasing their stress while also simultaneously increasing group cohesion. Participants may also have been hesitant to admitting stress in that stress may be viewed as a weakness in this context.

Alternatively, it could be that what they were feeling is not something they would classify as stress, due to the fact they were unaware they were experiencing different forms of stress.

5.2.2. Forms of Stress

By contrast, eu-stress was found more predominantly throughout data collection. Participants were unaware of how in-depth and complex stress can be, with having multiple levels. It was prevalent that these participants experienced eu-stress, specifically in servicing sponsors to ensure they were content and satisfied. This area of successfully servicing sponsors was deemed one of their most important beliefs and sources of motivation for them to go above and beyond to ensure that the sponsor was completely satisfied, affirming Chadwick's (2002) assertion that a lasting, trusting, and committed relationship with sponsors is of high value and importance. By creating this strong relationship, it can be argued that a shared identity is held between the participants and event sponsors, where they both share the same goal of having a successful event and in

return enhances the participant's self-esteem because they were successful in servicing their sponsor (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1974).

Sponsorship relationships and maintaining sponsor satisfaction, was stressful for participants at times. This was largely due to the fact that the participants had to be mindful of their team sponsorship relationships, while also building a temporary relationship with the event sponsors. Some found this balance to be more difficult than others. This can be explained by Farrelly and Quester (2005) where they argue the importance of sponsorship commitment through economic satisfaction, thus in this instance creating stress for employees when sponsors no longer view the relationship as mutually beneficial.

Although ambush marketing was not cited as a primary concern for participant's, the maintenance and balancing of these relationships presented significant challenges for the employees studied and reaffirmed the disconnect found between respondents' verbalized stress and experienced stress. The data clearly indicates that sponsorship relationships, and maintaining sponsor satisfaction, was stressful for participants at times. The national sporting event challenged the study's participants and their team sponsors, as the majority of the team's own sponsors were not able to be an event sponsor. However, it is also the participants' duty to ensure the event sponsors feel the same kind of praise and support as their team sponsors to ensure an efficient prosperous event by exhibiting a mutual commitment and trust. Thus, adding another stressor to these participants while they work the event, which in turn, increases their stress and has potential for these employees to burn out (Podsakoff et al., 2007).

Hypo-stress was not as prevalent as compared to the other levels of stress in data collection; however, as Steptoe-Warren (2013) argued stress experienced at work is very complex. During the first phase of data collection (prior to the event), the atmosphere and participants actions expressed a calm peaceful environment to work in. This could be a result of having little to no external environment influences affecting the internal work environment of the employees.

5.2.3. Coping Mechanisms

Interestingly, the majority of participants did not believe they had coping mechanisms to deal with any stress or stressors that presented themselves. Odio et al. (2013) discussed stress in event volunteers, but little is known about how to cope with these stressors that employees' experience.

Communication among participants was the most discussed coping mechanism, which could be due to the fact that stress decreased when the participants talked situations through with each other, specifically with their supervisors. This is supported by Steinhardt et al. (2003) who claimed support from supervisor's relationships with employees had an influence over employee's job satisfaction and cohesion which lead to a positive work environment.

It seemed the older and more experienced participants held less stress and more strategies for coping with their stress. This supports Taylor (1975) claim that the older and more experience an individual, the better they are at reaching decisions more accurately and efficiently; therefore, less stress would be associated with these individuals.

5.3. RQ3: To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion?

Before diving into discussing the themes found for research question three, it is important to mention that these findings reflect Doherty's (1998) model when exploring external environment factors, such as ambush marketing. The connection between stress and cohesion noted by these participants (e.g., higher levels of cohesion felt by the participants as a result of their ties to the sponsorship department, made them less stressed), can be further explained through SIT in that an external factor challenges the internal identity and the group then comes together, and this results in them being less stressed. This was seen through eu-stress and hyper-stress where participants seemed to come together, whether it be talking with one another about dealing with sponsors and the challenges they may have been experiencing with them or even venting to one another about situations. Therefore, the following themes highlight how ambush marketing indirectly impacted the participants and how it is perceived that stress mediated the level cohesion felt amongst the participants

5.3.1. Stakeholder Relations

Throughout the staging of the event, the study's participants were required to balance multiple roles. One of these roles was servicing the event sponsors; as Chadwick (2002) stated, ensuring that sponsors are fully satisfied is highly important to have them return. Therefore, these participants have that added stressor of ensuring these event sponsors are pleased to continue to sponsor the event, but not their team. Intriguingly, participants pursued similar goals for both their own team sponsors and event sponsors – ensuring that both were satisfied through protecting sponsors from ambushers. This

context created a new dynamic between participant and event sponsor, where participant and event sponsor values and goals might not align completely; however, the event sponsors values and goals could align with the league, therefore creating a unique relationship to manage.

Importantly, participants expressed a strong relationship with ‘their’ sponsors – referring to the team’s existing partners – whereby they were extremely committed to their sponsors, and to one another, in ensuring they were always content and happy. This strong relationship can be explained by Morgan and Hunt (1994) where the foundation of this relationship was established by the level of trust and commitment between the two parties; thereby resulting in a strong mutual relationship for both parties. This can then be further explained by SIT, as participants were attached to a value and emotional significance towards this membership with their team sponsors (Tajfel, 1974).

5.3.2. Strong Cohesion

A strong cohesive bond was also shared among the participants during the observations and interviews. This can be explained by Sanchez and Yurrebaso (2009) because they claimed group cohesion shares a positive correlation with job and personal satisfaction, along with the contribution made to the group. Beehr et al. (2000) argued that individuals in stressful situations found that support actually contributed to their strains; however, this did not seem to be the case for these participants, it was perceived that support actually strengthened these participants relationship and decreased stress for them. This conflicting finding may be explained by SIT where identity (and strong identity) moderates this relationship between stress and cohesion.

Cohesion was stronger intra-departmentally rather than inter-departmentally (for example, between operations, communications, and finance); this may have been a product of individual departments' or units' individual mandates and responsibilities. While each department within the organization strove for the overarching mission and success of the event, each department was segregated and thus created their own beliefs, values, and missions to be achieved. This is supported by Sanchez and Yurrebaso (2009) where they argue how organizational behaviour is the interaction between different groups within the organization, these groups can develop their own culture that share a similar beliefs and values to successfully run the organization. Therefore, these group are going to share a stronger cohesion among their group rather than the organization as a whole, due to the fact not all groups' beliefs and values are going to align. Sanchez and Yurrebaso (2009) claimed that groups that have more interaction among group members will result in higher levels of cohesion, meaning these smaller groups interact more with one another than with other groups resulting in the small group to share a strong cohesion among each other.

5.3.3. Evidence of a Support System

Employee's relationships with their peers were viewed more as friendships than colleagues, which in turn lowered their levels of stress. The role of departments in managing sport events is highly important, especially in ensuring everything runs smoothly and effectively. The identity within the department group as well as within the organization more broadly is important when trying to manage stressful situations, for example sponsorship relationships during event execution. Social identity is a part of an individual's self-concept which derives from (1) the individual's knowledge of their

membership of social group(s) together and (2) the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1974). Therefore, the department shares such a strong support system because of their “membership” within the group, as well the emotional significance each member has placed on this “membership” and in the group, where the perception and belief in a tight unit that shares similar beliefs and values informs their own individual identity, motivations, and beliefs.

The employees thus created a strong support system among each other where they were able to use each other as ‘sound boards’ and support if and when they felt stressed. Specifically, when the participants went to their supervisors for assistance and/or support it created an interaction between them enhancing group cohesion. Soldan (2010) also supports this claim by stating that group cohesion strengthens in unity which in return “increases members” commitment and willingness to work hard for the group (p. 157).

5.4. Discussion Summary

From this analysis of data, it can be interpreted that the ambush marketing shares a lot of complexities with how it is interpreted, defined, and perceived by the participants and sponsors. Where, it can be argued that creating and maintaining a committed trustworthy relationship with sponsors sometimes is more complicated than previous scholars have said, especially for once a year event that continues to change locations. While also, it was supported that when stress increased so did cohesion, resulting in a stronger cohesion among intra-department groups. Lastly, age and experience leads to a greater understanding of how the participants came to their perceptions and understanding of the complex strategic nature of ambush marketing, while also able to be manage stressors due to their vast experience and age.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Following the emergence of ambush marketing during the 1984 Olympics, ambush marketing has proliferated and the number of brands participating in ambushing has increased (Chadwick & Burton, 2011). Subsequently, academic research into ambushing has grown and developed as a subsection of the sponsorship literature. To date, the four central themes that ambush marketing research commonly addresses are the definition of ambush marketing, the impact on consumers, the ethical concern, and the legal implications of ambush marketing (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; Crompton, 2004, Meenaghan 1994; Sandler & Shani, 1989; Seguin & O'Reilly, 2008).

Unfortunately, although advances have been made in the ambush marketing literature, there is still much to be discovered and investigated to advance theory in this area. Ambush marketing continues to shift and change, complicating both professional and scholarly understandings of its nature and uses, along with the terms and phrases used to in describing ambush marketing, making it difficult to gain a clear comprehension of what exactly is ambush marketing (Burton & Bradish, 2018; Burton, et al., 2018). As a result, a lack of consensus regarding ambush marketing definition and the remaining ambiguities concerning the nature of ambush marketing remains, leaving the perception of ambush marketing to be held “in the eye of the beholder” (Meenaghan, 1994, p. 85). In turn, considerable uncertainty with respect to ambushing’s effects and implications, persists in both research and practice.

Specific to this study, despite extensive research, the impact of ambush marketing on host organizations is relatively unknown. Although myriad sponsorship protection measures have been implemented by events and rights holders reflective of the changes

and advances in ambush marketing over the course of the past thirty years (Chadwick & Burton, 2011), to date no research has considered the effects of ambush marketing – and those counter-ambush efforts employed by event owners – on employees of the commercial rights holder. Rather, the literature has primarily explored the effects of ambushing on consumer memory and sponsorship returns (McDaniel & Kinney, 1998; Meenaghan, 1998; Sandler & Shani 1989). This is a significant gap in the literature given that employees are the individuals who must manage sponsorship deals, interact with sponsors, and enact counter-ambush efforts for their organizations. This gap in knowledge creates an area of inquiry that requires further investigation.

Doherty's (1998) conceptual model highlighted the empirically supported associations that provided a valuable framework for understanding ambush marketing's effects on these sport event employees. Further, SIT was used to provide a theoretical explanation for the impact of ambush marketing on these sport employees. Specifically, group identification with their sponsorship department and national sporting event caused an emotional tie to the activity that impacted both entities, therefore influencing participant behaviour.

Therefore, this study was designed to, and succeeded in, understanding the impacts of ambush marketing on sport employees during a national sporting event. The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of ambush marketing on employees who host a national sporting event. Of particular interest was the impact of ambush marketing on stress and group cohesion during a national sporting event. This study of the effects of ambush marketing on employee stress and group cohesion, developed a new lens to view ambush marketing. Where then this new lens can be applied to any sporting event with

sponsorships that have the potential to encounter ambush marketing, and employee interactions.

This single-case study examined the phenomenon of interest with a new perspective by using Doherty's model for managing human resources and SIT to explore the influences of ambush marketing. Drawing on participant observation as the initial form of data collection followed by interviews as form of data collection, the following research questions were answered:

1. How do employees interpret ambush marketing?
2. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence perceptions of employee stress?
3. To what extent does perceived ambush marketing influence employee perceptions of group cohesion?

Specifically, the findings highlighted how complex ambush marketing is for the study's participants at this event. For instance, it was found that these participants comprehended what ambush marketing was; however, due to the complexity of ambush marketing, their actions did not always reflect their definition and understanding. The data also highlighted the high importance placed on the participants and servicing their sponsors of both the event and their team. However, again touching on the complexity of ambush marketing, there was a conflicting view of what is ambush marketing between the event sponsors and the participants, thus resulting in the participants feeling stress in relation to in having to combat against ambushing they would not typically classify as ambushing. It was uncovered that participants and team sponsors shared a unique relationship, which was a driving force behind ensuring they delivered on servicing both

team and event sponsors. Lastly, it was found that age and experience played an important role in distinguishing the levels of stress certain participants would experience, for instance, the older and more experience participants the less stress would be associated with them due to the fact they have been in the industry longer.

Moreover, it was found that ambush marketing was not a main concern for participants, but rather it was the driving force behind maintaining and balancing sponsor relationships to ensure sponsors were also content and satisfied. This often lead to some participants feeling stress do to having to try and service both their team sponsor and event sponsor. However, when participants experienced stress many of them coped with stress in a similar manner, where they communicate with one another in their department. Where it was also found that the older and more experience participants were better adept to coping with stress, which was transferred and reinforced a strong cohesion with the other employees due to the fact they were able to communicate with one another.

Lastly, the cohesion witnessed throughout the organization was expressed intra-departmentally rather than inter-departmentally. This was because groups intra-departmentally had created strong friendships among each other where it was easy to share similar goals and objectives, therefore, solidifying their social identity and enabling employees to work together towards their goal of providing superb sponsor servicing.

The significance of this research and findings should not be understated. The aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees at this specific event. The findings that came from this study allow for a new lens that allows for a new complex level of ambush marketing to be viewed.

6.1. Limitations and Future Research

Although this study makes a number of important contributions, there are some limitations which must be acknowledged. A limitation to take into consideration is league employees were not interviewed or observed; however, the purpose here was to uncover the pressures of the host employees. Examining the league employees may be an area for future research. Further, a future research idea would be to further research into how local and national event organizations deal with ambush marketing. Is ambush marketing deemed more acceptable at these levels? How do these other organizations define ambush marketing?

While another limitation to be consider is the length of time of observations (i.e., relatively short one-week window), due to availability and cost; therefore, future research should go at different time variables to gain a better understanding of group cohesion and stress before the event. Bias may have been present in the responses, however, the length of time that was spent during observations, it was clear that the participants became more open as time went on, which was a benefit to having the interviews following the observations.

While also it should be taken into consideration to further explore how hosting a national sporting event affects an organization's employees when their own property partners are not an official sponsor of the hosted event. And lastly, another future research idea is to examine how variables such as age and experience on the job affect an employee's relationship with ambush marketing.

One last limitation to consider is that this was one event and one time period, therefore future research could examine the effects of ambush marketing on employees in different settings at different time points.

6.2. Implications for Sport Event Host Employees

These findings highlight the strategic nature of ambush marketing, and the dynamic influence of sponsors and sponsor relationships on employees of this national sporting event. Theoretically, this work provides the foundation for understanding the complexity of the social relationships that exist within and between employees and sponsors of this national sporting events where the host city had unique sponsors compared to the host league of the event, and the findings offer an avenue for future research in this area. In terms of practical implications, the findings here have been presented to the managers within this study – focusing specifically on managing their definition of ambush marketing and acknowledging/managing stress.

This study's findings have a few implications for sport event host employees, specifically in the areas of understanding: the complexities of ambush marketing; the different challenges in having to serve and satisfy both team sponsors and even sponsors; the employees' age and experience with ambush marketing and, finally; the awareness of how stress can actually be perceived positively and increase group cohesion.

First, as has been stated by multiple scholars (Chadwick & Burton, 2011; Burton & Bradish, 2018; Burton & Chadwick, 2018; Burton et al., 2018, Crow & Hoek, 2003), ambush marketing has been evolving and so too the definition and perception of it. Thus, ambush marketing is an ever-changing phenomenon, the perception of which differs depending on the perspective of individuals or groups. Therefore, it should be taken into

consideration the fact that there are dimensions of ambush marketing that are more complex than just at the Olympic, Super Bowl, or FIFA World Cup level, and the different parameters that other sport event hosts employees have to consider, such as the tensions inherent in satisfying both event and team sponsors, should be taken into account.

While also, it is evident from these findings that the sport event host employees must successfully manage and satisfy more than one group of sponsors. As Morgan and Hunt (1994) discussed the importance of building a strong trusting committed relationship between both parties. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the fact that these employees have to walk that fine line in ensuring both sets of sponsors continuously are satisfied. Additionally, this raises awareness of the need to create a clear understanding of multiple dynamics the event host must execute in ensuring for a prosperous event, while also pleasing two contrasting sets of sponsors, which can be a stressor for some employees. Odio et al., (2013) relates to this by arguing that due to the fact that these sporting events are not held in the same location it creates a stressor that constantly evolves.

As, related to Lanzetta (1955) highlighted the connection between stress and cohesion among employees, stating that employees increased cohesion when stress was a threat to employees. It was found that the group would unite and support one another to work towards having everyone perform calmly by talking with one another, even if one of them experienced any form of stress, even if they did not think they had any coping mechanisms. This created a positive work environment where they all strongly identified within their department group which allowed them to decrease their stress and increase

their cohesion. Therefore, the implications for this is becoming aware of how stress can impact employee groups in a positive way.

Furthermore, the unexpected theme that arose of participants' age and experience should receive future attention in terms of understanding this potential factor of an employee's performance. It became evident that this played a role in how they perceived and experienced ambush marketing, along with stress. In terms of implications, it brings attention and support towards the multiple perceptions of how ambush marketing is perceived, this adds another layer of depth towards how and why certain employees will either categorize something as ambushing or not.

This event and its employees were specifically chosen because the context allowed a transfer of the theoretical frameworks, such as SIT and Doherty's conceptual framework (1998), to other national sporting events. For instance, this research and its specific context can be applied by other researchers of sporting events, human resource management, sponsorship, and sport management. Therefore, the findings of this study are relevant for academic literature in multiple ways, such as providing a benchmark for exploring Doherty's model where cohesion and stress may be mediating variables, rather than viewed as variables independent of one another.

6.3. Theoretical Contribution

Through this study multiple theoretical contributions have been made. These include: creating a proposed framework that concentrates on the mediation between stress and cohesion from Doherty's conceptual framework; exploring sponsorship servicing at the event and team levels separately, rather than as a collective unit, and; exploring

ambush marketing in a completely new context in which the focus is on the employees and how they are affected.

Doherty (1998) stated that her model, “extends, perhaps, our typical understanding of human resource management” (p. 3) and where the outcomes for the individual and group levels “focus...on affective and behavioural outcomes” (p. 5). However, this study suggests instead that a mediating relationship between stress and group cohesion may be present in Doherty’s Conceptual Framework, as employees outlined how ambush marketing (managing sponsor relationships) caused greater cohesion in the group, which then reduced stress. Therefore, another model was proposed to represent these findings (see Figure 3).

This study also explored interactions between sponsor and sponsee, such as sponsorship servicing. Multiple scholars have explored the importance of maintaining a positive relationship and suggested ways to maintain it (Chadwick, 2002; Farrelly & Quester 2005; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Nufer & Buhler, 2010). However, none of them actually studied how the effects of servicing these sponsors and maintaining these relationships effected the employees. This study provides a starting point for exploring the importance of maintaining sponsor relationships, suggesting that fulfilling sponsorship obligations had both positive and negative effects on participants. This was found in both the observations and interviews, where participants expressed or mentioned the complexities of servicing sponsors, especially the challenge of having to service sponsors that are only for the event and were conflicts with their own team sponsors.

Finally, this study examines employees and the effects of ambush marketing on them, thus illuminating a new avenue of ambush marketing research. It further enhances our understanding of the dynamic interactions between employee, sponsor, and ambusher.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Invitation

Letter of Invitation

[Date: TBD]

Title of Study: 50 Shades of Ambush Marketing: Exploring the Effects of Ambush Marketing on Sport Employees

Principal Student Investigator: Stephanie Kast, Applied Health Science Graduate Student, Brock University

Principal Investigator: Dr. Shannon Kerwin, Co-Supervisor, Sport Management, Brock University

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Nicholas Burton, Co-Supervisor, Sport Management, Brock University

I, Stephanie Kast, from the Faculty of Applied Health Science at Brock University, invite your organization to participate in a research project entitled “Exploring the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees during a National Sporting Event”.

The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees who interact with ambush marketing, specifically focusing on the impact of ambush marketing on stress and group cohesion during a national championship event. Should you choose to participate, your employees will be asked to participate in participant observation where notes will be taken before and during the event and then in an interview with an audio-recording device occurring after the event.

The expected duration will be approximately a week prior of the event. The researcher will be present Monday - Friday 9am-5pm the week prior to the event; while during the event the researcher will be present for the entire length of the event. The researcher will then be present approximately three days, Monday – Wednesday, after the event staying 9am-5pm to conduct the interviews. The researcher hopes to attend formal marketing or sponsorship meetings while there. Each data collection session will vary in length and time.

The potential risks associated with participation in this study would be participants feeling embarrassed worried or upset, or experiencing emotional stress while being observed or interviewed. As well participants may be concerned about possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation by participating in this study. The mitigation for this is for researcher will be mindful of these potential risks to ensure participant safety and wellbeing. The researcher will ensure the participants know their information will be kept confidential during both the observation and interview collection. The participants will be informed that at any point throughout the study they are able to leave and all documentation about them will be destroyed immediately.

The potential benefits of this study would be the sport organization and the employees’ by bringing awareness to how ambush marketing effects sport employees, especially with bringing awareness to how employees might be impacted by an increase of stress. While also improving interpersonal dynamics by making it aware of how to improve a stronger cohesive dynamic between team members and sponsors. Therefore, reducing any conflict and increasing communication and understanding among everyone. If you choose to participate, I will provide a report at the end of the project that will highlight ways to reduce stress by managing the effects of ambush marketing on employees as well as a summary of major themes found. However, there is no pressure or obligation for you to participate in this study if you do not wish too.

The information provided from your organization will be kept confidential. As well only I, Stephanie Kast, and my two co-supervisors will have access of who is participating along with the data linked identifiers. Therefore you, the organization, will have no knowledge of who is and is not participating and their data linked identifiers. If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Stephanie Kast
Graduate Student,
289-696-4197
sk11oa@brocku.ca

Dr. Nicholas Burton
Assistant Professor, Co-Supervisor
905 688 5550 x 6289
nburton@brocku.ca

Dr. Shannon Kerwin
Associate Professor, Co-Supervisor
905 688 5550 x 6177
skerwin@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board (File 17-042 – KERWIN)

Appendix B: Informed Consent – Participant Observation

Informed Consent: *Participant Observation*

[Date: TBD]

Project Title: 50 Shades of Ambush Marketing: Exploring the Effects of Ambush Marketing on Sport Employees

Principal Student Investigator: Stephanie Kast

Principal Investigator: Dr. Shannon Kerwin, Co-Supervisor, Sport Management, Brock University

Department of Sport Management

Brock University

289 696 4197

sk11oa@brocku.ca

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Nicholas Burton

Department of Sport Management

Brock University

(905) 688-5550 Ext. 6177

nburton@brocku.ca

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves qualitative research. The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees who interact with ambush marketing, specifically focusing on the impact of ambush marketing on employees during a national championship event.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in a week of participant observation that will be occurring the week before and during your involvement in a major sport event, where I, the researcher, will be observing at the office and the event. For instance, meetings, interactions amongst employees, interactions between employees and ambushers (event stakeholder sponsors and the sponsor's competitors), activations on-site (pre-event and during event), and the overall group dynamic before, during, and after the event will be observed.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

The potential risks associated with participation in this study would be participants feeling embarrassed worried or upset, or experiencing emotional stress while being observed or interviewed. As well participants may be concerned about possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation by participating in this study. The mitigation for this is the researcher will be mindful of these potential risks to ensure participant safety and wellbeing. I will ensure the participants know they will be kept confidential during both the observation and interview collection. The participants will be informed that at any point throughout the study they are able to leave and all documentation about them will be destroyed immediately.

The potential benefits of this study would be directed towards the sport organization and the employees' by bringing awareness to how ambush marketing effects sport employees, especially with bringing awareness to how employees might be impacted by an increase of stress. While also improving interpersonal dynamics by bringing awareness towards a stronger cohesive dynamic between team members and sponsors. Therefore, reducing any conflict and increasing communication and understanding among each other. If you choose to participate, I will provide a report at the end of the project that will highlight ways to reduce stress by managing the effects of ambush marketing on employees as well as a summary of major themes found. However, there is no pressure or obligation for you to participate in this study if you do not wish too.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide will be kept confidential; however, there are limits to the confidentiality I can guarantee such as, being identifiable by others within the organization. Pseudonyms will be used to replace the name of the organization and the national event will be changed for publication. As well, pseudonyms will be used to replace your name and position. Further, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Also, if you are interested I will supply you a copy of a summary report from the findings and you can review it before a finalized report is created. Once completed, I will provide a report at the end of the project that will highlight ways to reduce stress by managing the effects of ambush marketing on employees during a national championship event.

Data collected during this study will be written in a journal and some will be recorded and then stored on a password protected laptop to be listened to again later to be analyzed. Data will be kept for two years after which time will be erased and the digital transcripts of the data deleted.

Access to this data will be restricted to Stephanie Kast, Dr. Burton and Dr. Kerwin.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary and is not a condition of employment and it is your decision to participate, not participate or withdraw will have no bearing on your employment. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty. If you choose to withdraw, any observational and/or interview data that includes you, your actions, and/or your conversations will be immediately erased. Some participants will also be asked separately to participate in an individual interview after the event.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available approximately 3-4 months after data collection has finished. You may contact Stephanie Kast, via email at skl1oa@brocku.ca, if you have any questions or comments.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Stephanie Kast or Dr. Burton or Dr. Kerwin using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University 17-042 – KERWIN. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the observations associated with this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Informed Consent – Interviews

Informed Consent: *Interviews*

[Date: TBD]

Project Title: 50 Shades of Ambush Marketing: Exploring the Effects of Ambush Marketing on Sport Employees

Principal Student Investigator: Stephanie Kast

Principal Investigator: Dr. Shannon Kerwin, Co-Supervisor, Sport Management, Brock University

Department of Sport Management

Brock University

289 696 4197

sk11oa@brocku.ca

Faculty Supervisor Dr. Nicholas Burton

Department of Sport Management

Brock University

(905) 688-5550 Ext. 6289

nburton@brocku.ca

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves qualitative research. The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees who interact with ambush marketing, specifically focusing on the impact of ambush marketing on employees during a national championship event.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in a formal 30 minutes to an hour long audio-recorded interview that will be occurring after the event, as well as informal interviews that may occur throughout the event. An example of an interview question would be asking if you ever feel stressed at work and if so to describe how you felt during that time. While for informal interviews I will be asking you about emergent and unanticipated topics pertaining towards ambush marketing during the interview or a structured time of observation.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

The potential risks associated with participation in this study would be participants feeling embarrassed worried or upset, or experiencing emotional stress while being observed or interviewed. As well participants may be concerned about possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation by participating in this study. The mitigation for this is for researcher will be mindful of these potential risks to ensure participant safety and wellbeing. The researcher will ensure the participants know they will be kept confidential during both the observation and interview collection. The participants will be informed that at any point throughout the study they are able to leave and all documentation about them will be destroyed immediately.

The potential benefits of this study would be the sport organization and the employees' by bringing awareness to how ambush marketing effects sport employees, especially with bringing awareness to how employees might be impacted by an increase of stress. While also improving interpersonal dynamics by bringing awareness towards a stronger cohesive dynamic between team members and sponsors. Therefore, reducing any conflict and increasing communication and understanding among each other. If you choose to participate, I will provide a report at the end of the project that will highlight ways to reduce stress by managing the effects of ambush marketing on employees as well as a summary of major themes found. However, there is no pressure or obligation for you to participate in this study if you do not wish too.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide will be kept confidential; however, there are limits to the confidentiality I can guarantee such as, being identifiable by others within the organization. Pseudonyms will be used to replace the name of the organization and the national event will be changed for publication. As well, pseudonyms will be used to replace your name and position. Further, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Also, if you are interested I will supply you a copy of a summary report from the findings and you can review it before I create the finalized report. Once completed, I will provide a report at the end of the project that will highlight ways to reduce stress by managing the effects of ambush marketing on employees during a national championship event.

Data collected during this study will be stored on tape then transcribed verbatim. Data will be kept for two years after which time will be erased and the digital transcripts deleted.

Access to this data will be restricted to Stephanie Kast, Dr. Burton and Dr. Kerwin.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary and is not a condition of employment and it is your decision to participate, not participate or withdraw will have no bearing on your employment. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty. If you choose to withdraw, any observational and/or interview data that includes you, your actions, and/or your conversations will be immediately erased.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available approximately 3-4 months after data collection has finished. You may contact Stephanie Kast, via email at sk11oa@brocku.ca, if you have any questions or comments.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Stephanie Kast or Dr. Burton or Dr. Kerwin using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University 17-042 – KERWIN. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the interviews in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Interview Guide

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (read verbatim)

Introduction:

This interview forms part of a research project for my study of exploring the effects of ambush marketing on sport employees during a National Championship and should take approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

As you are already aware, the focus of the research project is an examination of the effects of ambush marketing on employees' during a national championship event. This discussion aims to examine further the observations that took place before and during the event to better understand the effect of ambush marketing on employees. (Go over the letter of consent with them and have them sign it)

Would it be acceptable for me to record this interview? (*If not:* Start writing.)

I realize this information may be sensitive. May I assure you that the contents of our discussion will be kept strictly confidential and your name will be replaced with a pseudonym following data collection. Data collected during this study will be written in a journal and interview data will be recorded. The audio recorded interviews will be stored on a password protected laptop to be listened to again later to be analyzed. The audio files will be deleted immediately upon transcription. Transcribed data will be kept for two years after which time will be erased and the digital transcripts of the data deleted. See page 7 for the changes. See page 7 of the appendices

If you would like any further information about this project, please do not hesitate to ask at the end of the interview.

Likewise, if you have any concerns or questions throughout the interview, please do not hesitate.

- 1 Can you tell me about your employment here?
 - i. What is your position here?
 - ii. How long have you been employed here?
 - iii. Who do you work directly with?
 - iv. Do you enjoy working here?
- 2 How would you define ambush marketing?
- 3 What would you say are the main challenges posed by ambushing?
- 4 Have you ever had to deal with ambush marketing before?
 - a. If so can you tell me about that time?
 - b. Can you take me back through the emotions you were feeling?
 - i. Who was involved?
 - ii. Was there tension?
- 5 How closely do you work together with you colleagues in diluting the ambush marketing attempt(s)?
 - a. How are those relationships managed?
- 6 How closely do you work with the sponsor in diluting the ambush marketing attempt(s)?
 - a. How are those relationships managed?
- 7 What does stress mean to you?
- 8 How would you define a stressful situation at work?
- 9 Can you think back to a time where you were feeling stressed?
 - a. How did you feel?
 - b. How did you cope with the stress?
 - c. Why do you think you were stressed?
- 10 How likely do you think it is that sponsorship programmes you are involved in will be ambushed?
 - a. Does this make you feel stressed?

- b. How does this make you feel?
- 11 What does group cohesion mean to you?
- 12 Can you tell me about a time where you remember where the group was very cohesive?
- a. Why do you think this was?
- 13 How about a time where there was less cohesion?
- a. Why do you think that?
 - b. Does this make you feel stressed?
- 14 Who do you believe to be more important to have cohesion with, your fellow employees or your sponsors?
- a. Can you please explain?
 - b. Why do you think this is?
 - c. Is feeling stressed ever associated with these interactions?
- 15 Who would you say makes you more stressed when being ambushed – Employees or the Sponsor?
- a. Can you please further elaborate?

CLOSING STATEMENT: (read verbatim)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. May I contact you via email, if I have any further questions?

Following analysis of this recording, all records will be erased and destroyed.

At no stage will any specific details of this interview go beyond myself or any of the Supervisors at Brock University. However, anonymous quotations maybe used in the thesis where pseudonyms will be used to ensure for full confidentiality.

If you are interested, following the data collection stage I intend to will include stress management strategies and a summarized report of the participant observation and interviews responses, with the important themes that emerge.

Would you like to receive a copy of the strategies and/or summary? And if yes, where would you like it sent?

(Do not ask if they have already requested summarised report – do ask if they have not)

Yes: Both

No: Both

Yes: Strategies

No: Only Strategies

Yes: Summary

No: Only Summary

-Thank you very much for your time-