The Contemporary Sport Employee: An Examination of Sport Employee Identification (SEI)

By

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Abstract

The importance of sport employees is realized by the value they bring to sport organizations. As is with contemporary non-sport organizations, the duties and roles of all employees allow the organization to function properly and efficiently. Indeed, there has been a growing interest within the sport management discipline about the behaviors and attitudes of middle management employees (see Brimecombe, 2012; Oja, Bass, & Gordon, 2015; Swanson & Kent, 2015; Todd & Kent, 2009). The purpose of this dissertation was to specifically explore the concepts of Sport Employee Identification (SEI) brought forth by Oja et al. (2015). As part of this analysis, the two dimensions of Oja et al.'s (2015) SEI were retitled sport organizational identification and sport centric identification. To better understand SEI, it is important to ask how sport employees identify with their sport organization, how is such an identification cultivated, and how does this identification impact organizational outcomes.

To explore the concept of SEI, a psychometric instrument was created. The guidelines set forth by Churchill (1979) were utilized to stipulate a rigorous developmental procedure. A focus group, an expert panel, and three separate data samples (i.e., $N = 167$, $N = 244$, $N = 243$) were used to begin the process of validating the instrument. The results were indications that there was a multidimensional construct that represented SEI and the two dimensions were similar to what Oja et al. (2015) had initially posited. From there, hypothesized antecedents and outcomes were examined with structural equation modeling.

Two separate data collections (i.e., $N = 516$ and $N = 555$) – independent from the samples used to build the instrument – were used to statistically and theoretically investigate antecedents and outcomes related to SEI. Organizational, individual, and leadership antecedents were found to impact SEI at varying levels. Further, both dimensions of SEI did not have a

relationship with counterproductive work behaviors, while the sport organizational identification dimension did positively impact sport employees' job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and organizational citizenship behaviors. However, the sport centric dimension did not have any statistical impact on any of the outcome variables.

The results are signs that much work remains with the understanding of sport employees. Yet, there are several practical and theoretical implications. It appears that sport employees have an identification with the sport aspect of their organizations. While there are ways by which sport administrators can grow or improve their employees' degree of SEI, there are currently no known outcomes concerning the sport centric dimension. Future research is required to better understand the dimension and its possible outcomes.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The way by which sport employees identify with their sport organization has received little academic inquiry. Several scholars have attempted to alleviate the dearth of academic contributions regarding the identification of sport employees. Todd and Kent (2009) initially hypothesized that sport employees have a unique form of social identification. Their conceptual design surmised sport employees experience a form of positive social identification due to their affiliation with popular athletics organizations. A similar concept was later empirically tested and general support was found for the concept that sport employees do identify as employees and as fans with their sport organization due to the use of instruments that reflect such constructs (Swanson & Kent, 2015). Oja, Bass, and Gordon (2015) put forth a more specific form of social identification. The authors named their construct Sport Employee Identification (SEI) and described the construct as the psychological connection between sport employee and sport organization. In summation, Oja et al. (2015) hypothesized that SEI is a conglomeration of both an identification with sport (i.e., team identification) and organizational identification. Their position was strengthened by the inclusion of ethnographic data taken from employees of a large sport organization. However, SEI has yet to be quantitatively tested and requires further examination to measure validity and potential usage. Additionally, potential antecedent and outcome constructs and the degree of their relationship to SEI have yet to be quantitatively examined. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the SEI construct and its relationships with the proposed antecedents (e.g., individual, organizational, and leadership) and outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction and turnover intentions).

The development of a variable that describes how sport employees identify with their sport organization has implications that are valuable to both practitioners and to researchers. The

theoretical value of such a construct rests in the advancement of theory that specifically pertains to sport organizational behavior research. Scholars in the field of sport management have requested sport-specific theory (Chalip, 2006; Costa, 2005; Doherty, 2013; Fink, 2013). To that point, Chalip (2006) specifically noted that for sport management to become legitimized as an academic discipline there must be distinctive and unique elements. SEI offers such a theory as it focuses specifically on sport employees in sport organizations and is theorized to be conceptually different from both team identification and organizational identification. That is not to say that SEI and organizational identification are thought to be completely dissimilar – Oja et al. (2015) fashioned SEI to be partly inclusive of organizational identification. The inclusion of organizational identification is based on the premise that sport employees do feel a sense of belonging to their sport organization just as a non-sport employee would to their organization. However, the differentiation of SEI from pure organizational identification resides with the inclusion of a sport centric identification dimension. Here, the sense of belonging to a group is attributed to the connection to sport that a sport organization represents for a sport employee. Restated, SEI is a conglomeration of two dimensions – one that is similar to organizational identification (SO) and another that represents identification with sport (SC).

Additional theoretical value comes from Riketta's (2005) meta-analysis of organizational identification that called for more specific measures of organizational identification for similar groups of employees. The specific group that SEI is formulated to measure is the middle management of sport organizations. This categorization of sport employees allows for a nuanced exploration of a particular set of similar individuals. Scholars have begun to describe the positions of middle managers within the hierarchical structure of sport organizations by stratifying the employees of sport organizations. For example, Kent and Chelladurai (2001) put

forth a generalized typology of college athletics departments. Their generalized structure had

four levels. The top level consisted of the athletics director, the next level was comprised of

associate and assistant athletics directors, the third level had the second level's subordinates, and

finally the operating core was composed of coaches, staff, and athletes. Thus, the middle

management of sport organizations is confined to those employees who are neither in an

executive front office or athletics director position nor an athlete or coach and still have a full-

time position with a sport organization. That is, Kent and Chelladurai's (2001) top tier and

operating core are not included, but those positions in between comprise the middle management

sector of sport organizations. In terms of professional sport organizations, those individuals who

have executive duties are also not considered middle managers (e.g., General Manager, Vice

President of Operations) (Oja et al., 2015). Examples of middle management include Director of

Ticket Sales, Assistant Athletics Trainer, Head Equipment Manager, or Associate Director of

Compliance. Positions that are not considered to be middle management are Athletics Director,

General Manager, Director of Player Personnel, or owners (Oja et al., 2015).

In addition to the importance of the theoretical development of SEI, the construct has the

potential for significant value for practitioners due to the growing popularity of careers in sport.

The academic discipline of sport management has recently experienced a great deal of growth in

undergraduate and graduate programs (Belzer, 2014). Intuitively many of these students will

seek employment opportunities with sport organizations. It stands to reason that most, if not all,

graduates will at one time be classified as a middle manager (e.g., Assistant Athletics Trainer,

Associate Director of Ticket Operations, Director of Compliance) in a sport organization. The

development of a construct that measures their identification would likely support sport

management undergraduate and graduate programs and the matriculation of their students by

expanding the knowledgebase of sport employees. Additionally, Oja et al. (2015) explained that the empirical development of SEI would likely help sport organizations better manage their employees and even aide in the hiring of new employees. These reasons speak to the criticality of the development of SEI, which has been designed for a specific group of sport employees (i.e., middle management) (Oja et al., 2015).

The advancement of SEI will also help to fill a void in the academic literature pertaining to sport middle management employees. The past focus of sport employees in sport organizational behavior literature resides in groups such as coaches, athletics directors, and athletes (Cunningham & Rivera, 2001; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Turner & Chelladurai, 2005; Wells & Peachey, 2011). Specifically for sport middle managers, identity processes have been examined (Oja et al., 2015; Todd & Kent, 2009), others have used middle managers of a sport organization for their sample population for a study that focused on conflict triggering processes (Kerwin & Doherty, 2012), job satisfaction has also been investigated (Smucker & Kent, 2004), and scholars have studied the appeal of working in sport (Andrew, Todd, Greenwell, Pack, & Cannon, 2006; Todd & Andrew, 2008). Relatedly, sport employees have been found to have low levels of team identification, but those who do are less likely to commit negative work behaviors (Brimecombe, 2012). Still, improving the understanding of how sport employees identify with their sport organizations has the potential to further illuminate the relationship between sport employees and critical outcome variables such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions, and how other variables (e.g., relationships with employees, visibility of organization, leadership) impact sport employees' identification with their sport organization.

Both dimensions of SEI (i.e., organizational and sport) are thought to individually impact the relationships between SEI and other variables. Again, organizational identification is a key

component of SEI. Oja et al. (2015) heavily relied on both Ashforth and Mael (1989) and Mael and Ashforth (1992) to inform their definition and inclusion of organizational identification in the SEI construct. The insertion of organizational identification seems intuitive given that sport employees are posited to identify with their sport *organization*. In turn, it seems possible that some form of organizational identification occurs during the process of SEI. However, the true uniqueness of SEI is the presence of the sport centric identification. Essentially, Oja et al. (2015) argued that sport employees might experience emotional responses to the victories and defeats of the teams of their sport organizations – sport employees might become a fan of their sport organization's team/s. As such, both forms of identification (i.e., organizational and sport) are then likely to independently impact relevant variables (i.e., antecedents and outcomes of SEI).

The foundation for a conceptual model of SEI is illustrated in Figure 1. The model has three components. The first is the overarching construct that is SEI. This is the variable that describes how sport employees have a unique identification with their sport organization. The conceptual model is based on Oja et al.'s (2015) initial formation of the construct. The representation of the overall SEI construct is labeled as SEI in the model. The SEI construct is comprised of the other two components of the model – the two dimensions of SEI. These dimensions are the specific manners by which sport employees identify with their sport organization (i.e., sense of belonging). The first dimension is representative of how sport employees identify with their group (i.e., organization) and is similar to Mael and Ashforth's (1992) initial organizational identification construct. This dimension is represented as SO in the model. The second dimension symbolizes how sport employees have a unique identification with the sport aspect of their organization. Initially, this construct was thought to be similar to the Wann and Branscombe (1993) team identification construct. However, through the development

of the instrument it became apparent that this dimension is autonomous from team identification and was thus named the sport centric dimension of SEI. This dimension is signified as SC in the model. These two dimensions are correlated and constitute the SEI construct.
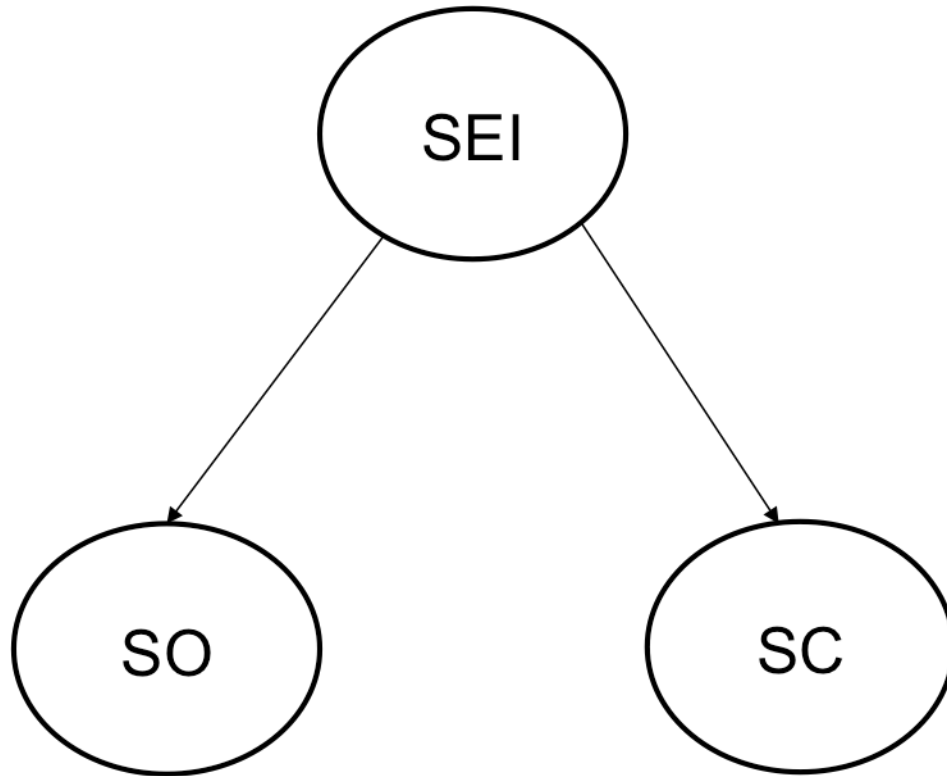
Figure 1. Conceptualization of SEI.

Theoretical Framework

The development of the SEI construct is a critical first step in the understanding of the construct's relationships with other variables. The usefulness of the SEI construct is manifest in its application to a variety of sport organizations and relevant relationships from antecedents and outcomes. The theoretical framework for such relationships is a near replication of the model proposed in Oja et al. (2015). The authors posited that SEI would have antecedents from three sources. The first form of antecedents was individual in nature. The authors listed tenure, person-organization fit, relationships with employees, and sport interest as individual antecedents. The organizational antecedents are represented by perceived success, perceived prestige, perceived

distinctiveness, and the perceived visibility of the organization and its teams/departments. The

last form of antecedents is leadership antecedents and is represented by Bass's (1985)

components of transformational leadership: charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individual

consideration.
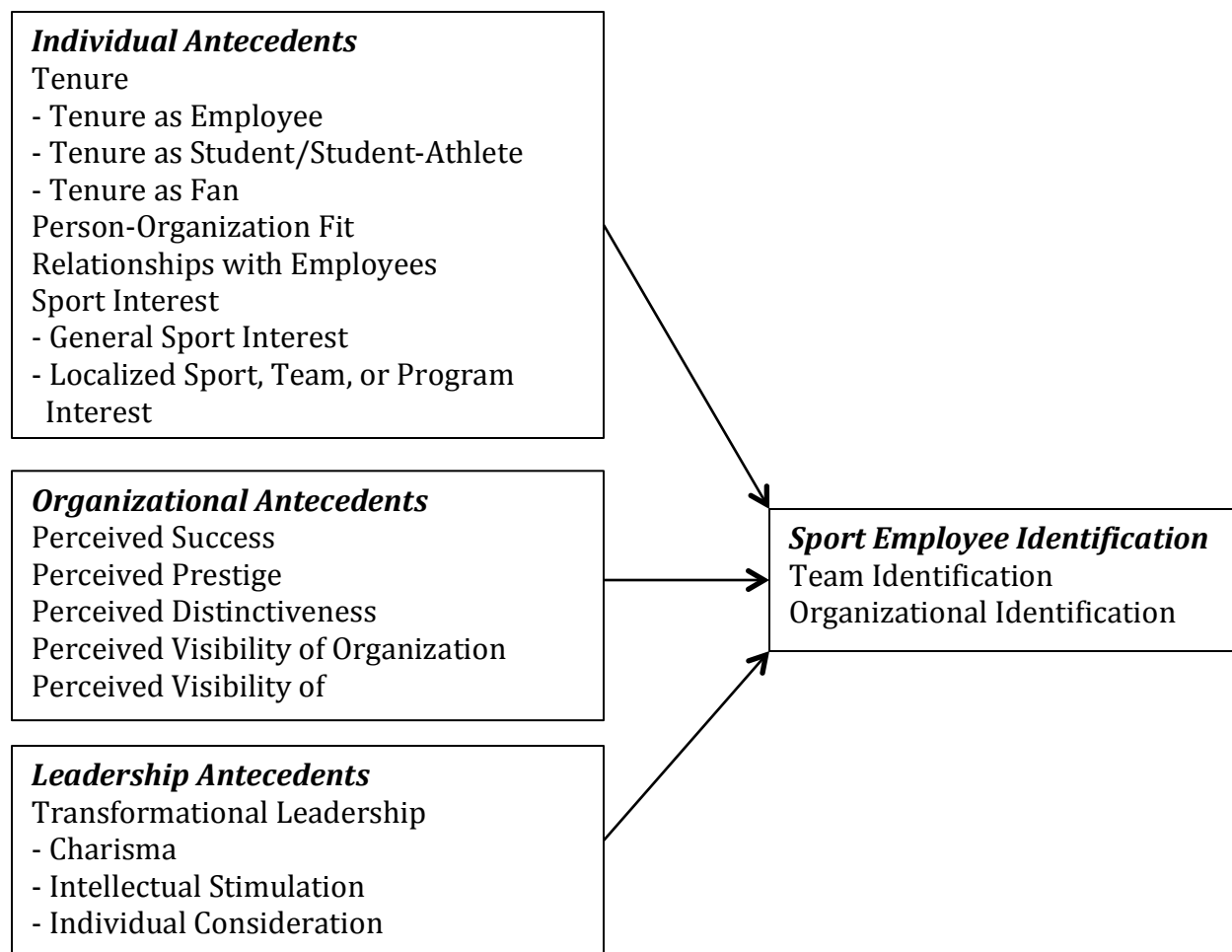
Figure 2. Sport Employee Identification (SEI) Theoretical Model. Taken from
"Conceptualizing employee identification with sport organizations: Sport Employee
Identification (SEI)," by B. D. Oja, J. R. Bass, and B. S. Gordon, 2015, *Sport Management
Review, 18*(4), p. 585. Copyright 2015 by Elsevier Ltd. Reprinted with permission.

The current model includes the updated SEI model and antecedents – sans tenure – from

Oja et al. (2015), and includes outcome variables. One outcome variable is counterproductive

work behaviors. These behaviors are negative in nature and diminish the productivity and moral

of the workplace. Next, job satisfaction is thought to be an outcome that is influenced by SEI. Job satisfaction is the degree to which an employee is pleased with their role in an organization. Another outcome is turnover intentions, which are the desire of the employee to permanently leave the organization. Turnover of employees has serious negative financial and cultural ramifications for organizations (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000). The final outcome variable is organizational citizenship behaviors. These are actions that employees do for the betterment of the organization and at the cost of their own resources.

Statement of the Problem

Sport employees are beginning to receive more academic inquiry (see Andrew et al., 2006; Brimecombe, 2012; Kerwin & Doherty, 2012; Oja & Bass, 2016; Oja et al., 2015; Swanson & Kent, 2015; Todd & Andrew, 2008). However, the burgeoning popularity of sport employees in academic literature is still rife with shortcomings. Previous academic investigations of sport employees have failed to yield an empirical explanation for their identification processes. To date, the unique identification of sport employees has only been theorized or measured via previously established instruments that are not specifically designed for sport employees. Rather, these instruments were created to measure general business or management employees' cognitive identification processes or their identities as sport fans. Unfortunately, assuming sport employees identify as fans of their sport organization's teams is not a valid proposition (Brimecombe, 2012). In short, little is known about how sport employees identify with their sport organization. This study addresses those limitations with three separate studies. First, a specific instrument to measure SEI is developed. Second, hypothesized antecedents of SEI are tested. Third, potential outcomes of SEI are examined. Yet, a detailed discussion of the

background of sport employees, SEI, related antecedents, and potential outcomes are necessary

to fully understand the scope of the SEI construct.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The following review begins with an examination of sport employees. From there the discussion transitions to general identity theory, social identification, of which both organizational and team identification originate. After social identity theory, organizational identification is studied. The organizational identification section includes a review of the antecedents and outcomes associated with organizational identification due to its proximity to SEI. Team identification follows and focuses on the development of the construct. Then the subject matter transitions to the concept of competition. The theme of identification through a connection to sport as a larger social edifice is continued with a review of identification as an athlete. Afterwards past developments with sport employee identification are examined in detail. Finally, potential outcomes of SEI are put forth.

Sport Employees

A majority of sport management literature has been focused on the roles of coaches (e.g., Chelladurai & Ogasawara, 2003; Dixon & Pastore, 2003; Dixon & Warner, 2010; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 1996; Oja, Schaeperkoetter, & Clopton, 2015) and athletic directors (Doherty, 1998). However, there have been various attempts to better understand the less visible members of sport organizations. These sport employees, found in the middle of Kent and Chelladurai's (2001) sport organization's hierarchical structure, are the employees that were the focus of Oja et al.'s (2015) work, and were referred to as the middle managers of sport organizations. Middle managers within the traditional organizational setting have received a substantial amount of academic inquiry. Scholars have focused on the complexities and challenges that face middle managers (Dopson & Stewart, 1990), their strategic involvement (Floyd & Wolldridge, 1992; Guth & MacMillian, 1986; Wolldridge & Floyd, 1990; Wooldridge,

Schmid, & Floyd, 2008), and general satisfaction of middle managers (Porter, 1961). In all, middle managers have been found to be critical components of organizational processes.

　　While academic investigation is sparse, it is likely that such employees are equally important to sport organizations. Early examinations of sport employees were centered on non-traditional sport organizations. For example, one population consisted of fitness center employees (Koehler, 1998) and another consisted of sport management program graduates (Parks & Parra, 1994). Other scholars have focused on the attraction of jobs in sport for students and the assumed prestige associated with jobs in the sport industry (Andrew, Todd, Greenwell, Pack, & Cannon, 2006; Todd & Andrew, 2008). The job satisfaction of sport employees has been a popular topic for scholars (Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, Kent, & Turner, 2005; Kim, Magnusen, Andrew, & Stoll, 2012; Koehler, 1998; Parks & Parra, 1994; Smucker & Kent, 2004). The results of the studies are mixed with some supporting the notion that sport employees are satisfied and others suggest the satisfaction is limited to certain aspects. Turnover intentions of sport employees have also been investigated (Cunningham, Fink, & Sagas, 2005).

　　More recent academic work has been fixated on the theoretical development of sport employees. The social identity of sport employees has been theorized to be a unique form of identification (Oja et al., 2015; Todd & Kent, 2009). The Todd and Kent (2009) model of sport employee identification is labeled as a positive social identity that arises from working in the sport environment. Oja et al. (2015) proposed that sport employees have a unique identification with their sport organization due to traditional organizational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992) and a connection to sport, which was thought to be closely related to team identification (Wann & Branscombe, 1991, 1993). Scholars have previously used the Wann and Branscome (1993) instrument to measure the level of fandom among sport employees

(Brimecombe, 2012) and outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, work motivation (Swanson & Kent, 2015), and counterproductive work behaviors (Brimecombe, 2012). Swanson and Kent (2015) found that organizational identification and team identification would predict organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, and work motivation in sport employees. Brimecombe (2012) noted a lack of team identification of sport employees, but that team identification and counterproductive work behaviors had a negative relationship. Although substantial progress has been made to develop a theoretical understanding of sport employees much work remains. To better understand sport employees a thorough review of the theories associated with SEI follows.

Identity Theory

The framework of SEI rests within the sphere of social identity theory (SID). However, one must understand the general theory of identity to fully grasp the concept of SID. Identity, as described by Jenkins, is "the human capacity – rooted in language – to know who's who (and hence 'what's what')" (2006, p. 5). Further, Jenkins provided three additional baseline definitions. First, identity signifies the ways an individual or collective distinguish themselves from other individuals or groups. Second, "Identification is the systematic establishment and signification, between individuals, between collectives, and between individuals and collectives, of relationships of similarity and difference" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 18). This second definition essentially designates identification as a means for individuals or groups to liken and contrast themselves with others. The third definition noted that similarities must be taken as one, and that they form the core of identification. Jenkins went as far to describe similarities and differences as the "dynamic principles of identification" (2008, p. 18).

These dynamic principles require action. Jenkins (2008) emphasized that identity is not a thing, but rather it is a *process* that one must go through. This process of identification is further supported through rituals and customs that reinforce one's identity (e.g., attending one of the organization's sport events with coworkers). Jenkins explained that people use identification as a cognitive mechanism, basically one uses identification to help make sense of his or herself. In turn, the process of identification provides one with the ability to distinguish themselves from others. Jenkins (2008, p. 5) explained that the process of identification involves knowing oneself, knowing whom others are, the others knowing who we are, and one knowing what others think we are. Without having an understanding of who one is, it is impossible to make a distinction between oneself and another. For example, one must see himself or herself as an employee for identification as an employee to take shape.

The process of identification obliges one to understand similarities and differences (Jenkins, 2008). Jenkins stated that differences are not enough to establish identification alone; one must also understand similarities. Restated, comprehending that another person is not a group member or that they are not similar to another individual does not fully create an identity. According to Jenkins, establishing an identity is greatly benefited by an understanding of the shared similarities. One must observe another's behavior, posture, mentality, or tone to understand our sense of self. Mead (as cited in Jenkins) supported this idea in that individuals need to see how others view themselves to fully understand his or herself. Further, Goffman (as cited in Jenkins) explained that while individuals cannot control how others view themselves, many still strive to appear in a specific manner to others. Restated, individuals are concerned with how others view them and this has a direct impact on how one identifies. The understanding of the views of others and how that affects one's perceptions is what Jenkins (2008) described as

the process of identification. To this point, Jenkins explained that, "Selfhood is thoroughly socially constructed" (p. 40) and that "Identity is never unilateral" (p. 42). The process of identity, even for the self, is a mechanism of the understanding of oneself based on the associations and interactions one has with other individuals and groups.

The feedback received from others might influence one to change their identity depending on the environment. Mead (as cited in Burke and Stets, 2009) drew the connection between perceptions of self and corresponding action. Broadly, an individual is likely to alter their identity, or even environment, in order to help better understand the self. However, alterations to identity need not focus solely on the individual. Rather, the identity of an individual might guide one's behavior with respect to others. Mead (as cited in Burke and Stets, 2009) suggested that a baseball player must know the self and the identities of teammates as well as opponents in order to properly diagnose the correct course of action. Yet, once the game is over the baseball player might shed his baseball player identity for another (i.e., father, son, husband, bachelor). The idea of multiple self-identities has been credited to William James (Burke & Stets, 2009). However, it is Stryker who is known for a hierarchical view of identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). According to Burke and Stets (2009), Stryker believed that "Identities are person's internalized role expectations in the sense that individuals take these expectations to be their own, as part who they are. For each role a person plays out in a social network, there is a corresponding identity attached to it" (p. 45-46). In turn, individuals will likely chose an identity that fits their self-view. As an example, a sport employee might enact an identity that is related to sport and competition while at the work place as it fits the environment.

Further, there is an order to one's multiple identities. That is, identities are prioritized. Burke and Stets (2009) proposed that prominence and salience help one determine when to

evoke or retain a given identity. The salience of an identity is related to how often the identity is utilized, and the prominence is related to the importance of the identity to the individual. Therefore a male is likely to retain his father identity at home, but he might also evoke that identity at his workplace when showing pictures of his children to his coworkers (Burke & Stets, 2009). Thus, one's choice of identity, which is very dependent upon internal factors, is seen through external behaviors. Behavior has been thought to confirm identification (Burke & Stets, 2009). A sport employee who takes time out of his or her day to watch an event in which his or her organization's team is participating would confirm their current identity as a sport employee of the sport organization. Accordingly, one's behaviors allow for an understanding of what one's current identity is. However, one's identity is not simply a name given to a set of behaviors, it is a process.

The aforementioned Jenkins' (2008) position that identification is a process can be operationalized as Burke and Stets' (2009) four components of identification. The first component is the *identity standard*. This component provides a gauge for an individual to determine a response to a given stimulus. Burke and Stets (2009) used gender as an example as an identity standard. A male might view himself as more masculine than other males. This level of masculinity would be considered the identity standard. When an individual is met with stimuli (i.e., inputs) it is up to the individual to determine how to respond to the stimuli given their identity standard. Burke and Stets (2009) described inputs – the third component – as perceptions. An individual will perceive a given situation, and then the third component – the comparator –compares the current input perception to the established identity. The results of the identity process results in the outputs or behavior – the final component – of the individual. The behavior is a reflection of the individual balancing out the situation to his or her identity

standard. This process is akin to an employee who is highly identified with their organization (i.e., identity standard) that finds themselves discussing the performance of the organization with a group of friends who are not employees of the organization. If the conversation begins to focus on the negative aspects of the organization (i.e., perception/input) the employee must compare the current environment to his or her identity standard in order to decide how to react (i.e., comparator). In this scenario, a highly identified employee would likely attempt to defend the organization (i.e., output/behavior) if the organization is under admonishment by others. One's inclination to fix the incongruences between their identity and the perceptions of their current environment guides the process of identification and consequent behavior. Confirmation and reinforcement of one's approved and accepted identification is a vital aspect of human behavior as it has lead to positive social outcomes (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Individuals seek to have their identity confirmed or reinforced by their own behaviors or the behavior of others (Burke & Stets, 2009). Burke and Stets (2009) provided a hypothetical scenario of a trucker driver that uses his or her own resources to improve their truck. This action by the hypothetical truck driver demonstrates a reinforcement of his or her identity as a truck driver. This example is similar to a basketball player buying new shoes to reinforce their identity as an athlete, or a sport employee buying a polo that displays the logo of their sport organization to support their identity of an employee of that particular sport organization. Burke and Stets (2009) explained that the process of identification and the subsequent behaviors' dominant purpose is to conform situations so they match up with a given identity. This process often entails an individual committing resources to confirm or support a desired identity. Thus, identification is broadly a means to control one's perceptions of signs and symbols (i.e., inputs). Consequently, one's identity changes the way one views a given situation (Burke & Stets, 2009).

This concept denotes the salience of identity theory for all social sciences. Burke and Stets' (2009) viewpoint that individuals change the way they view inputs to better fit their identity standard provides scholars with a plethora of research angles by which to study human behavior. All humans have identities; some are more salient than others (i.e., gender or race) while others are more discreet (i.e., morning person or bird watching enthusiast). Nonetheless, identities are present and some identities surface more often than others. Thus, all sentient beings have different identities for different environments, and individuals will alter their behavior in an attempt to transform the environment so their identity standard is in congruence with their present situation.

Another sign of the significance of identity theory is the immense amount of academic research dedicated to the theory. The scholars of organizational behavior have devoted much attention to the concept of identity. Specifically for sport management scholars, identity theory has been used in the form of the variable known as team identification (Wann & Branscombe, 1991, 1993). Additionally, organizational behavior researchers in the business discipline have utilized the concept of organizational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992) to explore the consequences of identified employees. Team identification and organizational identification, as well as SEI itself, originate from a specific form of identity theory: social identity theory.

Social Identity Theory

Tajfel (as cited in Hogg & Terry, 2012) first posited social identity theory (SIT). The theory is predominantly utilized as a means to explain an individual's ability to form an identity based on their group membership or association and the emotional value the individual places on the membership (Hogg & Terry, 2012). Defined, social identity is the "…*part* of an individual's

self-concept which derives from his (sic) knowledge of his (sic) membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). Hence, membership to a group has a direct effect upon an individual's self-concept. Tajfel described the essence of SIT "as an individual's image of himself (sic) – positive or negative – which derive from his (sic) membership of groups that are salient to him (sic)" (1978, p. 8). The salience of group membership is a key feature to social identity theory. Group membership, both beneficial and unfavorable aspects, contributes to one's self-concept (i.e., identity) (Tajfel, 1978). Thus, social identity might be seen as an extension of one's view of themselves. As opposed to an identity as a father or mother, SIT is related to an individual's membership to a group and how such a membership helps inform their identity. Group membership can range from but is not limited to inclusion in a social group, formal organization, or being a fan of an organization. The membership to such a group helps form an identity based on being a part of such a group by providing an association with a larger edifice to draw from or to promote one's identity (Burke & Stets, 2009; Hogg & Terry, 2012; Tajfel, 1978). Yet, membership to a group is not an arbitrary endeavor.

Tajfel (1978) stated that group membership requires (i.e., is derived from) comparisons with other groups. To differentiate groups one must understand what constitutes a group. Three aspects, cognitive – the understanding that one belongs to a group, evaluative – the value of being in the group, positive or negative, that is held by the individual, and emotional – the connection and emotions shared with the group and group members that are related to the group are the basis of group membership (Tajfel, 1978). The cognitive aspect simply requires an individual to recognize that they are a member of the group, an employee who is allowed into his or her organization's building and spends the day at work would likely recognize they belong to

an organization. The evaluative aspect provides a function to an individual to measure the worth

of belonging to a particular group. Lastly, the emotional function speaks to the draw of

relationships with others within the organization. This aspect allows for an individual to realize

group inclusion due to relationships with others within the organization. Moreover, Ellemers

(2012) concurred with and supported Tajfel's (1978) three aspects of groups. However, the three

components do not always behave in similar ways. An individual might experience strong

feelings towards two of the three components, but less so or even negatively towards a third

component (Ellemers, 2012). For example, one might highly value their membership (evaluative)

and accept their group inclusion (cognitive), but they might not be very committed to the group

(affective). While the components might not produce similar reactions it is difficult to remove a

component and still accurately describe in-group identification (Ellemers, 2012). Understanding

that one belongs in a group is vital to SIT. However, one must still be able to differentiate

between groups in order to fully experience SIT.

　　　Social categorization, as described by Tajfel (1978), represents the individual's

organization of and ranking of the social groups to which they belong. An individual first must

cognitively understand and accept group membership. From there, the categorized social groups

are evaluated by the individual based on a value approximation based on their how close the

group aligns with the individual. The resulting discrepancy, or value differentiation, serves as the

means by which an individual categorizes their social groups (Tajfel, 1978). Tajfel explained that

"This interaction between socially derived value differentials on the one hand and the cognitive

"mechanics" of categorization on the other is particularly important in all social divisions

between 'us' and 'them'" (1978, p. 62). Restated, this facet of social categorization is related to

differentiation between groups. Social identity is dependent upon an individual to differentiate

between the various groups to which they belong, as the theory explains partial features of an individual, which are related to specific partial features of social behavior (Tajfel, 1978). Consequently, one must be able to separate their group memberships for social identification to occur. Further, Berger (as cited in Tajfel p. 63-64) explained that individuals eventually come to understand that their identities are socially defined. That is, individuals need social groups to truly understand their identities and memberships to social groups provide a means for one to comprehend their identity.

Group membership, as it is related to SIT, has several consequences. Tajfel (1978, p. 64) described four prominent outcomes of group membership. The first consequence is how individuals constantly seek positive social identities. Individuals are likely to maintain memberships that bring them some form of satisfaction. Restated, individuals want to join groups that make them feel better about themselves. The second outcome is that individuals will seek to leave a group if said satisfaction or positive contributions to their social identity begin to diminish. Third, if leaving a group proves to be difficult individuals will attempt to alter their interpretation of the group to better fit with the individual's personal beliefs or values. Individuals might also attempt to change the views of the group as a whole. Lastly, the fourth outcome suggests that everyone, in some fashion, is a member of various groups and thus positive SIT requires meanings from the groups that one belongs to, which allows one to draw significance from the groups to which one is a member of.

The final outcome posited by Tajfel (1978) presents the need for distinction between groups. Comparing groups to one another allows for positive aspects of social identification (Tajfel, 1978). A member of a sport organization must be able to recognize that his or her membership to their organization does not include membership to another sport organization. For

example, a positive contribution to a sport employee's social identity might be some form of vicarious achievement. Such an event would require distinctive boundaries to a group and the understanding that the sport employee is positioned within the boundary of the sport organization. The blurring between the lines that differentiate organizations would seemingly complicate vicarious achievement and other forms of positive contributions to one's social identity. This is why Tajfel (1978) explicitly noted that it is group differentiation and distinction that allows one to draw significance from the groups they belong to. Without such distinctions, positive features of social identity become greatly limited. The need for distinction of social groups reiterates the usefulness of social categorization as it allows one to understand how an individual defines their group membership. This intersection between social identity and social categorization denotes the relationship between the constructs and their importance in understanding how individuals make sense of the groups to which they belong.

Jenkins (2008) also purported the salience of distinctions and boundaries between groups. Specifically, there are two means of viewing collectivity (i.e., group or social identifications) (Jenkins, 2008). The first view is similar to Tajfel's (1978) cognitive aspect of identification, as one might recognize their inclusion within a collective. The second viewpoint is that individuals are unaware or oblivious to their group membership. Rather, the membership is determined by others labeling an individual (Jenkins, 2008). Although the vicarious grouping is a means of categorization, identification requires an individual's cognitive acceptance. Jenkins (2008) explained that, "Group identification is the product of *collective internal definition*" (p. 105), and categorization is external. Further, Jenkins (2008) also supported the idea that social identifications are a product of individual's understanding of similarities and differences. However, categorizations are thought to be the building blocks for identification (Jenkins, 2008).

In Jenkins' (2008) view, categorization is an external process. Other individuals place others into groups or categorizations. Thus there are no relationships between the individuals within the categorization. Yet, identification, as an internal process, is a cognitive awareness and acceptance of group membership and this leads to relationships between individuals within the group. Further, such relationships between members might not be understood or known by the individuals, but they can recognize their shared membership (Jenkins, 2008). Hence, once members begin to realize their relationships within a category the genesis of identification commences (Jenkins, 2008).

Shared relationships between group members might begin the process of identification, but differentiation and the comparing of groups strengthens identification (Jenkins, 2008). Group comparison provides meaning to membership (Jenkins, 2008). Not only must members share a bond or relationship, but also the bond or relationship has to be meaningful for identification to occur (Jenkins, 2008). Further, Jenkins went on to broadly surmise that SIT focuses on how groups emerge from categories with an emphasis on inter-group processes.

Burke and Stets (2009) viewed SIT as a function of depersonalization – a removal of individuality – and emphasis on a collective body or group. As Tajfel (1978) posited, there is a unique positive identification that results from identification with a group. Burke and Stets (2009) positioned positive social identity as individuals wanting to join groups as a means to feel better about him or herself. The drive to feel better about oneself by joining groups creates the notion of 'we' for an individual who positively identifies with a group. The notion of 'we' verse 'them' further strengthens the mentality of group independence (i.e., in-group verses out-group), which exasperates the differences between groups (Burke & Stets, 2009). The process of identification requires distinctive groups, and Burke and Stets (2009) along with Tajfel (1978)

emphasized the differences between groups when they noted the criticality of the positive aspect of SIT. Individuals, by seeking group membership to improve their own cognitive reflections of themselves, yearn for being a part of an entity that is greater than the individual. This is not unlike the concept of a team or an organization being greater than the sum of its parts. Sport organizations provide an excellent vehicle for one to experience positive social identification (Todd & Kent, 2009). An employee of a sport organization would likely clearly note the distinction between their organization and others with different colors and logos. Additionally, sport provides a tangible means to provide significance to membership (e.g., trophies, media accolades, public recognition).

Hogg and Terry (2012) described the premise of SIT as social categories or groups by which individuals who are members of or feel as if they are within such a category retain a definition of themselves based on inclusion with the group. Further, the self-definition must be related to the premise of the group: "a self-definition that is a part of the self-concept" (Hogg & Terry, 2012, p. 3). The idea that individuals garner a self-definition via their membership to a group provides a means for behavior regulation. It is this mechanism, behavior regulation, that allows for individuals with a strong social identity to differentiate between in-group practices and out-group practices (Hogg & Terry, 2012). As the social identity is infused with the self-concept an individual will begin to regulate their behavior based upon the normative guidelines of the group (van Knippenberg & van Leeuwen, 2012). This helps an individual to better differentiate between their group and other groups. In effect, as the salience of the identity increases so will the behavior pattern, which then intensifies the distinction between groups for the individual (Hogg & Terry, 2012).

Social identities also have an evaluative function, which is a consequence of social identity's combination of distinct groups and the influence on self-concepts (Hogg & Terry, 2012). The evaluative aspect of social identity serves as a means to compare the success of one's group to that of another. In the words of Hogg and Terry (2012),

> Because social identities have these important self-evaluative consequences, groups and their members are motivated to adopt behavioral strategies for achieving or maintaining ingroup-outgroup (sic) comparisons that favor the ingroup (sic), and thus the course of the self (p. 3-4).

In turn, the evaluative feature of social identities promotes the positive identity desire of individuals. Hogg and Terry (2012) explained that the desire of positive identification is a result of the socio-cognitive process known as self-enhancement. This is due to individuals' assumed need to view him or herself in a favorable manner when comparing themselves with others. Accordingly, in a group environment one might make comparisons between the in-group and related out-groups in a fashion that would be beneficial to the in-group (Hogg & Terry, 2012).

In Tajfel's (1978) view, it is the categorizations that are compared and evaluated by an individual (i.e., in-group verses out-group). Once the distinctions and comparisons have been made, an individual is likely to view the in-group in an ethnocentric manner (Tajfel, 1978). Essentially, the group becomes an extension of the self, and the group is therefore another means for an individual to compare themselves with others in a manner in which will be favorable to the individual and thus promote and improve their concept of self. This process – known as the *self-esteem hypothesis* (Abrams & Hogg, 1988) or *positive distinctiveness* (Tyler, 2012) – emphasizes the relevance of social identities and their value for individuals.

Improving an individual's self-esteem or self-concept is one potential benefit of SIT. Another related benefit is that a social identity helps one remove uncertainty about the self-concept. Hogg and Abrams (1988) explained that individuals use the salient features of the group to help define the important features of him or herself. This is part of the reason that athletes join sport teams and highly intelligent individuals wish to attend prestigious academic institutions (Tyler, 2012). Jost and Elsbach (2012) broadly described SIT as concept that explains how individuals garner a significant amount of meaning and value from group memberships. Further, the self-concept is based upon how group memberships are viewed by the individual and others.

Hogg and Terry (2012) also described how SIT affects uncertainty. Specifically, "social identity processes are also motivated by a need to reduce subjective uncertainty about one's perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors, and ultimately one's self-concept and place within the social world" (Hogg & Terry, 2012, p. 6). Uncertainty reduction is a significant motivation for all individuals as certainty evokes confidence in behavior and provides meaning to one's existence (Hogg & Terry, 2012). Thus, social identity processes allow an individual to better understand himself or herself by providing an outlet to join a group or groups that will exude salient features of their self-concept as well as promoting uncertainty reduction and the related benefits of certainty of self. Additionally, the promotion of the positive features of group membership known as self-enhancement, and uncertainty reduction to the self are thought to be independent motivations as some circumstances might call for an individual to pursue uncertainty reduction rather than self-enhancement (Hogg & Terry, 2012). For instance, a sport employee might be more inclined to identify with their prestigious sport organization if his or her own self-esteem is lacking. Conversely, a sport employee in need of certainty might relish the structure of a sport organization and the specific role the sport employee has within the structure.

Organizational Identification

SIT is relevant for almost any group, but organizations have seen a great deal of academic inquiry with SIT as the theoretical approach. Jenkins described organizations as "networks of identifications – individually and collectively – which influence strongly who does what within those procedures, and how" (2008, p. 169). Additionally, organizations have two forms of distinctions, in-group verses out-group and various identities within the organization (Jenkins, 2008). Relationships within organizations are products of similarities and differences, and that membership within organizations has a noteworthy impact on the constitution of individual's identities (Jenkins, 2008). Jenkins went as far as to proclaim that one of an organization's fundamental roles is to contribute to one's identities, "Whatever else organisations (sic) do, they do identification" (2008, p. 170).

Other scholars have focused on an explicit form of identity that is derived from being a member of a specific organization. Ashforth and Mael's (1989) seminal work with organizational identification (OID) posited the construct as a specific form of social identity theory. The pair would later describe the OID construct as "the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual *defines* him or herself in term of the organization(s) in which he or she is a member" (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). Ashforth and Mael (1989) noted that one's organization might be able to provide an answer to one's self-definition. Further, the authors surmised that an individual would experience the key features of Tajfel's (1978) conceptualization of SIT in the organizational setting as an organization would provide distinction, comparison, and therefor a positive social identity. Social identification within an organization might be garnered from an individual's "work group, department, union, lunch group, age cohort, fast-track group, and so on" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 22).

Essentially, this thought informs that organizational identities come from, at least in part, micro groups formed within an organization as opposed to solely the entire organization.

One of Ashforth and Mael's (1989) proposed antecedents of OID, competition, is particularly salient to this discussion. Competition allows for and strengthens organizational barriers and distinctions (van Knippenberg, 1984). The effects of competition on organizational members has also been described as "Win-lose, zero-sum competitive relations between groups, in particular, enhance the salience of group boundaries and produce negative feelings toward and stereotypes about the other group" (Gaertner, Bachman, Dovidio, & Banker, 2012, p. 268). Further, competition is expressly prominent within sport. The nature of sport includes ideals such as competitions and specific and defined teams competing against each other. Moreover, constructs such as basking in reflected glory (BIRGing) (Cialdini et al., 1976), cutting off reflected failure (CORFing) (Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986), and cutting off future failure (COFFing) (Wann, Hamlet, Wilson, & Hodges, 1995) display the intersection between competition and sport organizations. The three aforementioned constructs describe how symbolic members of organizations that are strongly identified with the organization (i.e., avid sport fans of a specific team) alter their behavior, or more specifically identity processes, based upon the outcome of competition. Restated, the results of organizational competitions between an individual's parent organization and their contemporaries allow for positive, or potentially negative, identification processes.

Mael and Ashforth (1992) operationalized their earlier conceptualization of OID (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and provided proposed antecedents and outcomes of OID. The authors utilized four prominent features of SIT to inform their conceptualization of OID. First, they viewed identity as a cognitive concept. Second, organizational identification is relational and

comparative. These first two features are similar to Tajfel's (1978) description of SIT (i.e., one must understand and accept membership and group comparisons create meaning). Third, the comparing of groups leads to positive social identification or increased self-esteem (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). Fourth, the strength of one's realized identification to a group is a matter of different levels (i.e., there are different degrees of identification). Additionally, Mael and Ashforth (1992) differentiated occupational identification from OID. Occupational, or professional, identification is a description of how one derives their self-concept based upon the specific work that they do, as opposed to creating their self-concept from the organization they work for (i.e., organizational identity). Further, occupational or professional identifications are not specific to a specific organization while OID does require a specific organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

Mael and Ashforth (1992) posited that organizational distinctiveness, organizational prestige, inter-organizational competition, and intra-organizational competition would be organizational antecedents of the six item OID measure. Additionally, organizational tenure, length of membership, number of comparable organizations joined, existence of mentor, satisfaction with organization, and sentimentality would serve as individual antecedents of OID. Mael and Ashforth (1992) showed that organizational distinctiveness, organizational prestige, and intra-organizational competition were significant predictors of OID. Interestingly, inter-organizational competition was not found to be a significant antecedent of OID. Also, tenure, satisfaction, and sentimentality were shown to be significant predictors of OID. Further, OID predicted relevant outcomes, such as organizational consequences, which were defined as support for the organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The outcome variable, support for the organization, was broken down into three sections: financial contributions, advising offspring

and others to attend their alma mater (i.e., organization), and participating in alumni and university (i.e., organizational) functions. OID was found to predict, at varying levels, all three sections of the support for organization variable. Additionally, OID was a partial mediator of the antecedents on the support for organization variable (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

While Ashforth and Mael (1989) and Mael and Ashforth (1992) are seminal pieces of literature, they are not the only conceptualizations OID. For instance, Pratt (2012) explained that, in general, organizational scholars seek to comprehend how an organizational member or employee relates to the organization. Earlier, Pratt (1998) described how OID occurred when "an individual's beliefs about his or her organization become self-referential or self-defining" (p. 172). Additionally, Mael and Ashforth's (1995) reworking of the Mael and Ashforth (1992) scale has been viewed as overly focused on public expressions of identification and lacking in subjective meanings of identification (Abrams & de Moura, 2012). Also, Ellemers (2012) noted that Mael and Ashforth (1992) specified the term identification as relevant to cognitive processes (i.e., understanding and accepting group membership) and put less emphasis on affective features. Other OID measures have focused on individual's feelings in relation to their membership to the organization, and the subsequent of the meaning of the organization to that individual (Abrams & de Moura, 2012). Tyler (2012) noted how the "attributes central to the organization" (p. 155) are what permits individuals to identify with the organization and consequently derive a positive social identity from the association. Thus, the features of an organization must be relevant to the identification process. Restated, for an individual to garner a positive social identity from an organization, the organization must have meaningful and germane properties.

Other scholars have emphasized the involvement that personal interactions have on organizational identity (Bartel & Dutton, 2012). This concept is based on organizational membership as a consequence of social and interactive processes (Snow & Anderson, 1987), and a basic need and desire to identify with others. Bartel and Dutton (2012) explained "the need to form and maintain interpersonal relationships with others is a fundamental human motivation that drives identification with social groups" (p. 116-117). This assertion is based on research from the fields of social psychology (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and evolutionary psychology (Caporael, 1997; Stevens & Fiske, 1995). Relationship formations appears to be a feature of identification in the organizational setting, and additionally after relationships are formed individuals will go to great lengths to preserve and maintain their connections with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Consequently, "Social interactions constitute another mechanism through which individuals may come to perceive themselves as organizational members" (Bartel & Dutton, 2012, p. 118), and thus spur organizational identification. To that point, exclusion from others in an organization and also the removal of daily interactions is likely to decrease identification with the organization (Bartel & Dutton, 2012). The relationship between social interaction and identification with an organization is not surprising given that much of one's identity is derived from others (Bartel & Dutton, 2012). Individuals gain an understanding of themselves based on feedback and input from others (Jenkins, 2008). With regards to OID, organizations are thought to provide an environment by which an individual not only constructs and informs their self-definition, but also gains a better understanding of their place within the collective (Bartel & Dutton, 2012).

Outcomes of Organizational Identity

Conceptually, the idea that OID predicts behavior is valid as OID informs the self-definition and thus one's behavior is at least partially governed by the identification with the organization (van Knippenberg & van Leeuwen, 2012). Ellemers' (2012) example of sacrificing personal interests for the organization is just one form of possible outcomes of OID. In addition to Ellemers' (2012) suggested behavioral consequences of OID, other scholars have researched other outcomes of OID. The prediction of behavioral consequences of OID has been thought to generally relate to members' desire to help and improve the parent organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Some of the most commonly researched behavioral outcomes associated with OID are turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs).

Turnover intentions are thought to be devastating to organizations for a variety of reasons (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 1996; Watrous, Huffman, & Pritchard, 2006). Specifically, turnover intentions are thought to lower profits and weaken organizational morale (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000) and generally weaken organizational performance (Watrous et al., 2006). Past scholars have found a link between OID and turnover. Abrams, Ando, and Hinkle (1998) found that those with higher levels of organizational identification were less willing to leave their job. Mael and Ashforth (1995) have also asserted that OID decreases turnover intentions. Further, Abrams and de Moura (2012) found that OID was the most salient predictor of turnover intentions in their multi-national study. Moreover, in a separate sample OID was a stronger mediator of job satisfaction to turnover intentions than job satisfaction as the mediator and OID as the independent variable (Abrams & de Moura, 2012). These findings reinforce the importance of OID with regards to turnover intentions. The connection between OID and turnover intentions is evident due to the circumstances by which a member would feel as if the organization is a part of their self-definition, which a highly identified member would. One who,

at least in part, defines him or herself based on their association with a group would be unlikely to partake in any activity that distances themselves from the group. Accordingly, the idea of leaving such an organization would either be a very arduous decision or the decisions might not even be taken under consideration (Abrams & de Moura, 2012).

As previously mentioned, OCBs have also been found to be an outcome associated with OID. Todd and Kent (2006) generally described OCBs as "those sets of individual behaviors that contribute to the social and psychological context in which the task performance of a job must function" (p. 253). More specifically, Schnake (1991) defined OCBs as "those behaviors which are not formally prescribed, but yet are desired by the organization" (p. 736). Others have used phrases such as extra-roles (Kent & Chelladurai, 2001) and extra work behavior (Bateman & Organ, 1983). Essentially, OCBs are the acts that employees do for an organization that are not required of them (e.g., staying late, coming in early, volunteering, etc.).

Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) posited that higher levels of OID would lead to more OCBs. This was based on the assumption that there is a strong connection between how an individual defines him or herself and their organization. Thus, a member is able to serve both themselves and the organization at once. In effect, this lessens the burden of performing OCBs and makes them more advantageous. Past researchers have found that OID does predict OCBs indirectly (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000) and directly (Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Dukerich, Golden, & Shortell, 2002; Kramer, 1993; Pratt, 1998; Tyler & Blader, 2000). Also, Moorman and Blakely (1995) noted how individuals who shared collectivist values, a similar concept to identification, were more likely to produce OCBs. Extra role behaviors (i.e., OCBs) represent a willingness to sacrifice personal resources (i.e., time, effort) to enhance the well being of the organization. An individual who is identified with an organization sees the organization as a part

of their self-definition. The willingness to go above and beyond to help improve an organization is more likely to occur when the individual performing the extra role behaviors believes that the extra efforts are for the betterment of the organization *and* themselves. It is the identification with the organization that likely facilities the OCBs. Hence, the relationship between OID and OCBs appears to be theoretically and empirically valid.

Job satisfaction has also been posited as an outcome of organizational identification. The construct has been described as "best viewed as a collection of attitudes about different aspects of the job and work context" (McShane & Steen, 2009, p. 85). Others have defined the construct as "an attitude people have about their jobs" (Chelladurai, 1999, p. 230), or as "an attitude towards specific aspects of the concrete job and tasks one has to perform" (Van Dick et al., 2004, p. 352). Essentially, job satisfaction signifies the level of contentment and fulfillment of an individual with regards to their role in the organization. Job satisfaction is a result of agreement with compensation, relationships with coworkers, or job characteristics (Van Dick et al., 2004). The relationship between OID and job satisfaction has been summarized as "Identification with the 'we'…allows individuals to experience satisfaction (to gain utility) from success of the unit" (Simon, 1991, p. 36). Also, OID is likely to affect job satisfaction as

> "employees with a strong organizational identity perceive their job as proof of their organizational membership, and therefore as validating those part of their self that stem from this membership. Furthermore, they could evaluate their job positively because this is consistent with their organizational identity. Job satisfaction in turn influences the most concrete attitude towards the organization" (Van Dick, 2004, p. 353).

Van Dick et al. (2004) found, in four separate samples, that OID influenced (i.e., predicted) job satisfaction. Also, OID has predicted job satisfaction in professional sport employees (Swanson

& Kent, 2015). Thus there is evidence, theoretical and empirical, that OID can predict pertinent and critical outcome variables for organizations. This is likely a result of an individual's perception that the organization supports building and maintaining their self-definition. Restated, the membership to the organization is relevant and vital to the individual and thus their behaviors will reflect the salience of the membership to the individual.

Another form behavior that is related to OID is counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). This set of behaviors – in the form of deviance – is defined as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in doing so threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both" (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 556). Scholars have debated the requirement of (Gruys & Sackett, 2003) or absence of (Spector & Fox, 2007) intent for CWBs. Restated, CWBs are behaviors that promote negative consequences for the organization and its members (Collins & Griffin, 1998; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Spector & Fox, 2007; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). The negative consequences associated with CWBs go beyond financial implications. CWBs also affect workplace turnover, absenteeism, and morale (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keshley & Jagatic, 2003).

The connection between OID and CWB has had limited direct empirical analysis. It has been posited that strong identification would lead to lower workplace deviance in the form of crimes against the organization (Vadera & Pratt, 2013). The authors also suggested that strong identification would increase crimes that would *benefit* the organization. Their argument was theoretically based – an individual that is highly identified with an organization would consider him or herself to be a part of the organization. Therefore it stands to reason that such an employee would avoid harming the organization and by proxy themselves. Membership to the group would be important to a strongly identified employee, and jeopardizing that membership

goes against the principles of OID. Vadera and Pratt (2013) noted that over-identified individuals – those that lose much of their individual identity and replace it with their organizational identity – would over conform and commit crimes to benefit the organization.

The negative link between OID and CWBs has some empirical validation. As a moderator between psychological capital and CWBs, OID has been found to be negatively correlated with CWBs (Norman, Avey, Nimnicht, & Graber-Pigeon, 2010). The authors noted the importance of building OID to lower or prevent CWBs (Norman et al., 2010). Other scholars utilized the inverse of OID (i.e., organizational disidentification) to examine its relationship with CWBs. The authors found that organizational disidentification was positively correlated with CWBs, thus OID was negatively correlated with CWBs (Bolton, Harvey, Grawitch, & Barber, 2012). Further, when compared to emotional exhaustion, organizational disidentificaiton was a stronger predictor of CWBs (Bolton et al., 2012). The results of past scholarship indicate that there is a negative relationship between OID and CWBs.

Team Identification

Sport organizations are unique organizations as they provide a product that is tangibly measured and compared against the products' of their rival sport organizations. These tangible means of measurement for success might be viewed as the performances of the organization's teams. Oja et al. (2015) argued that employees of sport organizations are, at least in part, fans of their sport organization's teams and this phenomenon impacts their identification with their sport organization. This position has had mixed results from previous examinations. One analysis of professional sport employees reported that nearly 30 percent of the participants had very low levels of fandom and two percent had very high levels of fandom for their organization's team (Brimecombe, 2012). Other scholars noted general support for the notion that sport employees

are fans of their organization's team/s (Swanson & Kent, 2015). To describe fandom of sport

employees the variable known as team identification (TID) – developed by Wann and

Branscombe (1991,1993) – will now be examined.

Team identification, like organizational identification, is a specific form of social identity

(Wann, 1997). Madrigal and Chen (2008) conceptualized team identification as a "psychological

alignment with a team" (p. 718). Wann and Branscombe (1991) noted how the construct

provides a sense of belonging and relationship with a larger social edifice. The connection stems

from an individual (i.e., sport fan) perceiving a vicarious membership with the sport

organization. Much like those who identify with an organization using the term 'we' (Mael &

Ashforth, 1992) sport fans that identify with a sport team/organization refer to the team as 'we'.

Restated, sport fans view sport teams as a replication of themselves (Wann, Melnick, Russell, &

Pease, 2001). Heere and James (2007) posited that fans see themselves as members of the

organization (i.e., team). Team identification represents a connection between a fan and a team

(Funk & James, 2001). Further, for a fan that is highly identified with their team "the team is

important, the team is representative of personal beliefs and values" (Funk & James, 2001, p.

140). It is those personal beliefs and values that inform the social identity of team identification.

Wann and Branscombe (1993) suggested that fans of sport teams have different levels of

identification. That is, less identified fans have a small amount of their self-concept that is

fulfilled by team identification, and highly identified fans consider their identification with their

favorite team to be a central component of their self-definition (Wann et al., 2001). In turn, these

different levels of identification were thought to produce a subsequently diverse set of reactions

and behaviors to the outcomes of athletic contests that involve a fan's favorite team. These

behaviors and reactions range from positive (e.g., BIRGing) (Cialdini et al., 1976) to negative

(e.g., CORFing) (Snyder et al., 1986). Further, Wann and Branscombe (1990) noted that highly identified fans are more likely to maintain their association with their favorite team than those with moderate or low levels of identification. Moreover, highly identified fans demonstrated greater levels of excitement during athletic contests than fans with low team identification (Branscombe & Wann, 1991). Also, highly identified fans were found to be more demeaning to fans of the opposing team. Wann et al. (2001) also made the negative connection between fans and the rival teams. Fans are likely to revel in the demise of the rival of their favorite sport organization. Restated, fans are likely to experience pleasure from watching a hated rival team lose, even if the fan's favorite team is not involved in that particular contest (Mahony & Howard, 1998).

Wann and Branscombe (1993) noted that highly identified fans demonstrated a number of attitudes and behaviors including: being more involved and willing to spend money on the team, more positive about the attributes of the team, and viewing their fellow fans of the team as special. Madrigal and Chen (2008) utilized team identification to determine the judgments and attributions of fans after a sporting contest. They found a self-serving bias on the part of the fans. Essentially, highly identified fans attributed victories to internal factors, and that their team would likely win again if the two teams played. Other researchers found that highly identified fans accredited a loss by their favorite team to external circumstances (Wann & Dolan, 1994a; Wann & Schrader, 2000), but Madrigal and Chen (2008) did not find this connection. In a testament to the construct's psychological connection between the sport organization and its fans, Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson, and Kennedy (1992) found that fans interpreted the success or lack thereof of their favorite sport organization as their own individual victories or defeats. The responses of identified fans are not surprising given TID's roots in SIT and the previously

mentioned trend for identified individuals to glorify in-group members and processes while degrading out-group members and processes. Other results that internalize the success or failure of sport teams (e.g., Hirt et al., 1992) demonstrate how fans view the achievements and disappointments of the teams as their own, which is also a key principle of SIT.

Another realm of team identification that involves the behavior of fans is a consequence of the results of competitive contests. As previously mentioned BIRGing (Cialdini et al., 1976), CORFing (Snyder et al., 1986), and COFFing (Wann et al., 1995) all describe various behaviors that are associated with the results of athletic competitions. BIRGing refers to a positive response by an individual due to his or her team's victory or accomplishment. Restated, fans share in the accomplishments of the team that they identify with vicariously. This reaction might involve a range of behaviors and attitudes such as a feeling of personal victory, rushing the field after a critical victory, or buying merchandise with the logo of the team. CORFing is the inverse of BIRGing as it involves distancing oneself from the failure of a loss of an athletic competition. Individuals who CORF will remove clothing that brandishes the logo of the team, leave an athletic contest before completion due to impending failure, or even feign disinterest in the team after the loss. Less identified fans are more susceptible to CORFing, while highly identified fans might be immune to the effects of losing (Wann et al., 2001). COFFing represents the idea that some individuals will brace themselves for a potential defeat in a future competition. Wann et al. (2001) described the theory as the prevention of BIRGing and the displacement of themselves from the team to avoid the potential ramifications of a defeat. COFFing is somewhat akin to modesty. Fans who COFF will downplay past victories and suggest the upcoming competition will not result in a favorable outcome, avoid watching a contest, or elude functions or gatherings that are designed to excite the fan base. These behavioral aspects of team identification represent

the intersection between competition and identification. All three constructs involve the outcome or potential outcome of athletic competitions. Thus the idea of competition warrants further discussion.

Competition was thought of as an antecedent to Mael and Ashforth's (1992) conceptualization of OID. Specifically, competition was framed to relate to the clashes between one's organization and their contemporaries. Mael and Ashforth (1992) based their inclusion of competition as an antecedent of OID on Brown and Ross (as cited in Mael and Ashforth, 1992) and Friedkin and Simpson's (as cited in Mael and Ashforth, 1992) conclusions that competition accentuates group boundaries and differences in general are accentuated. Thus, identification is amplified. As previously mentioned, competition is also imbedded in the team identification variable (i.e., BIRGing, CORFing, COFFing). The concept that competition is an aspect of organizational identification implies that sport employees might value other forms of athletics. Thus, athlete identity could play a role in the identification of sport employees.

Athlete Identity

An individual's athlete identity has been defined as "the degree to which an individual identifies with the athlete role (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993, p. 237). This suggests that an 'athlete identity' is a role identity, which is based on the specific duties and responsibilities of the position (Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998). A natural role and duty of an athlete is to compete. Accordingly the notions of competition and viewing oneself as an athlete appear to be intertwined. Brewer et al. (1993) provided the first conceptualization of athlete identity as a unidimensional construct, but Webb et al. (1998) later proposed a multidimensional model. This conceptualization consisted of two components: public and private identities. The public component is related to how others view the person as an athlete. The private identity is focused

on how the individual has internalized the role of an athlete and how the role as an athlete then influences the self-definition (Webb et al., 1998). The definition of the private identity would suggest that anyone who is currently or was an athlete at one time would potentially have an athlete identity. The private identity component is the more pertinent of the two as an individual's internalized view of themselves as an athlete is more relevant to informing an identity as a sport employee. The position that a public identity as an athlete would not be of concern to sport employees is based on previous research (Brewer et al., 1993; Greendorfer & Blinde, 1985; Houle, Brewer, & Kluck, 2010, Miller & Kerr, 2003).

In general, scholars have found that athlete identification wanes as one grows in age. Restated, as individuals begin to reach an age that does not accommodate competitive sport, their identification as an athlete begins to diminish. More specifically, athlete identity remains strong through young adulthood, but once individuals leave competitive sport involvement then their identity as an athlete begins to fade (Houle et al., 2010). Also, athletes who were cut from a team had diminished athlete identity compared to those who made the team (Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004). Shachar, Brewer, Cornelious, and Petitpas (2004) compared former athletes who went into the coaching profession to those athletes who did not. Former athletes who went on to become coaches were found to have higher levels of athlete identity than those were not coaches. Thus, a profession that involves employment with a sport organization might allow one to retain an identity as an athlete.

It is conceivable that a sport employee would retain some of their self-definition as an athlete because of their direct or indirect involvement in the competitive nature of sport through the window that a sport organization provides to the realm of competitive sport. By being provided an opportunity to work in sport, sport employees are then given the benefits of having

their desire for competition and athlete identity fulfilled. Further, while the idea that individuals become coaches, at least in part, to fulfill their desire to think of themselves as an athlete has been reviewed (Shachar et al., 2004), there has been no academic research conducted which tests whether other staff members join sport organizations to retain a similar identity.

Based on the previous discussion of identification, an individual has a high athlete identity when their athlete role is particularly salient to their self-definition. Further, Callero (1985) noted that an individual who has a prominent athlete identity would gain self-esteem from positive displays of their athletic acumen. Presumably, a sport employee who retains such a level of an athlete identity would also gain satisfaction or positive reinforcement to their self-esteem through victories by the sport organization to which they are a part of. This proposition encapsulates the intersection between organizational, team, and athlete identity.

Sport Employee Identification

As previously noted, little research has been conducted on the idea that sport employees have a unique identification (e.g., Oja et al., 2015; Swanson & Kent, 2015; Todd & Kent, 2009). The argument that sport employees have a distinctive identification with their sport organization is grounded in the belief that sport is the mechanism that drives sport employees to have a palpable connection to their sport organization. Sport, and the concept of competition that comes with it, is a unique entity in and of itself. Further, sport offers individuals a variety of outlets for entertainment (Wann et al., 2001). Todd and Kent (2009) hypothesized that sport employees might experience a distinct identification because of a sport organization's reputation and the public's willingness to celebrate their successes. In turn, measuring sport employee's identification solely with organizational identification scales would likely fail to capture all of the unique variance that is associated with being a sport employee. The antecedents and

outcomes associated with this unique identification have previously been empirically examined with the use of OID and TID constructs (Swanson & Kent, 2015).

Todd and Kent (2009) proposed two levels of antecedents for their model of positive social identity in their conceptual paper. In general, the authors posited that working in a prestigious and well-known organization would lead to a positive social identity and thus improve an employee's self-esteem. Construed external image and member attraction were projected to be precursors to positive social identity. Oja et al. (2015) suggested that individual, organizational, and leadership antecedents would contribute to one's sport employee identification. The Todd and Kent (2009) model positioned construed external image as a collection of firm reputation, popularity of the firm, and social prestige of the firm. The member attraction antecedent consisted of membership benefits and person-organization fit. The Oja et al. (2015) model, which included qualitative data from sport employees, proposed variables grounded in theory and variables based upon the data obtained from sport employees. Swanson and Kent (2015) proposed that prestige, distinctiveness, and fit would predict OID and TID. It was discovered that distinctiveness and fit predicted their respective form of identification (Swanson & Kent, 2015). Many antecedents from the three models are similar, but the Oja et al. (2015) model provided a more nuanced definition for the identification of sport employees (i.e., a specific variable for sport employees as opposed to just OID and TID). Thus, the Oja et al. (2015) model of sport employee identification deserves a thorough review.

The SEI model (i.e., Oja et al., 2015) contains a wide range of antecedents. The individual antecedents consist of person-organization fit, relationships with other employees, and sport interest. Further, sport interest is split between two constructs: general sport interest and localized sport, team, or program interest. Moreover, both of the sport interest constructs were

based on the qualitative data gathered for the study. The other individual antecedents were based on previous theory.

The organizational antecedents include perceived success, perceived prestige, perceived distinctiveness, perceived visibility of the organization, and perceived visibility of the team or department. Only perceived visibility of team or department was informed by the qualitative data gathered. These antecedents are quite similar to Todd and Kent's (2009) positive social identity model. Most are similar to construed external image. Thus, theoretically it appears that the notoriety of the sport organization might play a role in the identification with the sport organization. The last section of the sport employee identification model is dedicated to transformational leadership. The three dimensions of transformational leadership were based on Bass' (1990) description of the construct. Those three dimensions are charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. These three sets of constructs were proposed to be antecedents for Oja et al.'s (2015) variable: sport employee identification. SEI was initially posited to be a composite of team identification and organizational identification.

Each proposed antecedent in the SEI model was included based on either inductive or deductive analysis. The rational for the proposed antecedents warrants review. First, PO Fit is generally thought of as the alignment of values between the member and the organization (Yaniv & Farkas, 2005). Kriener and Ashforth (2004) argued that individuals become more identified with their organization when they feel an alignment with the organization. Cable and DeRue (2002) noted a strong relationship between OID and PO Fit, and posited that when members of organizations do not share in the same values as their organization, such employees will find it difficult to identify with the organization. Further, sport employees have commented that their shared values with their sport organization allowed them to identify with the organization, and

that sport itself was constructed as one of those shared values (Oja et al., 2015). Further, Oja et al. (2015) suggested that sport employees and sport organizations will have different sets of values, and when those value sets match up then a sport employee is likely to identify with that sport organization due to value congruence. Fit with organization and team has been found to influence identification with sport employees (Swanson & Kent, 2015).

Hypothesis 1 (H₁): Person-organization fit will predict improved SEI.

Relationships with other employees have several possible functions. One could view the construct as a form of social capital as sport employees seek to foster and create bonds with their fellow sport employees. Also, the construct might be viewed as social cohesion and trust. Sport employees that find unity and fellowship with other sport employees will likely be more inclined to identify with their sport organization (Oja et al., 2015). Muchinsky (1997) made the connection between communication amongst organizational members and positive organizational identification. Further, cognitive organizational membership is greatly aided by interpersonal relationships (Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade, & Williams, 1986). Additionally, Bass, Gordon, and Kim (2013) posited that the regularity and strength of friendships between university alumni would likely improve university identification. Moreover, the participants of Oja et al.'s (2015) interviews suggested that the relationships between sport employees aided in their identification with the organization. For example, one sport employee explained, "If you love what you are doing, you love the people around you, it will kind of become a part of you" (Oja et al., 2015, p. 591). Restated, as one builds social relations within a network they are likely to feel more connected and a part of an organization, which is a key tenant of social identification (Bartel & Dutton, 2012). Thus it appears as if positive relationships and cohesion with other sport employees may lead to SEI.

H₂: Positive relationships with employees will predict improved SEI.

The final individual antecedent, sport interest, is included based on the inductive analysis of data collected from sport employees (Oja et al., 2015). Also, the authors suggested that sport interest should be divided into two aspects: general sport interest (national and international sport teams and leagues) and localized (teams with the sport employee's organization). Most of the sport employees interviewed by the authors proclaimed a general sport interest, and some noted that the ability to be connected to a sport organization served as a point of pride and identification. Other employees were hired as a result of their local sport interest. The lone employee who did not have much of a sport interest did not identify with the organization and was actively seeking a position outside of sport. A sport interest is likely to influence SEI as it will likely aid in the fulfillment of being a member of a sport organization. A sport employee who has a sport interest would likely be more identified with a sport organization because of their sport interest. Hence, sport interest might support a sport employee's identification.

H₃: Sport interest – generally and local interest – will predict improved SEI.

Organizational antecedents represent constructs that are derived from the organization itself as opposed to the individual and in turn influence SEI. The first proposed organizational antecedent is perceived organizational success. As previously described, past research has allowed for a better understanding of individuals' reactions to the success (i.e., BIRGing) or lack thereof (i.e., CORFing) of organizations to which they choose to affiliate with. The idea that the success of a sport organization influences a sport employee is grounded in TID literature (cf. Wann & Dolan, 1994b). Fundamentally, those sport employees who experience their sport organization's successful endeavors will likely be predisposed to a higher SEI. Restated, sport employees will likely attribute the sport organization's successes as their own thus leading to

higher levels of identification (cf. Hirt et al., 1992). The sport employees from the Oja et al. (2015) study demonstrated behaviors akin to excitement and pride while the teams associated with the sport organization performed well. Thus, the perceived organizational success could be viewed as a measure of performance (Delaney & Huselid, 1996).

H_4: Perceived organizational success will predict improved SEI.

Prestige is the accumulation of past success over vast periods of time, while success is more short-term in nature and is derived from single moments (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Accordingly, COFFing and prestige are connected. Fans who COFF are concerned with the long-term outlook of their teams and so they avoid positive emotions related to the future endeavors of the team. Conversely, fans that support teams who have a long-standing tradition of excellence (i.e., prestige) are unlikely to COFF. Thus, sport employees who work for prestigious sport organizations are not likely to COFF. Further, sport employees, much like non-sport employees, are more likely to identify with their organization because it is viewed as prestigious (cf. Mael & Ashforth, 1992; March & Simon, 1958; Reade, 2001). Indeed, sport employees have noted that they take pride in working for a prestigious sport organization (Oja et al., 2015).

H_5: Perceived organizational prestige will predict improved SEI.

Distinct organizations are also thought to contribute to SEI. Distinctiveness allows an organization to separate themselves from other organizations in the same environment. In general, distinctiveness supports the central foundations of identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Mael and Ashforth (1992) found that distinctiveness was an antecedent of OID and further explained that distinctiveness "differentiates the organization from other organizations and provides a sharper and more salient definition for organizational members" (p. 107). Furthermore, distinctiveness is considered to be a vital component of SIT (Tajfel, 1978). This

reasoning can be applied to sport employees, as distinctiveness should support their

identification with their sport organization. Furthermore, sport employees' identification is likely

to benefit from employment with an organization that is well-known and thus distinct from other

sport organizations in the same community such that a sport employee who works for a local

National Basketball Association team should enjoy more distinctiveness than a sport employee

who works for the local minor league baseball team (Oja et al., 2015). The uniqueness of the

association should lead to the increased identification. Moreover, Reade (2001) commented that

social identity implies that membership to a distinctive group will positively effect self-esteem.

Distinctiveness has been found to predict the identification of sport employees (Swanson &

Kent, 2015). Lastly, Oja et al. (2015) found mixed results in terms of distinctiveness as an

antecedent of SEI. Some sport employees specifically remarked that working for a unique sport

organization improved their identification with the sport organization, but for other employees

the unique association was of little consequence.

H_6: *Perceived organizational distinctiveness will predict improved SEI.*

Visibility is the final proposed organizational antecedent of SEI. Visibility is construed as

an indication of the volume of organizational accomplishments and consequently their notoriety.

Therefore it is posited that sport organizations that have many visible accomplishments will

positively influence SEI. This position is based on Fisher and Wakefield's (1998) advice that

those organizations that enjoy a significant amount of success and notoriety should emphasize

their accomplishments to foster identification, and organizations with less external notoriety

should focus on internal accomplishments. Smidts, Pruyn, and Van Riel (2001) found that

visibility, in the form of prestige, predicted OID. To that point, little research has been conducted

on this form of the visibility construct. Also, few scales have been created to measure the

visibility of organizations (Fuller et al., 2006). Potentially the most concrete connection between identification and visibility of an organization resides in the ethnographic study done by Oja et al. (2015). The participants discussed the perceived visibility of the sport organization at length. Additionally, the sport employees noted how they desired more visibility for their specific department within the organization. This led the participants to identify themselves as members of the overall organization as opposed to the specific department within the organization. This occurrence is not surprising given that Reade (2001) explained that there are different points for identification depending on the environment. Further, Ashforth and Mael (1989) contended that various identities would be activated depending on the importance held by the individual. This notion seems to indicate that the visibility antecedent should be split into two constructs: organizational and team/department.

H_7: *Visibility of the organization and team/department will predict improved SEI.*

Oja et al. (2015) posited that transformational leadership should be considered an antecedent of SEI. Transformational leadership is considered to be "the process of influencing major changes in attitudes and assumptions of organizational members and building commitment for the organization's mission and objectives" (Yukl, 1989, p. 204). Restated, transformational leadership is thought to motivate employees in their daily activities at work. Further, transformational leadership might invoke higher expectations, create higher ideals and values, and improve effort and performance of followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bryman, 1992; Tichy & Ulrich, 1984; Yukl, 1989). The variable is construed according to Bass's (1990) conceptualization of the construct, which includes four dimensions. Bass (1990) described the four dimensions as charisma: "provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust", intellectual stimulation: "promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem

solving", individual consideration: "gives attention, treats each employee individually, coaches, advises", and inspiration: "communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses important purposes in simple ways" (p. 22). However, Kent and Chelladurai (2001) warned of reliability issues due to multicollinearity problems with the inspiration dimension.

Oja et al. (2015) used the remaining three dimensions in their classification of transformational leadership. Charismatic leadership has previously been connected to identification (Carmeli, Gilat, & Waldman, 2007). That is, organizational leaders who devise a value system or standards that are accepted by the employees will spur identification with the organization as the values or standards are then internalized which produces the improved identification (Carmeli et al., 2007). Previous studies have noted the link between intellectual stimulation and individual consideration and improvements in identification for the collective (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004) and organization (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Martin & Epitropaki, 2001). Leadership influences identification as the leadership improves the individual's sense of belonging to the organization. This occurs though the specific attention paid to the employee by the supervisor. This is the base of the theoretical support for the notion that transformational leadership impacts identification, and is likely to affect SEI. The data retrieved by Oja et al. (2015) supported the notion that Bass's (1990) dimensions of transformational leadership do impact SEI. Specifically, charismatic leadership and individual consideration were found to improve a sport employees' identification with their sport organization.

H_8: *Charismatic leadership will predict improved SEI.*

H_9: *Individualized consideration will predict improved SEI.*

H_{10}: *Intellectual stimulation will predict improved SEI.*

While the antecedents are likely to predict sport employee identification, there are also organizationally relevant outcomes associated with SEI. Conceptually, SEI should predict relevant outcomes. SEI is likely to be utilized with employees of sport organizations. Accordingly, the focus of outcomes for SEI should be relegated to those similar to OID. This rationale follows the suggestions of Oja et al. (2015), Swanson and Kent (2015), and Todd and Kent (2009). Thus, in line with the aforementioned research associated with the outcomes of OID, SEI is henceforth proposed to predict a variety of outcomes previously associated with OID.

Organizational citizenship behaviors are likely to be a consequence of sport employee identification. The relationship between OCBs and SEI is grounded in previous literature that pertains to organizational identity. As previously mentioned, organizational identification has previously shown to predict OCBs and is theoretically supported due to the individual being able to simultaneously help themselves and the organization when performing extra role behaviors. Further, as noted above, sport employees are likely to feel a unique connection with their sport organization, as the presence of sport (i.e., team identification, competition, connection to sport) creates the uniqueness for membership in such an organization. In turn, this unique membership with the sport organization is likely to be significant to the sport employee. This concept is reflected in the findings of Gilson, Pratt, Roberts, and Weymes (as cited in Todd & Kent, 2009). Todd and Kent (2009) likened Gilson et al.'s findings to sport employees feeling as if they belong to exclusive clubs that provide benefits, tangible and intangible, to the employee. Consequently this environment will possibly foster the saliency of membership and sport employees will likely reciprocate the positives of group membership with extra effort on the job.

As such, a sport employee from Gilson et al.'s (as cited in Todd & Kent. 2009) work noted the salient membership and the resulting motivation to work harder than usual.

H_{11}: *SEI will predict an increase in OCBs of sport employees.*

Turnover intentions are another proposed outcome of SEI. Turnover intentions, much like OCBs, have a strong history of results that suggest that organizational identification is a predictor. Thus, the rational to include turnover intentions as an outcome of SEI is similar to the rational for the inclusion of OCBs. The unique membership and resulting advantages of membership are likely to persuade a sport employee to remain employed in the current sport organization. As far as leaving one sport organization for another, the relationships built within the organization, which is a component of social identity and accordingly SEI (Bartel & Dutton, 2012), will likely result in sport employees remaining with the current organization. Past scholars have confirmed a negative relationship between identification and turnover intentions (Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998; Abrams & de Moura. 2012; Mael & Ashforth, 1995). Restated, sport employees who are highly identified with their sport organization will be unlikely to leave their current sport organization due to their resulting relationships and affinity with their particular organization. To that point, advantages at one sport organization might not be the same or similar in another sport organization.

H_{12}: *SEI will predict lower turnover intentions of sport employees.*

Job satisfaction is anotherl proposed outcome for sport employees who are highly identified with their sport organization. Todd and Kent (2009) hypothesized that sport employees are likely to derive satisfaction from their identification with sport organizations due to sport's popularity and cultural significance. Further, the authors speculated that sport organizations might be well served by providing affiliation materials (e.g., shirts that have the organization's

logo). Moreover, this strategy might be equally important as compensation adjustments when attempting to build job satisfaction. Todd and Kent (2009) surmised that sport employees draw satisfaction from contextual elements of their jobs (i.e., outsiders captivation with sport creates significance for the sport employee to be associated with the sport organization). Restated, sport employees are likely to be satisfied with their jobs because it is *cool* to work for a sport organization. The satisfaction is a result of the association or alignment with the organization, and thus identifying with the sport organization would drive the satisfaction. Furthermore, past studies have found that OID predicted job satisfaction (Swanson & Kent, 2015; Van Dick et al., 2004). Thus, it is expected that high levels of SEI will predict high levels of job satisfaction.

H_{13}: *SEI will predict higher job satisfaction of sport employees.*

The final hypothesized outcome of SEI is CWBs. As previously discussed, CWBs have been theoretically (Vadera & Pratt, 2013) and empirically linked to OID (Bolton et al., 2012; Norman et al., 2010). Additionally, the construct has also been linked with TID. Past scholars have examined if sport employees are fans of their organization's teams and if there is a relationship between sport employee fandom and CWBs. In an examination of CWBs of professional baseball sport employees, it was discovered that TID had a significant negative correlation with CWBs (Brimecombe, 2012). This indicates that being a fan of the team that one works for might not have negative outcomes from the emotional reactions from fans of sport (i.e., BIRGing, CORFing, COFFing). Further, others found that being a fan of the team that represents the professional sport organization would lead to positive outcomes for the organization (Swanson & Kent, 2015). Both of the examinations utilized the Wann and Branscombe (1993) instrument to measure the fandom of sport employees. While being a fan of a sport organization has caused traditional fans to emotionally react to the outcomes of sport

contests (i.e., BIRGing, CORFing, and COFFing), it does not appear as if there is empirical evidence to support the notion that having fans as employees will lead to CWBs. Therefore, it is expected that SEI will have a negative relationship with CWBs.

H_{14}: *SEI will predict a decrease in CWBs of sport employees.*

With its roots in SIT, sport employee identification is a unique construct designed to measure a specific group of individuals. The combination of organizational and sport related (i.e., team identification and athlete identification) identifications supports the uniqueness of the proposed construct. The next step to better understand SEI is to measure the variable empirically. To do that, an instrument to measure SEI is first developed. The specific scale to measure SEI will allow researchers to gain a more precise understanding of sport employees' identification with their sport organization. As previously discussed, sport employees have received little academic inquiry despite the growing popularity of sport employment opportunities. The growing volume of sport management programs around the world signifies the increasing interest of employment in sport (Belzer, 2014). This measure will allow for the examination of the effects of antecedents on SEI and related work outcomes. In turn, sport management researchers will be able to provide critical analyses pertaining to the identity of sport employees and the precursors and consequences that are related to their identification with their sport organization.

Chapter III: Methodology

Quantitative methodology was utilized to measure the hypotheses that are related to the antecedents and outcomes of SEI. In turn, the research design was non-experimental as there was no mechanism for intervention employed. Before SEI's potential antecedents and outcomes were measured, an instrument needed to be constructed to quantify the construct. Therefore, Study One describes the process by which the instrumentation of SEI was conceived. Study Two consists of the measurement of the proposed antecedents of SEI, and Study Three is the examination of the projected outcomes of SEI.

Study One

To build a reliable and valid measure of SEI, Churchill's (1979) scale building procedure was utilized. The stages of Churchill's (1979) process are as follows:

- Stage One: The specification of the domain of the construct. At this stage, the researcher should explicitly determine what is within the realm and what is outside the realm of the given construct. Churchill suggested the use of developed theory via past literature as a guide to forming the definition of the construct.

- Stage Two: Generation of an initial set of items. Churchill prescribed the use of past literature or focus groups to aide in the creation of items.

- Stage Three: Collection of data using the aforementioned items.

- Stage Four: The researcher purifies the measure based on the results of the initial data collection.

- Stage Five: Collect data once again. This collection of data is used for a rigorous analysis to judge the viability of the items.

- Stage Six: Conduct a reliability assessment of the measure.

- Stage Seven: Perform a validity assessment of the measure.
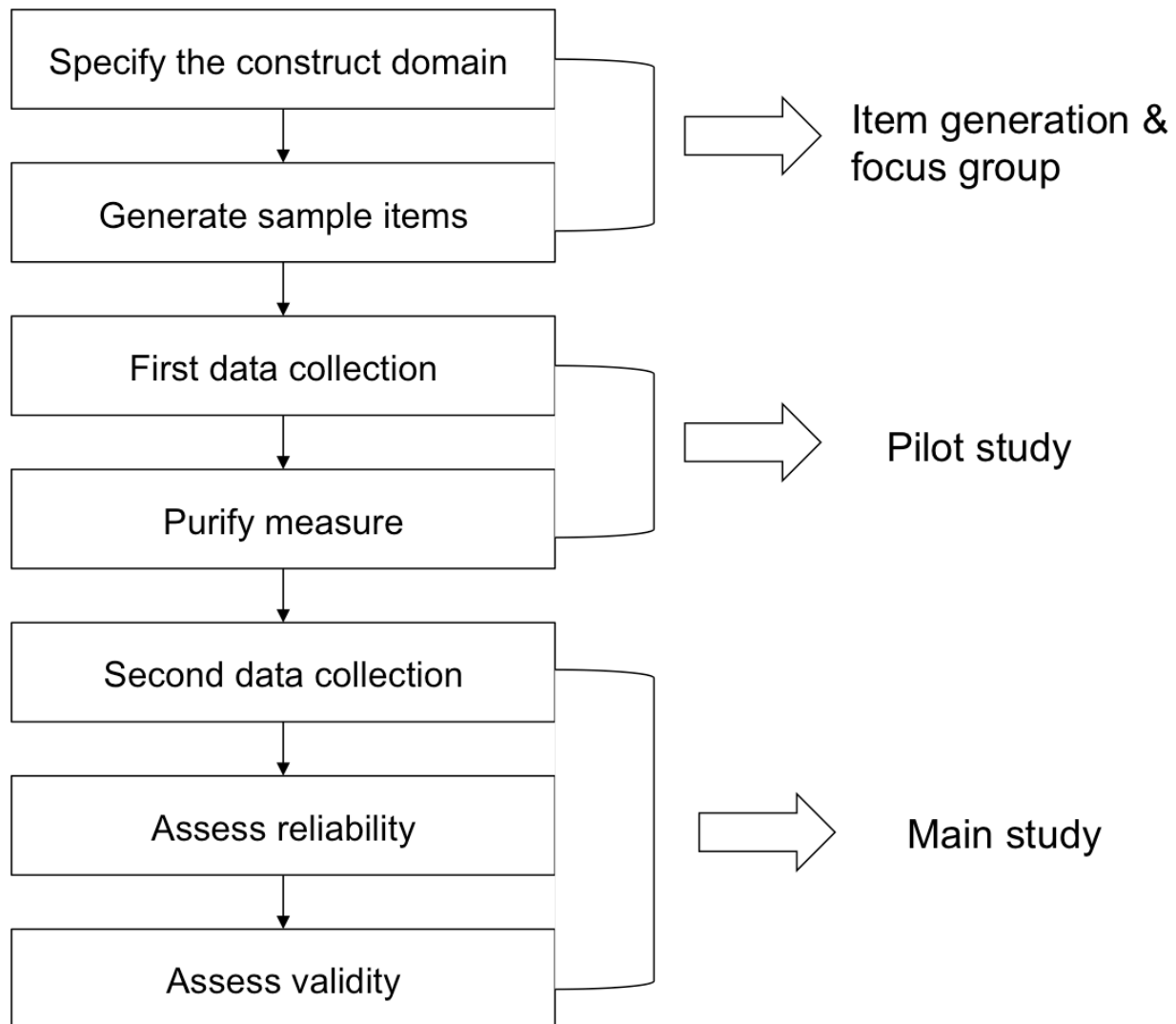
Figure 3. Churchill's (1979) model of scale building.

Churchill's (1979) process is not linear in the sense that failure at any given stage of the process does not mean the researcher should revert to the previous stage. Rather, if the measure fails at any point it must either revert back to the first stage (i.e., specification of domain) or the second stage (i.e., generation of initial items). This implies that to create a viable measure a researcher must establish nomological validity before they begin to collect data (Churchill, 1979).

Step one – specification of the construct domain. Oja et al. (2015) initially

hypothesized SEI as a distinctive construct. Essentially, they proposed that sport employees

identify with their sport organization in a unique manner that is independent of how one would

normally identify with their work organization (i.e., organizational identification). This unique

identification was proposed to be manifested from two constructs: team identification and

organizational identification. Oja et al. (2015) provided theoretical support with previous

literature as well as data from an ethnographic study for their conceptualization of SEI. The

definition of SEI is "the psychological bond arising from both organizational and team

identification between sport employees and the parent organization in which they are employed"

(Oja et al., 2015, p. 584). In turn, this definition was used as a guide for the present construct

definition. Further, sport employees are likely to experience emotional reactions to the results of

the contests of the sport organization's teams (Oja et al., 2015). The authors suggested that team

identification should be used to measure the manner by which sport employees feel inclusion

within the organization via sport specific occurrences. Sport employees' identification with their

parent sport organization is thus a composite of organizational identification and a sport centric

identification.

Step two – generation of sample items. To develop items for the measure both

deductive (i.e., past literature) and inductive (i.e., interviews) methods were used to create the

items (Hinkin, 1995). To facilitate the definition of SEI, two previously well-used instruments

were adapted to fit the current study. Mael and Ashforth's (1992) organizational identification

scale was used to measure how sport employees identified with their organization. Also, Wann

and Branscombe's (1993) team identification measure was utilized to gauge if sport employees

identify as fans of their sport organization's teams. The deductive process described here follows the suggestions of Oja et al. (2015).

Since the literature pertaining to sport employees is particularly void of a robust discussion of the subject matter, the decision was made to conduct a focus group to provide insights into the identification of sport employees. Before the focus group was conducted, approval was sought and granted from the Internal Review Board for the entire project, including the focus group. The focus group constitutes an inductive manner of generating items for a scale. Johnson and Christensen (2008) broadly described a focus group as a group interview that is conducted by a moderator. It is the moderator who asks questions of the group and largely facilitates the ensuing discussion. Focus groups typically consist of six to twelve participants who have knowledge that pertains to a specific topic. This allows the researcher to probe the minds of those who have a unique knowledge of the pertinent topic (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Specifically, focus groups are a tool that a researcher can use to develop instrument items (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1998). The focus group consisted of six sport employees. The focus group members had worked at various athletics departments, and their specific departments included marketing, compliance, and development.

The interview protocol was highly influenced by Oja et al.'s (2015) earlier work. The questions in the interview protocol were specifically designed to be general and open ended to facilitate conversation among the participants. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix A. In all, 10 general questions were asked and the session lasted approximately 90 minutes. The responses were recorded, transcribed, and then deductively coded for common themes pertaining to the sport employees' identification with their sport organization. In all, a total of 37 items were created, 13 of which were from existing scales – six from Mael and Ashforth (1992) and

seven from Wann and Branscombe (1993) – the remaining 24 were derived from the data collected from the focus group.

Step three – first data collection. The first data collection had 164 participants ($N =$ 164). The participants were randomly selected from online staff directories of full-time employees of intercollegiate athletic departments. Of the 164 participants, 98 were males, 151 worked at the Division 1 level, eight worked at the Division II level, and five participants worked at the NAIA level. Also, 140 of the participants identified as White, six as Hispanic, eight as African-American, and the remaining 10 chose not to identify their ethnicity. Many ($n = 77$) of the participants worked at their current sport organization for between one to five years, and 38 ($n = 38$) worked from six to 10 years. The goal of the pilot study was to test the items with an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The EFA allowed for an initial understanding and review of the indicators. Further, the use of the EFA provided a first test of dimensionality for the construct of SEI. Additionally, the reliability of the construct was reviewed.

Step four – purifying of the measure. Purifying the measure refers to removing poor items. The method of removal was two fold. First, the results of the EFA guided the removal of items that performed poorly. All items with a factor loading of .45 or higher were retained. This is based on the guidelines of Comrey and Lee (1992) who consider loadings above .45 to be fair as they explain 20% of the overlapping variance. Further, the early stage of scale development directed the low threshold. Three of the items from Mael and Ashforth's (1992) scale were retained, and only one item from Wann and Branscombe (1993) was retained. Further, 15 items that were derived from the focus group were retained which brought the remaining item total to 19.

The second step of purifying the measure involved sending the remaining items to a panel of experts. The decision to consult a panel of experts after the initial data collection reflects Churchill's (1979) process. This procedure also served as a test of content validity for the scale. Four professors from four different universities served on the content validity panel. One individual was chosen for their expertise in organizational identification research, another for organizational behavior research, the third for team identification research, and the fourth for their scale building knowledge. The panel was provided with the remaining items, their factor loadings, and the proposed definitions of the constructs involved in the study. The panel was then asked to rate how the items were related to their given constructs. The rating system provided to the expert panel called for the experts to select one of three options: item is clearly representative, somewhat representative, and not representative of the construct. The feedback from the panel resulted in the rewording of several items and the complete removal of two items.

Step five – second data collection. The second data collection was designed to test the factor structure with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and was an independent collection after the first set of responses. This required a larger sample than the previous data collection. To solicit responses to the revised survey, 2,000 sport employees were emailed and invited to participate in the survey. Much like the first data collection, emails were collected from various sport organizations' online staff directories. To collect a random sample, organizations were chosen from multiple conferences and from various geographical regions of the United States and Canada. Further, to increase the randomization of the sample, participants were randomly selected from the staff directories by skipping every third name that fit within the parameters of the sample population (i.e., middle management as defined by Oja et al., 2015).

To increase the generalizability of the instrument, sport employees of professional sport organizations were included in the sample. Of the 2,000 emails, 500 were sent to professional sport employees. Fifty-five of the 2,000 individuals in the sample population had incorrect contact information and emails were unable to be delivered. This reduced the total size of the sample population to 1,945. A total of 487 ($N = 487$) individuals completed the survey for a 25 percent response rate. Of the 487 participants, 261 were males, 223 were females, and three either did not respond or chose not to identify. One hundred four participants worked for professional sport organizations, 269 worked at the Football Bowl Subdivision, 91 at the Football Championship Subdivision, and 23 worked at a different level. The race of the participants broke down as follows: 409 respondents identified as White, 23 as Hispanic, 31 as African-American, three as Native American, four as Asian, three as Pacific Islander, five as multiracial, three as other, and six either did not respond or chose not to identify. Finally, the tenure of the employees was also recorded. Sixty-two participants worked at their current sport organization for less than a year, 274 worked between one and five years, 117 worked between six and 15 years, 17 worked 16 to 26 years, and 17 worked for more than 25 years.

To assess the strength of the instrument the entire sample was randomly split into two samples. This was possible due to the large sample size ($N = 487$). The first sample consisted of 244 ($n1 = 244$) and the second sample had 243 ($n2 = 243$) subjects. In general, sample sizes that exceed 200 are considered acceptable for factor analysis procedures (Weston & Gore, 2006). The first sample was used in a CFA to determine the totality of items within each dimension of SEI. Restated, this sample established the factor structure (i.e., measurement model) in the CFA. Adjustments were made based on the performance of the indicators. The second sample was then subjected to a CFA using the established measurement model from the first CFA. The multiple

sample test of factor structures provided evidence of construct validity (Bollen, 1989; Kline, 2005). The split sample procedure was based on the suggestion of Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (2005).

Further, the directionalty of the construct's indicators is vital to the interpretation of the meaning of the construct. In a reflective model, the overall construct influences the indicators. As such, the indicators are equivalent with regards to the meaning of the construct. Restated, removing an indicator does not change the meaning of the construct (Jarvis, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003). The indicators are not indepent representations of different aspects of the construct (i.e., formative). Thus, the measurement model used to analyize the SEI construct was considered a reflective model. This assertion is based on the Jarvis et al. (2003) criteria for reflective models. First, the direction of the causality flows from the SEI dimensions to the items. Second, the indicators are thought to be manifestations of the SEI dimensions (i.e., organization and sport). Third, any changes made to indicators would not impact the respective dimension. Fourth, changes made to the dimensions of SEI would impact the respective indicators.

Step six – reliability assessment. Before conducting the CFA, reliability assessments were performed on the measure. Reliability is an essential component of a viable instrument. If an instrument is not reliable, it cannot be used (Spector, 1992). Further, Churchill (1979) noted that failure at this stage of scale development means the process must revert back to the initial stages. Two methods were used to measure reliability as suggested by Churchill (1979). First, the researcher calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Nunnally's (1978) .70 cutoff for reliable measures was utilized. Second, composite reliability was assessed and a cutoff of .60 was established according to the guidelines put forth by Bagozzi and Yi (1988). These methods were used for both samples. Additionally, item-to-total correlations were reviewed as a last check of

reliability with the second sample's data, and a cutoff of .50 for retention was used (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Step seven – validity assessment. Instrument validity refers to the extent that a measure accurately reflects the given construct (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). There are multiple aspects of construct validity, Johnson and Christensen (2008) described two forms of construct validity: translation validity (i.e., content validity) and criterion validity (i.e., convergent, discriminant, predictive validity). Further, DeVellis (2012) explained that validity assessments that involve latent (i.e., unobservable) variables should focus on theoretically supported correlations. The content validity of SEI is supported with the expert panel that was used in the fourth stage. The experts were given definitions of the constructs and asked to rate how the items fit within the definition of the constructs. As previously discussed, this resulted in the removal of two items and the rewording of several other items.

Convergent validity is intended to measure how well the proposed items correctly measure the given construct. To gauge convergent validity the researchers used Fornell and Larcker's (1981) average variance extracted (AVE) method. Fornell and Larcker's (1981) formula to measure AVE is reliant on factor loadings and measurement errors. If the AVE score of a construct surpasses .50 then convergent validity is confirmed, as the variance explained by the indicators is greater than the measurement error. Discriminant validity was also calculated with Fornell and Larcker's (1981) AVE method. Discriminant validity of a construct suggests that the variable is significantly different from another variable. This could be viewed in terms of dimensions within a given construct, a new measure being significantly different from a related variable, or both. Further, discriminant validity is similar to convergent validity in that the construct is supposed to perform in a certain matter. Restated, if a new measure is created, it

should be unrelated to variables that its predecessor or a related variable are not related to in order to achieve discriminant validity. Discriminant validity is established when the construct's AVE scores are higher than the squared correlation (R^2) between the two constructs. To measure discriminant validity, job satisfaction was utilized. Restated, job satisfaction and SEI should be statistically distinctive. To measure job satisfaction, Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh's (1983) three-item instrument was imbedded into the final survey.

Study Two

      Procedure. The purpose of Study Two was to measure the relationships between the proposed antecedents and SEI. To do so, the relationships between SEI and individual, organizational, and leadership antecedents were tested. Before the solicitation of participants begins, Institutional Review Board approval was sought and granted. Potential participants for the study were asked to participate via email. Participants were provided with an information statement about the study, a link to the survey, and were made aware that they may withdraw from the study at any point in time and not be penalized. The survey contained the eight-item SEI instrument described in Study One, as well as instruments that measured the proposed antecedents. The various instruments' items were not kept together. Rather, the order of the items was randomized in the survey. To find applicable participants, intercollegiate sport team online directories were examined for emails. To ensure the randomization of participants, every third qualified email was skipped. Participants were provided a link to the Qualtrics program, which stored the results. After the initial email was sent to the sample population, two more reminder emails were sent out approximately one week apart. The resulting data was examined for missing data and multivariate normality before conducting a CFA. Mplus version 7.0 was

used to run the various statistical analyses including the CFA. In this study, the antecedents served as the independent variables and SEI was the dependent (i.e., predicted) variable.

Instruments. To measure SEI, the instrument developed in Study 1 was used. This instrument has eight items – four for each dimension.

Individual antecedents. Person-organization fit was measured with Judge and Cable's (1997) instrument, which consists of three items with a seven-point scale. These items measure the fit between the organization and the employee by comparing values, goals, and personalities. Relationships with employees were evaluated with Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls' (1997) Social Cohesion and Trust instrument. This measure has five items and a seven-point Likert scale. The items reflect the degree of unity and meaningful relationships between employees of an organization. To measure sport interest – general and local – Funk, Ridinger, and Moorman's (2003) Sport Interest Inventory was adapted for sport employees. The scale consists of three items and uses a seven-point Likert scale. Each dimension of the sport interest antecedent had its three items adapted to reflect its nature. This instrument gauges the excitement and interest employees have with sport in general and the specific teams of the organization.

Organizational antecedents. Perceived organizational prestige was measured with Mael and Ashforth's (1992) instrument. The scale consists of eight items, and will have a seven-point Likert scale. These items measure the degree to which sport employees perceive that their organization is a respected and admired by others. Perceived organizational success was gauged with Wann and Dolan's (1994b) measure of perceived success. The four items have a seven-point Likert scale. This form of measurement was specifically chosen because the items reflect the conceptualization of perceived organizational success in Oja et al.'s (2015) work. That is, the perceptions of the external performance of the organization are measured. Perceived

distinctiveness was evaluated with an instrument based on Carlson, Donavan, and Cumiskey's (2009) and Jones and Volpe's (2011) work on the construct. This is three-item scale that uses a seven-point Likert scale. These items are meant to quantify the uniqueness of the organization when compared to others. Visibility – organization and team/department – was assessed with three items from Fuller et al.'s (2006) measure of visibility. These items quantify others' degree of familiarity with the general organization and specific department as perceived by the employee.

Leadership antecedents. To measure the three dimensions of leadership – charismatic, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation – Bass's (1985) scale was used. These items are derived from Bass's (1985) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Each section consists of three items, and will use a seven-point Likert scale. A list of the instruments used for the proposed antecedents of SEI can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Instruments Adapted for Antecedents

Antecedent	Original Instrument
Person-Organization Fit	Judge & Cable (1997)
Relationships with Employees	Sampson et al. (1997)
Sport Interest (General & Local)	Funk et al. (2003)
Perceived Organizational Prestige	Mael & Ashforth (1992)
Perceived Organizational Success	Wann & Dolan (1994b)
Perceived Distinctiveness	Carlson et al. (2009)/Jones & Volpe (2011)
Visibility (Org. & Team/Department)	Fuller et al. (2006)
Charismatic Leadership	Bass (1985)
Individualized Consideration	Bass (1985)
Intellectual Consideration	Bass (1985)

Participants. All participants were employees of American intercollegiate athletics departments. Following the guidelines of Oja et al. (2015), participation in the study was regulated to those who are full-time sport employees and do not have *Athletics Director* in their title. A total of 2,000 sport employees were asked to participate in the survey. To diversify the

backgrounds of the participants, intercollegiate athletics departments from a wide array of geographic locations were included in the sample population.

Analysis. Once the data was collected and inspected for missing data and multivariate normality, the data was subjected to a CFA. Initially, a measurement model was created to assess the fit of the data to the hypothesized structure. Each section of antecedents (i.e., individual, organizational, leadership) were estimated separately. After proper model fit was attained, the correlations between latent variables were transformed into regression paths to create a structural model. The structural model allows for the comparison of latent variables. It is the structural model that was used to test the hypotheses (i.e., the actual relationships between antecedents and SEI).

Study Three

Procedure. Study Three mirrored the procedure used in Study Two. However, Study Three involved the examination of outcomes of SEI. The proposed outcomes are job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, counterproductive workplace behaviors, and OCBs. The method of solicitation of potential participants was the same as in Study Two. However, the sample population was generated from different intercollegiate athletics departments than those used in Study Two. As in Study Two, the order of the instruments' items was randomized throughout the survey. Before conducting a CFA, both missing data and multivariate normality was inspected.

Instruments. All instruments used a seven-point scale. As in Study Two, the eight-item instrument developed in Study One was utilized to measure SEI. Job satisfaction was measured with Cammann et al.'s (1983) three item scale. These items measure an employee's approval of their job. Turnover intentions also drew from Cammann et al.'s (1983) work with another three-item scale. The items from this scale assess the intent of the employee to leave their current

organization. Both instruments originate from Cammann et al.'s (1983) seminal work on organizational group measurement instruments. Counterproductive workplace behaviors were measured with ten items from Bennett and Robinson's (2000) instrument. These items measured how often sport employees behaved in a manner that was detrimental to their sport organization. Lastly, 10 items from Podsakff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter's (1990) OCB scale was used to assess OCBs. The items from this instrument reflect the employee's willingness to perform extra-role behaviors and go above and beyond their required job duties. The instruments used for the proposed outcomes of SEI can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Instruments Adapted for Outcomes

Outcomes	Original Instrument
Job Satisfaction	Cammann et al. (1983)
Turnover Intentions	Cammann et al. (1983)
Counterproductive Work Behaviors	Bennett & Robinson (2000)
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors	Podsakff et al. (1990)

Participants. The criteria for the selection of participants was the same criteria used in Study Two. A total of 2,000 sport employees were asked to participate in the study. This sample population was completely independent from Study Two. Restated, sport employees from schools used in Study Two were not used in Study Three. Participants came from a geographically diverse set of intercollegiate athletics departments, but only came from American academic institutions.

Analysis. Before conducting the CFA, the data was reviewed for missing data and multivariate normality. After, the data were subjected to a CFA and reviewed in the subsequent measurement model. The model fit was assessed and adjustments that are theoretically sound was made to the model (e.g., removal of a poorly performing indicator). Each outcome was

estimated with SEI separate from other outcome variables. Acceptable model fit occurred

between the data and hypothesized relationships. The correlations between latent variables were

then transformed into regression paths in the resulting structural model. Here, the relationships

between SEI and the proposed outcomes were assessed. In Study Three, SEI is the independent

variable and the proposed outcomes are the dependent (i.e., predicted) variables.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of the studies in this examination of SEI had three objectives. First, the results of the building and creation of the SEI instrument are provided. The analysis revealed evidence of a reliable and valid two-dimensional construct. The SEI instrument was created by following Churchill's (1979) guidelines to scale development as detailed in Chapter Three. From there, the proposed antecedents to SEI are examined and results are provided. Lastly, the hypothesized outcomes of SEI are reviewed and the results are offered. The results of the three studies are indications that the SEI measure is a valid instrument, and many of the proposed antecedents and outcomes are statistically related to SEI.

Study One

Step two results. The focus group's discussion of their identities as sport employees lasted for nearly 90 minutes. During the course of the discussion, several themes emerged. The themes included *inclusion, fandom, sport centricity, and connection to a larger edifice.* After the themes were discovered, individual items were created based on the data provided by the focus group. Each theme produced different items.

Inclusion. This theme was derived from answers that reflected the notion that sport employees identify with being connected with a sport organization. Sample items include "Knowing athletes, coaches, and other staff members allows me to share in the success of the team", "I feel connected to the success of the organization because of my relationships with the athletes", and "I feel as if I am a part of the team/s I work with". Within the theme of inclusion, a sense of social capital is also apparent. Sport employees seemed to identify with being a member of the sport organization as a result of their connections within the social network of the sport organization. Further, the theme seems to be related to organizational identification (Ashforth &

Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Sport employees identified with being a part of their sport organization and sharing the success of their sport organization. Several items specifically represented this idea (e.g., "If my sport organization wins a big game, I feel personal success"). This theme produced nine items in the initial item generation.

Fandom. The fandom theme is generally related to how sport employees identify has sport fans. Examples of items that were derived from this theme are "I will watch our team/s compete when I am 'off the clock'", "I feel disdain for the rival teams of my organization", and "I openly cheer against the rivals of my organization". Here, the focus group relayed thoughts of caring how their sport organization's teams fared on the field of play and how they were emotionally invested the outcomes. While none of the member of the focus group claimed to be sport fans of their sport organization, they did note how they cared about how well the teams did and how the outcomes of competitions – good or bad – did affect their attitudes at work. The fandom theme is similar to team identification (Wann & Branscombe 1991, 1993) in that it replicates how individuals are emotionally attached to sport teams or sport organizations. This theme initially had five items.

Sport centricity. This theme is described as a general connection to sport and athletics. The sport employees in the focus group described how they felt linked to sport and how that linkage contributed to the constitution of their identity. Sample items included "Sport is a fundamental part of who I am", "Working in sport allows me to stay involved in sport", and "Working in sport allows me to retain my identity as an athlete". The sport centricity theme is in some respects similar to Brewer et al.'s (1993) athlete identity construct. However, many of the items of the theme represent a positive relationship with sport. This theme initially contained six items.

Larger edifice. The final theme embodies how sport employees identify with being a part of a larger sport entity. The focus group explained that they felt working in a highly visible organization allowed them to feel special. This special feeling then contributed to their own identity. Sample items include "I like being a part of something bigger than me; working in sport does that" and "Being a sport employee is unique and neat". The larger edifice theme – like the inclusion theme – appears to be rooted in organizational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). This theme initially had three items.

In total, the focus group resulted in the creation of 24 items that provided unique insights into the identification of sport employees. Past theoretical developments support the viability of the themes, but the sport centricity theme has little previous theoretical support. These items were combined with previously established instruments to create a survey to determine the exact nature of a sport employees identification with their sport organization. The items resulting from the focus group and the modifications to the previously established Mael and Ashforth (1992) and Wann and Branscombe (1993) instruments can be found in Appendix A.

Step four results. The adequacy of the EFA model was evaluated with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (K-M-O) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO test resulted in a .87 value, which passes the Kaiser (1974) threshold for significance. Also, the EFA produced a significant Bartlett's test of sphericity figure, 2878.17 ($df = 666$, $p = < .001$). These results allowed the researcher to further refine the measure utilizing the EFA. In total, 164 sport employees completed the initial survey. To determine the dimensionality of SEI principal axis factoring was utilized based on the suggestion of Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). The results of the principal axis factoring suggested that two dimensions of SEI were present. This was based on two eigenvalues that were larger than 1.0 (11.16 and 2.58). The two dimensions

accounted for 33.76% of the variance. The eigenvalue and variance explained results from the

EFA test can be found in Table 3. Further, the scree plot showed an elbow after the second

factor, which indicated two factors. This is inline with Catell's (1966) explanation of scree tests

– one clear elbow should exist, which is an indication of the threshold between meaningful

factors and meaningless factors that are a result of over extraction. The scree plot can be seen in

Figure 4.

Table 3

Variance Explained for each Factor by Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor	Eigenvalue	Cumulative Eigenvalue Percent	Cumulative Variance Explained Percent
1 – Sport Identity	11.16	30.16	28.49
2 – Sport Centric	2.58	37.14	33.76

Note. KMO = .87, Bartlett's test of sphericity 2878.17 (*df* = 666, *p* < .001)
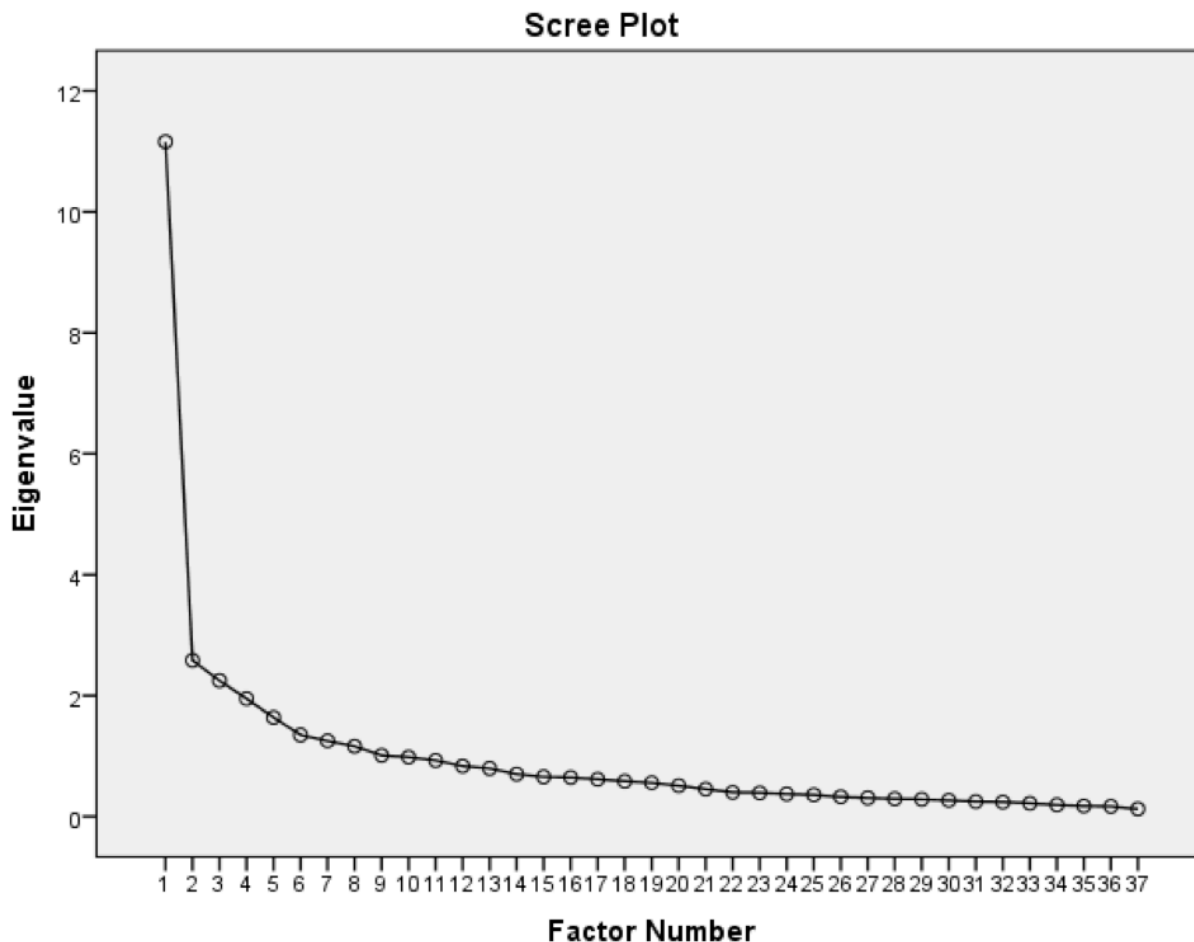
Figure 4. Scree plot of data.

     The first factor appeared to reflect identification based on improvements to self-esteem and inclusion (i.e., organizational identification), and the second factor appeared to represent identification with sport as a larger social entity (i.e., sport centricity). The two factors were significantly correlated (*r* = .63). The large correlation prompted the use of an oblique rotation via promax. The oblique rotation allowed for correlations between factors. The promax weakens smaller loadings and differentiates between which items load more efficiently onto the constructs despite the correlations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The results of the EFA were used as the rational for the removal of three items from the Mael and Ashforth (1992) organizational identification instrument, and six items from the Wann and Branscombe (1993) team

identification instrument. Further, nine items that were generated from the focus group were

removed. The threshold for retaining an indicator was a factor loading of .45 or higher, as a

factor loading with a score of at least .45 is considered a fair indicator (Comrey & Lee, 1992).

This left the instrument with 19 items. Also, the reliability of both dimensions was obtained. The

SO factor (i.e., self-esteem and inclusion) had a Cronbach's alpha score of .90 (α = .90) and the

SC factor (i.e., sport as a larger social entity) had a Cronbach's alpha score of .77 (α = .77), both

of which surpass Nunnally's (1978) .70 threshold. This finding suggests that these results will be

repeated in the future. The specific results of the EFA can be found on Table 4.

Table 4

Results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item	Std. Est.	Item-to-total	Corrected alpha
Sport Organization			.900
I feel as if I am a part of the team/s I work with	.830	.701	
Knowing athletes, coaches, and other staff members	.811	.699	
I see myself as part of my organization because I assist	.779	.645	
I feel a part of the success of my organization because	.763	.542	
The bond between myself and my organization is	.740	.532	
My organization's successes are my successes	.695	.727	
If my organization wins a big game, I feel personal	.594	.753	
When I talk about my organization, I usually say 'we'	.562	.608	
When someone praises my organization it feels like a	.548	.631	
I cheer for my organization's team/s because of my	.521	.518	
Victories allow me to feel recognition for my hard	.457	.610	
Sport Centricity			.770
I feel disdain for the rival teams of my organization	.726	.576	
I dislike the greatest rivals of my organization's teams	.691	.504	
Athletics matters to me; it is part of who I am	.636	.518	
Sport is a fundamental part of who I am	.610	.489	
It is important to me that our team/s win	.596	.480	
I openly cheer against the rivals of my organization	.471	.342	
Being involved in sport is all that I know; I can't see	.462	.444	
Working in sport allows me to retain my identity as an	.460	.368	

The second part of the purification of the measure also called for a review of the measure

by a panel of experts. The decision was made to conduct the EFA before giving the measure to

the panel of experts. This allowed the panel of experts to review the factor structure as well as the factor loadings (cf. Dwyer, Mudrick, Greenhalgh, LeCrom, & Drayer, in press). Further, it closely follows Churchill's (1979) suggestions. The expert panel was asked to comment on the proposed definition of the two dimensions of SEI. After the initial EFA, the first factor was initially thought to include both organizational and team identification. Two expert panel members were concerned that the dimension should be split in two – organizational and team. Two others generally supported the definition. The second factor was akin to an identification based on a connection to sport and competition. The expert panel was supportive of the proposed definition, but stressed staying within the boundaries of SID, and to strengthen the notion that sport is unique and attracts certain individuals.

The expert panel members were also asked to review the remaining 19 items. Based on the ratings and comments from the reviewers two items were removed, one from each dimension. The first item removed was 'Victories allow me to feel recognition for my hard work'. One reviewer noted that the item implied that victories were required for recognition. In light of the criticism, the item was removed. The other removed item, "It is important to me that our team/s win", caused concerns that the content item was already being assessed by other items. As such, this item was then removed. The remaining items all received adequate scores and the specific feedback from the panel was either positive or it prompted the rewording of items. One item had two experts rank as a 'one', which signified "not representative of the construct". This item was retained due to the support from the other panel members. No other item had more than one level one ranking. Two 'double-barreled' questions were revised, the word 'sport' was added before the word 'organization', and other changes were made based on the advice of the expert panel. In general, the expert panel supported the instrument as

representative of the SEI construct and thus there was evidence of content validity. Moreover,

after the review from the expert panel 17 items remained. The subsequent changes to items after

the expert panel can be found on Table 5.

Table 5

Changes to the Instrument After the Expert Panel

Pre-Panel Wording	Post-Panel Wording
I feel as if I am a part of the team/s I work with	I feel as if I am a part of the team/s I work with
Knowing athletes, coaches, and other staff members allows me to share in the success of the team	Identifying with athletes, coaches, and other staff members allows me to share in the success of the team
I see myself as part of my organization because I assist in the success of my organization	Assisting in the success of my sport organization makes me see the organization as part of who I am
I feel a part of the success of my organization because of my relationships with the athletes	I feel a part of the success of my sport organization because of my relationships with the athletes
The bond between myself and my organization is strengthened because of my relationships with athletes, coaches, and other staff members	My relationships with the athletes, coaches, and staff members impacts my bond with the sport organization
My organization's successes are my successes	My sport organization's successes are my successes
If my organization wins a big game, I feel personal success	If my sport organization wins a big game, I feel personal success
When I talk about my organization, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'	When I talk about my sport organization, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'
When someone praises my organization it feels like a personal compliment	When someone praises my sport organization it feels like a personal compliment
I cheer for my organization's team/s because of my personal relationships within the organization	I'm a fan of my organization's team/s because of my personal relationships within the sport organization
I feel disdain for the rival teams of my organization	I feel disdain for the rival teams of my sport organization
I dislike the greatest rivals of my organization's teams	I dislike the greatest rivals of my sport organizations' teams
Athletics matters to me; it is part of who I am	I consider athletics to be an important part of who I am
Sport is a fundamental part of who I am	Sport is a fundamental part of who I am

I openly cheer against the rivals of my organization	I cheer against the rivals of my sport organization
Being involved in sport is all that I know; I can't see myself doing anything else	Being involved in a competitive sport environment is important to me
Working in sport allows me to retain my identity as an athlete	Working in sport allows me to at least partially retain my identity as an athlete

Steps six and seven results. Before conducting the CFA, the data from the second sample were examined for missing data. Surveys that were not completed were removed, but surveys that were completed but had missing data were retained. In all, no item had more than two percent of its data missing. Further, the SEI items passed Little's missing completely at random test ($x^2 = 352.06$, $df = 320$, $p = .105$) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Thus, the missing data was missing completely at random as Little's test was not significant. To measure the missing data, Mplus's MLR estimator, which imputes for missing data, was utilized (Muthén & Muthén, 2012; Yuan & Bentler, 2000). Furthermore, the data was also reviewed to determine if it was multivariate normal. The data was not found to be linear normal and thus cannot be multivariate normal. Several indicators had skewness and kurtosis issues. Skewness and kurtosis issues were assessed by dividing their respective standard errors. If the resulting number was + or – 1.96 the indicator was considered to be not normal. The normality of a data set is judged by its levels of skewness and kurtosis. These concepts are described as follows,

> "Skewness has to do with the symmetry of the distribution; a skewed variable is a variable whose mean is not in the center of the distribution. Kurtosis has to do with the peakedness (sic) of a distribution; a distribution is either too peaked (with short, thick tails) or too flat (with long, thin tails)" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013, p. 79).

However, the use of the MLR estimator compensates for the non-normal data (Muthén & Muthén, 2012; Yuan & Bentler, 2000).

The 17 remaining items were then subjected to a CFA using the statistical program

Mplus version 7.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). The fixed factor method was utilized. The model

was over-identified. A review of the initial CFA – using the first half of the split sample –

revealed that several indicators performed poorly. The initial threshold for retention was set at

.55 based on the recommendation of Comrey and Lee (1992), as such loadings are considered to

be 'good'. Further, the items were reviewed for how well they theoretically fit with the

constructs. This is a necessary requirement with reflective models as the indicators must be

theoretically linked to the construct (Jarvis et al., 2003) and can be used as justification for

retaining indicators that preform below expectations. These guidelines forced the removal of

three indicators from the sport centric construct. The SO construct, which was associated with

improving or maintaining self-esteem through a connection with the sport organization, had five

items removed. The CFA was conducted again with the same sample and the results of the

analysis demonstrated that an indicator from the sport organizational identification construct

dipped below the .55 threshold and was deemed to be sufficiently explained through the other

indicators. Thus, the indicator was removed and the CFA was performed again. The following

CFA revealed good model fit statistics using Brown's (2006) guidelines. Brown's taxonomy of

fit indices ranges in order from poor, mediocre, acceptable, close, to exact fits. Acceptable fit is

prescribed as the minimum for adequate model fit. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(19, n}$

$_{= 244)} = 50.09., p < .001$, an acceptable comparative fit index (CFI) = .93, an acceptable Tucker-

Lewis index (TLI) = .90, an acceptable Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) =

.08 (.055 - .110), and a close Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .05. Further,

the two dimensions were correlated at .65 ($r = .65$). The final model had eight items, four in each

dimension. The items retained in each dimension clearly reflect their parameters as well as the

definition of SEI. The exact model was then used with the second sample to validate the items

and dimensions of SEI. The items and their factor loadings can be found in Table 6.

Table 6

Factor Loadings After the CFA – First Sample

Dimension	Item	Factor Loading
SC	Working in sport allows me to at least partially retain my identity as an athlete	.659
SC	I consider athletics to be an important part of who I am	.769
SC	Being involved in a competitive sport environment is important to me	.729
SC	Sport is a fundamental part of who I am	.729
SO	If my sport organization wins a big game, I feel personal success	.628
SO	My sport organization's successes are my successes	.690
SO	Assisting in the success of my sport organization makes me see the organization as part of who I am	.585
SO	When someone praises my sport organization it feels like a personal compliment	.719

The model created from the first split sample appears to fit well with the second split

sample. The model fit indices were sound with a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(19, n = 243)} = 35.84, p <$

.05, a close CFI = .97, a close TLI = .95, an acceptable RMSEA = .06 (.028 - .08), and a close

SRMR = .05. Also, the correlation between dimensions shifted to .60 (r = .60). These results

signify evidence of construct validity. From there, reliability statistics were examined. In the first

split sample. the SO factor had a Cronbach's alpha score of .75 (α = .75), and this figure

improved in the second split sample to .84 (α = .84). The SC factor, had a Cronbach's alpha

score of .80 (α = .80) in both the first and second samples. All of which surpass the .70 threshold,

which signifies their ability to be repeated in future data collections. Also, composite reliability

statistics were reviewed. The sport centric composite dimension reliability scores shifted from

.81 to .82, and the connection to the sport organization dimension composite reliability scores

went from .75 to .84 – all of which surpass the .60 threshold. Moreover, the item-to-total

correlations were examined from the second sample. All indicators such indicators surpassed the

.50 threshold. The results of both of the reliability tests suggest that the instrument is a reliable measure of sport employee identification. Factor loadings from the second sample can be found on Table 7.

Table 7

Factor Loadings After the CFA – Second Sample

Dimension	Item	Factor Loading
SC	Working in sport allows me to at least partially retain my identity as an athlete	.586
SC	I consider athletics to be an important part of who I am	.860
SC	Being involved in a competitive sport environment is important to me	.697
SC	Sport is a fundamental part of who I am	.763
SO	If my sport organization wins a big game, I feel personal success	.669
SO	My sport organization's successes are my successes	.784
SO	Assisting in the success of my sport organization makes me see the organization as part of who I am	.775
SO	When someone praises my sport organization it feels like a personal compliment	.802

During the formulation of the revised survey one other instrument was imbedded in the survey. The instrument was Cammann et al.'s (1983) job satisfaction measure. This scale was used for the initial validity tests of the instrument in development. The model fit exceptionally well with the data. There was an insignificant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, n = 243)} = 53.34$, $p = .09$, a close CFI = .99, a close TLI = .98, a close RMSEA = .04 (.000 - .060), and a close SRMR = .04. There are two forms of validity that are often used for latent variables: convergent and discriminant. Devellis (2012) noted that when using latent variables that are not easily measured one should use the framework of construct validity as opposed to criterion validity. Construct validity mandates discriminant and convergent validity. Convergent validity for the measure was supported by passing the AVE test (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The connection to the sport organization component's AVE was .58 and the athletics centric dimension's AVE was .53. Both constructs' AVE was higher than .5, which indicates convergent validity. Discriminant validity

was also measured using AVE. Both of the factors of SEI were subjected to discriminant validity

testing to ensure they are indeed different constructs. The results of the AVE test validate the

factors as different from one another as their squared correlation was less than their AVE.

Additionally, the squared correlation between the SEI dimensions and job satisfaction was less

than SEI's AVE thus discriminant validity is supported. Job satisfaction was correlated with the

organizational component at .58 ($r = .58$) and the athletics centric dimension at .30 ($r = .30$).

Therefore the proposed instrument for SEI appears to have both convergent and discriminant

validity.

Study Two

The focus of Study Two was to examine the hypothesized antecedents of SEI. To do so,

collegiate athletics department employees were solicited to participate in an online survey. The

survey included instruments that measured SEI, visibility of the sport organization, visibility of

the team/department, perceived distinctiveness, perceived organizational success, perceived

organizational prestige, general sport interest, local sport interest, relationships with employees,

PO Fit, charismatic leadership, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. The

item codes for the SEI construct and the antecedents can be found on Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Table 8

SEI Instrument Item Codes

Item	Code
Working in sport allows me to at least partially retain my identity as an athlete	sc1
I consider athletics to be an important part of who I am	sc2
Being involved in a competitive sport environment is important to me	sc3
Sport is a fundamental part of who I am	sc4
If my sport organization wins a big game, I feel personal success	so1
My sport organization's successes are my successes	so2
Assisting in the success of my sport organization makes me see the organization as part of who I am	so3
When someone praises my sport organization it feels like a personal compliment	so4

Table 9

Organizational Antecedent Instrument Item Codes

Item	Code
Perceived Organizational Prestige	
People in my community think highly of my organization	pop1
It is considered prestigious in the community to be associated with my organization	pop2
My organization is considered one of the best in its field	pop3
People from other organizations look down at my organization	pop4
Employees of other organizations would be proud to have their children work here	pop5
My organization does not have a good reputation in the community	pop6
A person seeking to advance in his or her career should downplay their association with this organization	pop7
When other organizations are seeking employees, they would not want employees from here	pop8
Perceived Organizational Success	
My organization's teams are outstanding	ps1
My organization's teams are performing below expectations	ps2
I generally consider our teams to be 'good'	ps3
I consider our teams to be below average	ps4
Perceived Distinctiveness	
I feel that this sport organization is unlike any other sport organization	pd1
I believe that this sport organization is very unique as compared to other sports organizations	pd2
This sport organization has unique characteristics compared to other sport organizations	pd3
Visibility of Organization	
When I tell people where I work, most are familiar with the organization	vo1
Most people in this area have heard of my organization	vo2
In this area, many people believe that my organization is the best place to go for sport entertainment	vo3
Visibility of Team/Department	
When I tell people where I work, most are familiar with my department	vt1
Most people in this area have heard of my department	vt2
In this area, many people believe that my department is essential	vt3

Table 10

Individual Antecedent Instrument Codes

Item	Code
Sport Interest - General	
I find sports to be very exciting	si1
First and foremost, I consider myself a fan of sport	si2
My interest in sport sparked my interest in my profession	si3
Sport Interest - Local	
I find my department/organization's games very exciting	li1
First and foremost, I consider myself a fan of the organization/teams to which I'm	li2

employed	
I follow how well the organization/teams are performing	li3
Relationships with Employees	
People around here are willing to help coworkers	re1
This is a close-knit organization	re2
People in this organization can be trusted	re3
People in this organization generally don't get along with each other	re4
People in this organization do not share the same values	re5
Person-Organization Fit	
To what degree do your values, goals, and personality 'match' or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization	pof1
To what degree do your values and personality prevent you from 'fitting in' this organization because they are different from most of the other employees' values and personality in this organization	pof2
Do you think the values and 'personality' of this organization reflect your own values and personality	pof3

Table 11

Leadership Antecedent Instrument Item Codes

Item	Code
Charismatic	
My supervisor is a model for me to follow	lc1
I have complete faith in my supervisor	lc2
My supervisor makes everyone around him/her enthusiastic about assignments	lc3
Individualized Consideration	
My supervisor finds out what I want and tries to help me get it	ic1
You can count on my supervisor to express appreciation when you do a good job	ic2
My supervisor gives personal attention to members who seem neglected for individualized consideration	ic3
Intellectual Stimulation	
My supervisor has provided me with new ways of looking at things which used to be a puzzle for me	ls1
My supervisor's ideas have forced me to rethink some of my own ideas which I had never questioned before	ls2
My supervisor enables me to think about old problems in new ways	ls3

Demographic data was also collected. This data included gender, race/ethnicity, level of collegiate sport, alumni status, and tenure at the sport organization. A total of 2,000 sport employees were invited to participate in the study. Of the 2,000 invitees, a total of 528 sport employees responded. The data was then examined for incomplete surveys. The survey consisted

of three pages – not including demographic questions – on the Qualtrics software program. Participants who failed to complete all three pages of questions were removed from the sample. That is, if a participant did not complete any question from one of the three pages of survey questions they were removed. This left the sample with 516 ($N = 516$) usable surveys. Of the participants 295 ($n = 295$) were males, 216 ($n = 216$) were females, and five ($n = 5$) either did not or chose to not identify as a male or female. There were 428 ($n = 428$) Caucasian, 19 ($n = 19$) Hispanic, 33 ($n = 33$) African American, four ($n = 4$) Native American, one ($n = 1$) Pacific Islander, 11 ($n = 11$) Asian, 11 ($n = 11$) Multiracial, one ($n = 1$) Other, and eight ($n = 8$) participants chose not to identify their race/ethnicity. Participants' level of college sport was 404 ($n = 404$) at the FBS level, 28 ($n = 28$) at the FCS level, 71 ($n = 71$) at the Division I (no football) level, and 12 ($n = 12$) at a different (other) level. The tenure of the participants ranged from less than a year to 40 years. Lastly, when asked if they were an alumnus of their sport organization 326 ($n = 326$) were not, 88 ($n = 88$) were as an undergraduate, 61 ($n = 61$) were as a graduate student, and 41 ($n = 41$) were as both an undergraduate and graduate student. To account for the degree of missing data, Little's missing data test was performed. This test determines if the missing data is to be considered missing completely at random (MCAR). Such a designation allows the researcher to assume that there is not a systematic causation for the missing data thus removing a potential source of bias in the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Little's test revealed that the missing data should be considered MCAR with an insignificant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(2207, N = 516)} = 2091.14$, $p = .96$.

The data were then reviewed for normality. Specifically, skewness and kurtosis were examined. Many of the variables contained indicators that showed evidence of nonnormal skew and kurtosis. That is, the distribution of the data were either positively or negatively skewed, and

the distribution of the data had either positive or negative kurtosis. Skew was generally negative

and kurtosis was generally positive. To determine if indicators had a normal distribution, skew

kurtosis were divided by their standard error to determine their z-scores. If the z-score was

greater than + or − 1.96 the indicator was deemed to be not normal (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The standard error of skewness was .108 and ranged between .215 and .216 for kurtosis. A full

list of the indicators and their means, standard deviations, skew and kurtosis can be found on

Table 12.

Table 12

Normality of Antecedent Model Items

Item	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
sc1	4.21	1.60	-.35	-.69
sc2	5.80	1.21	-1.42	2.46
sc3	5.47	1.30	-1.12	1.50
sc4	5.64	1.39	-1.37	1.96
so1	5.15	1.47	-.88	.36
so2	4.98	1.44	-.71	.00
so3	5.25	1.33	-1.05	1.09
so4	5.05	1.30	-.94	.88
pop1	5.61	1.16	-1.00	1.06
pop2	5.23	1.31	-.66	.06
pop3	4.78	1.59	-.489	-.62
pop4	5.06	1.53	-.52	-.86
pop5	5.51	1.12	-.93	.77
pop6	5.83	1.29	-1.44	1.87
pop7	5.99	1.15	-1.39	1.62
pop8	5.86	1.39	-1.57	1.92
ps1	4.58	1.48	-.43	-.57
ps2	4.55	1.57	-.21	-1.06
ps3	5.42	1.22	-1.25	1.68
ps4	5.06	1.61	-.67	-.61
pd1	4.38	1.46	-.17	-.71
pd2	4.89	1.36	-.54	-.30
pd3	5.14	1.25	-.77	.38
vo1	6.27	1.00	-1.99	5.19
vo2	6.34	.98	-2.31	7.14
vo3	4.78	1.80	-.47	-.91
vt1	5.37	1.45	-.93	.16
vt2	5.60	1.30	-1.09	.81

vt3	5.34	1.35	-.89	.365
si1	6.35	.86	-2.05	6.93
si2	5.55	1.57	-1.38	1.32
si3	6.17	1.19	-2.16	5.33
li1	5.58	1.02	-1.18	2.40
li2	4.74	1.71	-.65	-.57
li3	5.94	.93	-1.41	3.27
re1	5.37	1.31	-1.19	1.32
re2	4.74	1.52	-.58	-.46
re3	5.05	1.36	-1.13	.96
re4	5.33	1.33	-.98	.473
re5	4.61	1.52	-.36	-.72
pof1	4.95	1.23	-.80	-.33
pof2	5.26	1.44	-.73	.21
pof3	4.65	1.39	-.50	-.43
lc1	4.88	1.78	-.73	-.52
lc2	5.1	1.74	-.86	-.33
lc3	4.40	1.72	-.42	-.80
ic1	4.82	1.70	-.72	-.41
ic2	5.05	1.70	-.94	-.11
ic3	4.1	1.61	-.16	-.73
is1	4.46	1.60	-.55	-.54
is2	4.39	1.50	-.57	-.46
is3	4.83	1.55	-.80	.00

This prompted the utilization of the MLR estimator in the Mplus version 7.0 statistical program. The MLR estimator accounts for nonnormal data and adjusts the estimations accordingly (Yuan & Bentler, 2000). The data was then analyzed with the statistical program Mplus version 7.0. The fixed factor method was used for estimation. All of the measurement models were over-identified. First, a measurement model of the SEI construct was created. After the SEI measurement model was examined, separate measurement models for each group of antecedents (i.e., leadership, organizational, and individual) were formed. Then structural models of each antecedent with the SEI construct were formed and examined. A structural model aids in the measurement of the relationships between latent constructs. The composite reliability of each

construct was also examined. A composite reliability score above .60 is a sign that constructs are internally consistent (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

   Sport employee identification. The measurement model of the SEI construct was found to have a favorable fit. The model fit indices included a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(19, N = 516)} = 46.93$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.034 - .073), and a close SRMR = .04. Also, the correlation between dimensions was .63 ($r = .63$). The SC indicators were .515, .850, .667, and .832. The SO indicators were .814, .786, .718, and .729. The first SC item is below the .55 threshold for 'good' indicators (Comrey & Lee, 1992), but the item was deemed to be a critical theoretical component of the SC construct and was retained despite its fair factor loading. Full statistics of the performance of the indicators can be found on Table 13. Composite reliability of each dimension of SEI was also satisfactory with SC at .814 and SO at .847. Further, the items had convergent validity with AVE scores of .53 and .58 as both are < .5.

Table 13

SEI Construct Antecedent Measurement Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	Item-to-total
Sport Org.					.58	.85	
	so1	.814	.024	< .001			.68
	so2	.786	.026	< .001			.62
	so3	.718	.034	< .001			.64
	so4	.729	.033	< .001			.62
Sport Cent.					.53	.81	
	sc1	.515	.037	< .001			.48
	sc2	.850	.029	< .001			.64
	sc3	.667	.035	< .001			.63
	sc4	.832	.025	< .001			.63

Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04

Measurement model. Separate measurement models were created for each of the antecedent groups (i.e., leadership, organizational, and individual). The leadership antecedent measurement model displayed excellent fit statistics. The model fit indices included a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(109, N = 516)} = 221.13$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.036 - .053), and a close SRMR = .04. The correlations between leadership antecedent constructs can be found in Table 14.

Table 14

Leadership Antecedent Measurement Model Construct Relationships

Constructs (AVE)	R	Discriminant Validity
Charismatic Leadership (.81) & Individual Consideration (.69)	.93	No
Intellectual Stimulation (.57) & Charismatic Leadership (.81)	.92	No
Intellectual Stimulation (.57) & Individual Consideration (.69)	.87	No

The organizational antecedent measurement model also had good fit statistics. The model fit indices had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(356, N = 516)} = 765.46$, $p < .001$, an acceptable CFI = .93, an acceptable TLI = .91, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.043 - .052), and an acceptable SRMR = .05. The correlations between the constructs in the organizational antecedent measurement model can be found in Table 15.

Table 15

Organizational Antecedent Measurement Model Construct Relationships

Constructs (AVE)	R	Discriminant Validity
Perceived Distinctiveness (.65) & Perceived Prestige (.43)	.31	Yes
Perceived Prestige (.43) & Perceived Success (.63)	.71	Partial
Perceived Success (.63) & Perceived Distinctiveness (.65)	.33	Yes
Visibility of Organization (.37) & Perceived Distinctiveness (.65)	.11	Yes
Visibility of Organization (.37) & Perceived Prestige (.43)	.77	No
Visibility of Organization (.37) & Perceived Success (.63)	.64	Partial
Visibility of Team/Department (.49) & Perceived Distinctiveness	.04	Yes
Visibility of Team/Department (.49) & Perceived Prestige (.43)	.44	Yes
Visibility of Team/Department (.49) & Perceived Success (.63)	.28	Yes
Visibility of Team/Department (.49) & Visibility of Organization (.37)	.59	Yes

The individual antecedent measurement model had good fit statistics, but the POF latent variable was not positive definite. These fit indices included a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(194, N = 516)} = 452.36$, $p < .001$, an acceptable CFI = .94, an acceptable TLI = .93, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.045 - .057), and an acceptable SRMR = .05. The not positive definite error is an indication that the latent construct POF is not behaving properly and the provided statistics may not be completely accurate. Due to a very high correlation (i.e., $r = 83$) between POF and RE it was thought that this could be the cause of the error. Yet, when the RE construct was removed the same error that involved the POF construct occurred. This appears to be a sign that the error is specifically associated with the POF construct. To remedy the error, the POF construct was removed from the analysis in order to obtain accurate fit statistics and correlations between latent variables. The individual antecedent measurement model sans the POF construct had adequate fit statistics. These fit statistics included a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(142, N = 516)} = 362.82$, $p < .001$, an acceptable CFI = .93, an acceptable TLI = .92, an acceptable RMSEA = .06 (.048 - .062), and an acceptable SRMR = .05. The correlations between latent constructs in the individual antecedent measurement model are located in Table 16.

Table 16

Individual Antecedent Measurement Model Construct Relationships

Constructs (AVE)	R	Discriminant Validity
Local Sport Interest (.44) & General Sport Interest (.39)	.78	No
Person-Organization Fit (.56) & General Sport Interest (.39)*	.20	Yes
Person-Organization Fit (.56) & Local Sport Interest (.44)*	.56	Yes
Relationships with Employees (.58) & General Sport Interest (.39)	.08	Yes
Relationships with Employees (.58) & Local Sport Interest (.44)	.45	Yes
Relationships with Employees (.58) & Person-Organization Fit (.56)*	.83	No

Note. * denotes figures are from model that included PO Fit.

Charismatic leadership. A structural model was formed that tested the ability of charismatic leadership to predict SEI. Again, good fit statistics were found for the model. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 90.04$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.035 - .062), and a close SRMR = .05. The indicators for the charismatic leadership construct were .927, .923, and .848. All statistics related to the individual indicators and SEI can be found on Table 17. A relationship between SEI's constructs and charismatic leadership was discovered. The correlations between charismatic leadership and SC ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .22$, $p < .01$) were both significant. The charismatic leadership construct's composite reliability was .927.

Individual consideration. The structural model used to test the relationship between individual consideration and SEI also had satisfactory fit statistics. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 77.21$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .98, a close RMSEA = .04 (.027 - .055), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for the indicators of individual consideration were .878, .831, and .779. The statistics for this structural model can be found on Table 17. Significant correlations were found between intellectual consideration and SC ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .26$, $p < .01$). This construct's composite reliability figure was .869.

Intellectual stimulation. The structural model for SEI and intellectual stimulation was also sound. The model contained a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 77.04$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.027 - .055), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for intellectual stimulation were .892, .530, and .800. Significant correlations between intellectual stimulation and SC ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .27$, $p < .01$) were discovered. The composite reliability figure for this construct was .794. The specific results from the structural models of the leadership antecedents can be found in Table 17.

Table 17

Leadership Structural Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	*β* to SO	*β* to SC
Charismatic					.81	.93	.22	.16
	lc1	.927	.012	< .001				
	lc2	.923	.015	< .001				
	lc3	.848	.017	< .001				
Ind. Consid.					.69	.87	.26	.20
	lic1	.878	.020	< .001				
	lic2	.831	.026	< .001				
	lic3	.779	.024	< .001				
Intel. Stim.					.57	.79	.27	.23
	lis1	.892	.033	< .001				
	lis2	.530	.050	< .001				
	lis3	.800	.033	< .001				

Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .05 - Charismatic
Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .98; SRMR = .04 – Ind. Consid.
Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04 – Intel. Stim.

Sport interest. The structural model for sport interest and SEI had good fit statistics. The model consisted of a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 82.87$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .97, a close TLI = .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.031 - .058), and a close SRMR = .04. The sport interest factor loadings were .696, .615, and .553. Statistically significant correlations were found between sport interest and SC ($\beta = .89$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .58$, $p < .01$). The sport interest construct's composite reliability figure was .655.

Local sport interest. The structural model with SEI and localized sport interest also had good fit statistics. The model contained a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 95.10$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .96, a close TLI = .95, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.037 - .064), and a close SRMR = .05. The factor loadings associated with the local sport interest construct were .583, .491, and .568. The correlations between local sport interest and SC ($\beta = .56$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .66$, $p < .01$) were significant. The composite reliability level for this construct was below the acceptable cutoff level (i.e., .60) at .563.

PO fit. The structural model for SEI and PO Fit consisted of good fit statistics. The

model held a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)} = 76.38, p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI

= .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.026 - .055), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for the

PO Fit construct were .890, .504, and .803. The structural model contained significant

correlations between PO Fit and SC ($\beta = .31, p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .46, p < .01$). The PO Fit

construct's composite reliability was .787.

Relationships with employees. The structural model that contained both relationships

with employees and SEI also had good fit statistics. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(62,}$

$_{N = 516)} = 115.67, p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.029 -

.052), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for the relationships with employees were

.791, .783, .809, .770, and .659. Significant correlations between relationships with employees

and SC ($\beta = .20, p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .36, p < .01$) were found in the model. This construct's

composite reliability level was .875. The results from the structural models involving individual

antecedents can be found in Table 18.

Table 18

Individual Structural Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	β to SO	β to SC
General Sport Interest					.39	.66	.58	.89
	si1	.696	.040	< .001				
	si2	.615	.043	< .001				
	si3	.553	.056	< .001				
Local Sport Interest					.44	.56	.66	.56
	li1	.592	.073	< .001				
	li2	.838	.117	< .001				
	li3	.529	.073	< .001				
PO Fit					.56	.79	.46	.31
	pof1	.890	.039	< .001				
	pof2	.504	.044	< .001				

	pof3	.803	.035	< .001				
Relationships					.58	.88	.36	.20
	re1	.791	.025	< .001				
	re2	.783	.025	< .001				
	re3	.809	.025	< .001				
	re4	.770	.034	< .001				
	re5	.659	.032	< .001				

Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .97; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04 – General Sport Interest
Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .96; TLI = .95; SRMR = .05 – Local Sport Interest
Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04 – PO Fit
Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04 – Relationships with other employees

Perceived distinctiveness. The structural model that contained both SEI and perceived distinctiveness was also statistically viable. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)}$ = 82.29, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.030 - .058), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for perceived distinctiveness were .698, .948, and .751. Correlations between perceived distinctiveness and SC ($\beta = .18$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .27$, $p < .01$) were significant. Perceived distinctiveness's composite reliability was .845.

Perceived organizational prestige. The structural model for perceived organizational prestige and SEI was found to have acceptable fit statistics. The model contained a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(101, N = 516)}$ = 264.46, $p < .001$, an acceptable CFI = .94, an acceptable TLI = .93, an acceptable RMSEA = .06 (.048 - .064), and a close SRMR = .05. The factor loadings for the perceived organizational prestige construct were .787, .684, .720, .616, .705, .672, .555, and .455. There were significant correlations between perceived organizational prestige and SC ($\beta = .21$, $p < .01$) and SO ($\beta = .27$, $p < .01$) in the model. This construct's composite reliability figure was .856.

Perceived organizational success. The structural model for perceived organizational success and SEI was statistically sound. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(51, N = 516)}$ = 99.96, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .98, a close TLI = .97, a close RMSEA = .04 (.030 - .056), and a

close SRMR = .05. Perceived organizational had factor loadings of .837, .683, .824, and .816. A significant correlation between SO (β = .20, p < .01) and perceived organizational success was found, but the correlation between perceived organizational success and SC (β = .05, p = .41) was statistically insignificant. The perceived organizational success construct's composite reliability was .870.

Visibility of the organization. The structural model containing visibility of the organization and SEI had good model fit. The model held a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)}$ = 91.43, p < .001, a close CFI = .97, a close TLI = .96, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.035 - .062), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for the visibility of the organization were .722, .632, and .441. The model contained a significant correlation between visibility of the organization and SC (β = .13, p < .05), but the correlation between visibility of the organization and SO (β = .10, p = .14) was not statistically significant. The composite reliability level for this construct was .631.

Visibility of the team or department. The structural model for visibility of the team or department and SEI consisted of good model fit. The model held a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 516)}$ = 84.81, p < .001, a close CFI = .97, a close TLI = .96, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.032 - .059), and a close SRMR = .05. Factor loadings for the visibility of the team or department construct consisted of .792, .779, and .493. The structural model contained significant paths between visibility of team or department and SC (β = .19, p < .01) and SO (β = .21, p < .01). The composite reliability for this construct was .737. The results from the structural models for the organizational antecedents can be found in Table 19.

Table 19

Organizational Structural Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	β to SO	β to SC
Distinctiveness					.65	.85	.27	.18
	pd1	.698	.034	< .001				
	pd2	.948	.022	< .001				
	pd3	.751	.030	< .001				
Prestige					.43	.86	.27	.21
	pop1	.787	.027	< .001				
	pop2	.684	.035	< .001				
	pop3	.720	.028	< .001				
	pop4	.616	.036	< .001				
	pop5	.705	.029	< .001				
	pop6	.672	.038	< .001				
	pop7	.555	.047	< .001				
	pop8	.455	.046	< .001				
Org. Success					.63	.87	.20	*ns*
	ps1	.837	.021	< .001				
	ps2	.683	.029	< .001				
	ps3	.824	.021	< .001				
	ps4	.816	.030	< .001				
Visibility of Org.					.37	.63	*ns*	.13
	vo1	.722	.068	< .001				
	vo2	.632	.067	< .001				
	vo3	.441	.047	< .001				
Visibility of Team/Department					.49	.74	.21	.19
	vt1	.792	.039	< .001				
	vt2	.779	.039	< .001				
	vt3	.493	.047	< .001				

Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .04 – Perceived Distinctiveness
Note. RMSEA = .06; CFI = .94; TLI = .93; SRMR = .05 – Perceived Organizational Prestige
Note. RMSEA = .04; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; SRMR = .05 – Perceived Organizational Success
Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .97; TLI = .96; SRMR = .04 – Visibility of Organization
Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .97; TLI = .96; SRMR = .05 – Visibility of Team/Department

Study Three

The focus of Study Three was to examine the hypothesized outcomes of SEI. To do so,

collegiate athletics department employees were once again asked to participate in an online

survey. The survey included instruments that measured SEI, OCBs, turnover intentions, CWBs, and job satisfaction. The outcome variable items and item codes can be found in Table 20.

Table 20

Outcome Instrument Item Codes

Item	Code
Job Satisfaction	
All in all, I am satisfied with my job	sat1
In general, I don't like my job	sat2
In general, I like working here	sat3
Turnover Intentions	
I would prefer another, more ideal job than this sport job.	to1
I have had thoughts about changing universities since I have been here	to2
I plan on remaining at this university for the rest of my career	to3
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors	
My attendance at work above the norm	ocb1
I do not take extra breaks	ocb2
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one is watching	ocb3
I attend meetings that are not mandatory, but are considered important	ocb4
I attend functions that are not required, but help the company image	ocb5
I keep abreast of changes in the organization	ocb6
I read and keep up with organizational announcements, memos, and so on	ocb7
I help others who have heavy work loads	ocb8
I help orient new people even though it is not required	ocb9
I willingly help others who have work related problems	ocb10
Counterproductive Work Behaviors	
Taken property from work without permission	cwb1
Spent too much time fantasizing or daydreaming instead of working	cwb2
Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at work	cwb3
Come in late to work without permission	cwb4
Neglected to follow your boss's instructions	cwb5
Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked	cwb6
Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person	cwb7
Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job	cwb8
Put in little effort to your work	cwb9
Dragged out work in order to get overtime	cwb10

Additionally, demographic data was collected. This data included gender, race/ethnicity, level of collegiate sport, and tenure at the sport organization. A total of 2,000 sport employees were invited to participate in the study. Of the 2,000 invitees, a total of 567 participants

responded. The data were then examined for incomplete surveys. Similar to study two, the

survey consisted of three pages – not including demographic questions – on Qualtrics.

Participants who failed to complete all three pages of questions were removed from the sample –

as was done with Study Two. This left the sample with 555 ($N = 555$) usable surveys. Of the

participants 314 ($n = 314$) were males, 239 ($n = 239$) were females, and five ($n = 2$) did not

chose to identify as a male or female. There were 475 ($n = 475$) Caucasian, 15 ($n = 15$) Hispanic,

35 ($n = 35$) African American, two ($n = 2$) Native American, nine ($n = 9$) Asian, 11 ($n = 11$)

Multiracial, three ($n = 3$) Other, and five ($n = 5$) participants chose not to identify their

race/ethnicity. Participants' level of college sport was 329 ($n = 329$) at the FBS level, 95 ($n = 95$)

at the FCS level, 116 ($n = 116$) at the Division I (no football) level, and 13 ($n = 13$) at a different

(other) level. The tenure of the participants ranged from less than a year to 43 years. Lastly,

when asked if they were an alumnus of their sport organization 381 ($n = 381$) were not, 85 ($n = $

85) were as an undergraduate, 46 ($n = 46$) were as a graduate student, and 43 ($n = 43$) were as

both an undergraduate and graduate student. To account for the degree of missing data, Little's

missing data test was performed on the new sample. Little's test revealed that the missing data

should be considered MCAR significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(2090, N = 555)} = 2159.45$, $p = .142$.

Following the procedure of Study Two, the data were then reviewed for normality. Just as

in study two, many of the variables contained indicators that showed evidence of nonnormal

skew and kurtosis. That is, many indicators' distributions had negative skew and positive

kurtosis. Just as in Study Two, the skew and kurtosis was divided by the corresponding standard

error to determine normality. The standard error for skewness was .104 and ranged between .207

to .208 for kurtosis. A full list of the nonnormal indicators can be found on Table 21.

Table 21

Normality of Outcome Model Items

Item	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
sc1	4.24	1.64	-.34	-.61
sc2	5.75	1.29	-1.33	1.81
sc3	5.37	1.29	-.97	1.12
sc4	5.63	1.37	-1.22	1.43
so1	5.19	1.36	-.84	.47
so2	5.05	1.39	-.83	.45
so3	5.20	1.24	-.99	.95
so4	5.08	1.31	-.91	.70
ocb1	6.26	1.04	-1.74	3.26
ocb2	5.28	1.53	-.82	-.15
ocb3	6.25	.85	-1.84	6.49
ocb4	5.27	1.29	-1.05	.80
ocb5	5.04	1.37	-.84	.08
ocb6	5.71	.94	-1.26	3.31
ocb7	5.68	.99	-1.29	2.59
ocb8	5.58	.95	-1.07	1.97
ocb9	5.55	1.09	-.82	.73
ocb10	5.94	.83	-.96	1.77
sat1	5.50	1.24	-1.39	1.91
sat2	5.80	1.31	-1.39	1.52
sat3	5.82	1.04	-1.50	3.06
to1	4.5	1.80	-.294	-1.08
to2	3.73	1.99	.355	-1.24
to3	3.71	1.90	.15	-1.19
cwb1	1.37	.87	2.63	7.01
cwb2	3.00	1.79	.33	-1.05
cwb3	2.12	1.55	1.08	-.05
cwb4	1.99	1.51	1.32	.64
cwb5	1.62	1.13	1.98	3.64
cwb6	1.65	1.25	1.88	2.75
cwb7	1.52	1.07	2.28	5.11
cwb8	1.12	.60	6.06	40.53
cwb9	1.91	1.38	1.54	1.93
cwb10	1.06	.46	8.83	84.84

The lack of normal distributions prompted the utilization of the MLR estimator in the Mplus

version 7.0 statistical program. The data were then analyzed with Mplus. The fixed factor

method was once again used for estimation. The measurement model was over-identified. First, a

measurement model of the SEI construct was created. This was followed by a global outcome

measurement model. Then structural models of each antecedent with the SEI construct were

formed and examined. Structural models help to compare the relationships between latent

constructs. Once again, composite reliability scores are used as an indication of the degree to

which the items of the construct are internally consistent.

Sport employee identification. A measurement model of SEI was examined first. The

measurement model had good fit statistics just as it did in Study Two. The model consisted of a

significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(19, N = 555)} = 64.44$, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .96, an acceptable TLI = .94,

an acceptable RMSEA = .07 (.048 - .084), and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for SC

were .512, .823, .683, and .851. The factor loadings for SO consisted of .732, .729, .736, and

.749. Once again, the first SC item had a fair factor loading (Comrey & Lee, 1992), but the item

was retained due to its theoretical importance. The two dimensions were correlated at .58 ($r =$

.58). Composite reliability was also satisfactory with SC at .82 and SO at .83. Convergent

validity was apparent as SC had an AVE of .53 and SO had an AVE of .54 – both of which are

above .5. The results from the SEI outcome measurement model are located in Table 22.

Table 22

SEI Construct Outcome Measurement Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	Item-to-total
Sport Org.					.54	.83	
	so1	.732	.034	< .001			.57
	so2	.729	.037	< .001			.58
	so3	.736	.030	< .001			.61
	so4	.749	.030	< .001			.59
Sport Cent.					.53	.82	
	sc1	.512	.037	< .001			.42
	sc2	.823	.029	< .001			.62
	sc3	.683	.036	< .001			.61
	sc4	.851	.023	< .001			.62

Note. RMSEA = .07; CFI = .96; TLI = .94; SRMR = .04

Measurement model. Another measurement model was created that contained the SEI

construct and all of the proposed outcome constructs. This measurement model had mostly good

fit statistics. These fit statistics included a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(512, N = 555)} = 1045.89$, $p <$

.001, a mediocre CFI = .88, a mediocre TLI = .87, a close RMSEA = .04 (.040 - .047), and an

acceptable SRMR = .06. The correlations between latent variables in the outcome measurement

model can be found in Table 23.

Table 23

Outcome Measurement Model Construct Relationships

Constructs (AVE)	R	Discriminant Validity
OCB (.25) & CWB (.21)	-0.29	Yes
Job Satisfaction (.71) & CWB (.21)	-0.26	Yes
Job Satisfaction (.71) & OCB (.25)	.28	Yes
Turnover Intentions (.43) & CWB (.21)	-0.35	Yes
Turnover Intentions (.43) & OCB (.25)	.30	Yes
Turnover Intentions (.43) & Job Satisfaction (.71)	.82	Partial

Counterproductive work behaviors. The structural model with CWBs had mostly

acceptable fit statistics. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(132, N = 555)} = 308.99$, $p < .001$,

an acceptable CFI = .91, a mediocre TLI = .89, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.042 - .056), and a

close SRMR = .05. The factor loadings for the CWBs factor included .430, .502, .563, .474,

.446, .512, .481, .273, .487, and .336. The paths between CWBs and SC ($\beta = .13$, $p = .09$) and

SO ($\beta = -.12$, $p = .10$) were not statistically significant. The CWB construct had a composite

reliability level of .72.

Job satisfaction. The structural model that contained the job satisfaction and SEI

constructs had good model fit. The model consisted of a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 555)} =$

113.21, $p < .001$, a close CFI = .96, a close TLI = .95, an acceptable RMSEA = .06 (.044 - .069),

and a close SRMR = .04. The factor loadings for the job satisfaction construct were .910, .775,

and .842. There was a statistically significant correlation between job satisfaction and SO (β = .53, p < .01), but the correlation between job satisfaction and SC (β = -.13, p = .06) was not statistically significant. The job satisfaction construct's composite reliability was .88.

Turnover intentions. The structural model holding turnover intentions and SEI was found to have good model fit. The model had a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(41, N = 555)}$ = 100.26, p < .001, a close CFI = .96, a close TLI = .95, an acceptable RMSEA = .05 (.038 - .064), and a close SRMR = .04. Turnover intentions' factor loadings were .796, .517, and .613. The correlation between turnover intentions and SO (β = .46, p < .01) was statistically significant, but the correlation between turnover intentions and SC (β = -.07, p = .37) was not. The composite reliability for the turnover intentions construct was .68.

Organizational citizenship behaviors. The structural model with OCBs and SEI generally good model fit statistics. The model was found to have a significant chi-square, $\chi^2_{(132, N = 555)}$ = 349.97, p < .001, an acceptable CFI = .90, a mediocre TLI = .89, an acceptable RMSEA = .06 (.048 - .062), and a close SRMR = .05. The OCB construct held factor loadings of .327, .199, .330, .634, .603, .533, .502, .536, .623, and .551. Once again, a statistically significant correlation was found between OCBs and SO (β = .47, p < .01), but the correlation between OCBs and SC (β = -.12, p = .10) was not statistically significant. The OCB construct had a composite reliability figure of .76. The results of the structural models of the outcome variables are located in Table 24.

Table 24

Outcome Structural Model Results

Dimension	Item	Std. Est	*SE*	*p*	AVE	Composite reliability	β from SO	β from SC
CWBs					.21	.72	*ns*	*ns*
	cwb1	.430	.106	< .001				
	cwb2	.502	.057	< .001				
	cwb3	.563	.053	< .001				
	cwb4	.474	.049	<. 001				
	cwb5	.446	.066	< .001				
	cwb6	.512	.048	< .001				
	cwb7	.481	.082	< .001				
	cwb8	.273	.164	*ns*				
	cwb9	.487	.051	< .001				
	cwb10	.336	.163	< .05				
Job Sat.					.71	.88	.53	*ns*
	sat1	.910	.019	< .001				
	sat2	.775	.035	< .001				
	sat3	.842	.022	< .001				
Turnover Int.					.43	.68	.46	*ns*
	ti1	.796	.048	< .001				
	ti2	.517	.046	< .001				
	ti3	.613	.042	< .001				
OCBs					.25	.76	.47	*ns*
	ocb1	.327	.050	< .001				
	ocb2	.199	.053	< .001				
	ocb3	.330	.047	< .001				
	ocb4	.634	.038	< .001				
	ocb5	.603	.042	< .001				
	ocb6	.533	.045	< .001				
	ocb7	.502	.045	< .001				
	ocb8	.536	.049	< .001				
	ocb9	.623	.039	< .001				
	ocb10	.551	.047	< .001				

Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .91; TLI = .89; SRMR = .05 – CWBs
Note. RMSEA = .06; CFI = .96; TLI = .95; SRMR = .04 – Job Satisfaction
Note. RMSEA = .05; CFI = .96; TLI = .95; SRMR = .04 – Turnover Intentions
Note. RMSEA = .06; CFI = .90; TLI = .89; SRMR = .05 – OCBs

Chapter V: Discussion

The following chapter details both theoretical and practical implications. The results from Study One are indications that SEI is a construct that has two correlated dimensions. These dimensions represent a connection to sport and sport organizational identification. The instrument that measures SEI appears to be valid and reliable. In Study Two, the proposed antecedents of SEI were tested. It was discovered that all three forms of antecedents (i.e., leadership, organizational, and individual) had a relationship with SEI. Yet, some of the proposed antecedents did not have statistically significant relationships with SEI. In Study Three, the proposed outcomes of SEI were examined. SEI was not significantly correlated with CWBs, but the SO dimension did have positive relationships with the other outcome variables. However, the SC construct did not have any significant relationships with any of the outcome variables. Rationale for the findings, future directions, and limitations are included in the following discussion.

Study One

The results of Study One revealed a valid and reliable measure of sport employee identification. The uniqueness and criticality of the present scholarship is emphasized by past research. Swanson and Kent (2015) examined sport employees with established scales – both of which were used in the development of the SEI instrument (i.e., Mael & Ashforth (1992) and Wann & Branscombe (1993)). However, the current examination provides a specific instrument to be used with sport employees as opposed to altering instruments to fit the sport environment. As such, there are several theoretical implications. First, the SC dimension is evidence of the uniqueness of the construct. The SC construct of SEI lends credibility to the distinctiveness of the overall construct. While the SO dimension is similar to organizational identification (cf. Mael

& Ashforth, 1992), the SC dimension's theme is a product of the experiences of sport employees from the focus group. The data provided by the sport employees culminated in a previously unknown construct (i.e., the SC construct) – this finding is an indication that SEI is more than a nuanced form of organizational identification.

Additionally, the two factors are similar to those hypothesized in Oja et al.'s (2015) original work. Oja et al. (2015) initially proposed that SEI is composed of team identification and organizational identification properties; the results of this study verify those arguments in part. The first of the two factors discovered in this study is related to self-esteem verification or improvement, which is a common derivative of social identity theory (Burke & Stets, 2009; Tajfel, 1978), and potentially is a mechanism of organizational identification. That is, individuals might identify with their sport organization due to the enhancement that the membership provides to their self-esteem. The four-item factor contains two modified items that were retained from Mael & Ashforth's (1992) measure of organizational identification. Tyler (2012) explained that people gravitate to groups (i.e., organizations) that will inform their self-definition in a positive manner. In turn, it is plausible that sport employees identify with their sport organization due to their inclination to improve their self-esteem. A sport organization can facilitate such improvements to one's self-esteem via victories and other accomplishments that are not possible for a single individual to achieve. The increase in self-esteem thus facilitates the identification of the sport employee. As such, an identified sport employee might view the sport organization as an extension of the self, refer to the organization as 'we', and allow the defining features of the sport organization to influence their own self-definition. This construct represents identification with the organization and is titled Sport Organizational identification (SO).

The second factor of SEI is related to one's connection with a larger sport social edifice. Although Oja et al. (2015) posited that team identification would be a source of identification for sport employees, the second factor of SEI only partially reflects this assertion. The authors argued that sport employees are likely to form an emotional attachment to the teams of a sport organization and thus develop a sense of fandom. This concept is not diminished by the results of this study, but rather the mechanism for identification is accordingly altered. It appears that sport employees do form a psychological connection with the sport aspect of the organization, but this connection could be construed as deeper than mere team identification. It also seems as if sport employees relish the involvement in sport that a sport organization provides. As Hogg and Abrams (1988) explained, it is the salient features of the group by which individuals define the critical features of him or herself. Restated, sport organizations serve as a clear connection to the idea of sport (i.e., competition, thrill of victory, bonding with teammates or fellow employees) and sport employees identify with this salient feature of sport organizations because being involved in sport is important to the way they view the self (i.e., self-definition).

This manner of identification introduces the concept that individuals with certain characteristics might be drawn to sport organizations (e.g., former athletes or supporters of sport). Further, a specific desire to remain connected to the larger network of sport is similar to former athletes retaining their athlete identity by gaining employment with a sport organization (cf. Shachar et al., 2004). This concept strengthens Oja et al.'s (2015) argument that SEI is a unique form of organizational identification. Accordingly, sport employees likely identify with the sport organization as it allows them to remain a part of the culture of athletics and for former athletes retain their identity as an athlete. In turn, the definition of SEI is now repositioned to the psychological bond arising from both organizational identification and a sport centric identity

between sport employees and the parent organization in which they are employed. Thus this dimension is titled Sport Centric identification (SC).

The SC dimension of SEI should be considered a form of social identity. The dimension contains items such as 'Sport is a fundamental part of who I am' and 'I consider athletics to be an important part of who I am'. Initially, these items might appear to be of a personal identification theme. However, the instrument is positioned to measure how the salient features of the self allow one to identify with the group (i.e., sport organization). In this instance, an individual who has an internal definition of him or herself that is strongly related to sport will connect or identify with the sport organization as it represents the larger social sport network. Restated, the membership to the sport organization triggers, supports, or influences the concept of sport being particularly salient to the individual (i.e., self-definition). Further, in SIT group membership influences self-definition (Tajfel, 1978). With SEI, the membership with a sport organization might influence or even nourish the individual's self-definition that pertains to sport.

The two factors of SEI both draw from similar concepts such as group membership as a vehicle for self-improvement or validation. Not surprisingly, these two factors are correlated ($r =$ .60). Although both factors are distinct from one another and no indicators cross over to the other factor, the connection between the two is apparent statistically (i.e., the correlation) and theoretically (i.e., social identity theory). Both dimensions are posited to comprise the constitution of SEI. Restated, at this time in development one must utilize both factors to fully measure SEI. However, the substantial correlation does not indicate that the factors could not be independently measured in future research endeavors. Currently, SEI is posited as a conglomeration of improvement to self-esteem (i.e., SO) and verification of a connection to sport

(i.e., SC) as mechanisms for identification with a sport organization. That said, Oja et al.'s (2015) original definition of SEI should not be dissolved as the results of this study support the idea that sport employees feel a connection to their sport organization, but the identification arises specifically from self-esteem enhancement. This is related to organizational identification, and a connection to sport as a larger social sport edifice, which is more detailed and pronounced than team identification for sport employees.

The results from the focus group were particularly insightful. Of the eight final items, six were derived from the focus group's data. Academic inquiry of sport employees' identification is in its infancy. These findings should be considered a work in progress. As such, these findings offer a first step for the continuation of research pertaining to the identification of sport employees. The focus group method (i.e., qualitative methods) was utilized due to Churchill's (1979) recommendation. In this instance, the qualitative methods allowed the researcher to probe and gather specific details from individuals that reside within the sample population. The information gathered from the individuals who participated in the focus group allowed the researcher to better understand the identification processes of sport employees. Specifically, the data from the focus group revealed how sport employees identify with the sport centric nature of their sport organization.

Study Two

The purpose of Study Two was to examine the antecedents of SEI. The proposed antecedents of SEI were derived from Oja et al. (2015). The analysis revealed mixed support for the hypotheses concerning the antecedents of SEI. Each hypothesis will now be closely reviewed.

The first hypothesis was that PO Fit will predict SEI, and this notion was supported by the analysis. Though, PO Fit was unable to be estimated in the individual antecedent measurement model. The output was reviewed for inappropriate correlations (e.g., correlations greater than 1.00). No obvious errors were found. The high correlation between PO Fit and relationships with other employees in the first measurement model (i.e., $r = .83$) was thought to be the cause of the problem. The model was properly estimated when PO fit was removed, but when the relationships with other employees construct was removed PO Fit still had the same error. It appears as if the PO Fit constructs' correlations with other variables, when measured with the other individual antecedent constructs, is not likely to be accurately measured. Nevertheless, in the structural model with only PO Fit and SEI, PO Fit had strong statistical paths to both dimensions of SEI, with the path to SC at $\beta = .31$ and SO at $\beta = .46$. The statistically significant and robust paths from PO Fit to the dimensions of SEI informs that as a sport employee feels as if they fit in with their sport organization this environment will likely be a precursor to the sport employee generating the unique identification with their sport organization known as SEI. Further, the strength of the paths between PO Fit and the two dimensions of SEI is also noteworthy as they represent two of the strongest paths in the entire analysis.

This occurrence is not an indication that PO Fit is required for SEI to occur; rather, it signals the strength of the relationship between the constructs. Restated, PO Fit appears to have a substantial impact on the identities of sport employees. If sport employees feel a sense of a match between their values and the values of the sport organization then PO Fit is achieved. With a value alignment between sport employee and sport organization then the employee might have a notion of oneness with their employer as the organization and the employee think alike

(i.e., shared values). In turn, the employee will make the cognitive connection between self and group (i.e., oneness). The oneness idea is a critical feature of SIT. People must feel as if they belong, have a membership, or that they embody the organization (i.e., oneness) for SIT to occur. Thus, the presence of PO Fit might serve as a doorway to SEI as it has a role in the cognitive link between organization and employee.

Specifically, the two dimensions of SEI pose different theoretical implications. The SO dimension of SEI is similar to organizational identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), and had support from previous empirical investigations that PO Fit predicted SO (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Yaniv & Farkas, 2005). The theoretical argument rests in the previously explained oneness factor that allows sport employees to view the sport organization as an entity similar to themselves because of the shared values. However, the analysis also found that PO Fit predicted SC, which describes how a sport employee identifies with their sport organization due to their affinity for sport. Here, the connection between PO Fit and SC is likely a function of the sport environment. Any given sport organization is likely to have a code – either formal or informal – by which the sport organization produces, celebrates, or markets sport. Separate from a code of conduct or mission statement that might represent a generic message that any sport or non-sport organization might have, a sport organization's sport culture or values represent a unique connection for an individual who holds similar values concerning sport. As sport employees identify with sport organizations because of the opportunity to stay connected with sport (i.e., the SC construct), sharing the same sport values with a sport organization is likely to improve the ability of the sport employee to identify with the sport organization.

The second hypothesis was that positive relationships with employees would predict SEI. The analysis revealed that there was a positive relationship between the relationships with other

employees and both constructs of SEI, with SC at $\beta = .20$ and SO at $\beta = .36$, and was thus supported. The relationships with other employees construct is similar to a variable known as social capital, which describes the value of various connections or "links" one has in a given network (i.e., organization). In the current analysis, the pathways from the relationships with other employees to SEI are fairly strong. This finding is an indication that the more beneficial relationships one has in a sport organization the more easily they will be able to identify with the sport organization. This result is theoretically supported for reasons that are similar to PO Fit. As sport employees create or sustain social connections within their organization the links between employees will be positively affected. Restated, as one forges more connections and refortifies existing connections, their social capital will grow. Further, as their social capital grows the relationships they hold (i.e., the links within the network) remain or become more positive. Social capital or relationships with other employees are constructs that represent the progressive improvement into the social fabric of the organization. As one builds their social capital or positive relationships within the organization they become more engrained in the social network of the organization. Again, this leads to a sense of oneness, which is vital to SIT. When sport employees advance their relationships within their sport organization they are likely to feel a part of the sport organization, which will facilitate their perception of membership. If a sport employee do not feel as if they belong to their sport organization then identifying with the sport organization is a difficult process. However, creating social connections within the sport organization appears to be a mechanism for a sport employee to identify with their sport organization.

The specific results pertaining to the two dimension of SEI allow for a better understanding of the identification process for sport employees. The SO dimension is

theoretically supported by past examinations of OID and social capital (Bartel & Dutton, 2012; Brown et al., 1986). Again, the social connections within the network or organization facilitates the perception of oneness for the employee, which in turn induces the process of identification. Being a member of a group or organization is more than a formal title, relationships with other group members informs the sport employee that they are in fact a member of the organization. The SC dimension also had a statistically significant path with relationships with other employees. Theoretically, this insinuates that having good relationships with other sport employees improves the ability of the sport employee to identify with the sport organization by way of the connection to sport. Sport has a function of togetherness in (i.e., teamwork) and out (i.e., fandom) of the actual sports. Here, the teamwork aspect of sport likely draws in the sport employees. Sport employees, because of their fondness for sport; likely relish the opportunity to be a part of a team.

The shared interest in teamwork improves the social bonds between employees, which enables inclusion to the group or organization. This is why it is not likely that SEI comes before the relationships with other employees construct. Restated, the directionality is appropriate because identification as a sport employee alone is not able to thrust forward the connection to sport. Instead it is the opportunity to be a member of a sport team that brings people together, which in turn *spurs* the sense of oneness to the organization. If identification alone were enough to improve social capital or cohesion among sport employees then there would be little difference between the two variables. For example, if two sport employees with the same sport organization accept that they are both sport employees for their organization, this will not ensure that the two sport employees will get along; it merely means they work in the same building. However, working within the sport environment and mutual interest in teamwork (i.e., strong

social connections) likely allow for a mechanism to improve the sport employees identification with the sport centric aspect of the organization.

The third hypothesis was the sport interest – at a general and local level – will predict SEI. Sport interest at the general level represented if sport employees enjoyed sport, and sport interest at the local level was more pointed in that it represented if sport employees were fans of or enjoyed the athletic contests of the sport organization to which thy were employed. While the paths between both sport interest constructs and the two SEI constructs had very strong statistics $\beta = .89$ for SC and $\beta = .58$ for SO at the general level and $\beta = .56$ for SC and $\beta = .66$ for SO at the local level several issues arose. First, there is a lack of discriminant validity between SC and sport interest at the general level. This means that statistically the two constructs are not significantly different. Restated, the constructs are statistically measuring the same variance. Second, the sport interest at the local level construct did not have adequate composite reliability. This suggests that the construct is not accurately measuring what it intends to measure. The local sport interest instrument was adapted from the general sport interest instrument. The general instrument previously had adequate reliability figures, but nonetheless the low composite reliability figure for the local instrument brings pause to any generalizability of the results. Third, the other paths, while statistically significant, are rather large. The large pathways might indicate that there could be issues of mulitcollinerity.

Despite the previously noted concerns, there are several theoretical developments concerning sport interests as an antecedent of SEI. First, the strong pathways between the sport interest variables and both dimensions of SEI indicate that there is a connection between fandom and sport employees. Past scholars have investigated the idea that sport employees are sport fans or fans of their organization's teams. This concept was initially posited by Todd and Kent (2009)

when they stated that sport employees are likely to realize a positive social identity with their sport organization. Later, Oja et al. (2015) advanced the idea that sport employees would identify with the sport aspect of the organization and that Wann and Branscombe's (1993) team identification construct would best describe this occurrence. This notion was supported with ethnographic data. The connection between sport and sport employees has also received empirical investigations. Brimecombe (2012) examined how sport employees' fandom affected their work behaviors – specifically CWBs. Others have examined the potential benefits of fandom in the sport workplace (Swanson & Kent, 2015), and found that when sport employees have a team identification they are more likely to participate in beneficial behaviors for the sport organization. Interestingly, sport fans have reported very low levels of team identification with their organization's team/s (Brimecombe, 2012).

Yet, the results in the current study portray different circumstances. The strong regression weights indicate that there is a robust connection for sport employees between enjoying sport and their identification processes with their sport organization. This also indicates that sport employees do take an interest in sport. They do not just happen to work in sport as opposed to a more general business organization. Moreover, a general interest in sport statistically represented the SEI dimension considered to be sport centric, and having a general interest in sport had a very strong path with the sport organizational identification dimension. Restated, having a general interest in sport is a strong indication that one will have a unique identification with their sport organization.

The local interest in sport also had strong paths to both dimensions of SEI. This finding provides support to the proposition that sport employees – at some level – are fans of their sport organization. This is in contrast with previous examinations of sport employees (Brimecombe,

2012; Swanson & Kent, 2015). However, the mechanisms for response from the participants were different. In both of the aforementioned studies, participants were asked to fill out the Wann and Branscombe's (1993) Sport Spectator Identification Scale. In the current study, sport employees were asked to fill out two forms of Funk et al.'s (2003) sport interest survey. The purpose of the two scales is different. One is related to how an individual identifies with a sport team, and the other is focused on the emotional appeal of sport. Restated, one scale is cognitive based and the other is affect based. The contrasting results offer an opportunity for future research to better understand the relationship between sport and sport employees. However, the current results imply that sport employees do take an interest in sport in general and the team/s of their sport organization – even if they do not identify as a fan of their sport organization's team/s.

The fourth hypothesis was that perceived organizational success will predict SEI. This hypothesis was partially supported as SC did not have a significant path from perceived organizational success $\beta = .05$, but SO did have a significant path $\beta = .20$. This construct represents the perception of the sport employee that their sport organization is successful. This instrument does not measure an attraction to the sport organization's team/s; instead the measurement is focused on how well the employee believes the team/s is/are doing. The premise that sport employees' identification would benefit from being a part of a successful sport organization is rooted in SIT literature. Individuals yearn to join groups that are successful due to the consequential improvement to their self-esteem. That is, group members attribute the success of the group as their own success. Therefore, membership to a successful group should be a precursor to identifying with that group due to the positive effect on the group members' self-esteem.

In the current analysis, SO was predicted by perceived organizational success. This finding is similar to past explorations of OID and perceived success (e.g., Hirt et al., 1992). However, the interpretation of the analysis offers relevant insights. While still statistically significant, the path from perceived organizational success to SO is not overly strong. As such, the impact that perceived organizational success has on SO is not strong even if it is statistically significant. Having a winning organization will improve the identification processes for sport employees, but only moderately and in terms of how they feel aligned with the sport organization. However, the connection between SO and success is not surprising given that one of the items of SO is 'My sport organization's success are my successes'. Conversely, there was not a significant path between perceived organizational success and SC. The success of the organization's team/s did not effect the how the sport employee identified with the sport centric aspect of working for a sport organization. This idea potentially informs that the identification with the sport aspect of the organization is not about winning or losing. Rather, the identification might be improved from maintaining the sport environment. For sport employees, it appears that they are not as concerned with being a member of a successful sport organization. It is likely that what matters to sport employees is that they are connected to sport and the *opportunity* to compete or be associated with competition rather than the actual results of the competition with regards to the identification processes.

The fifth hypothesis was that perceived organizational prestige will predict SEI. The analysis revealed support for the hypothesis as both SC $\beta = .21$ and SO $\beta = .27$ had significant paths from perceived organizational prestige. This construct is representative of the perceptions of sport employees in terms of how well regarded their sport organization is. Being highly thought of as an organization is similar yet distinct from organizational success. While

organizational success is a measure of outcomes from an organization, prestige is classification

for something that is done in an exemplary fashion. For example, an organization does not need

to be successful in order to be seen as prestigious – well thought of organizations are not immune

to failure. Yet, success often facilitates – at least initially – prestige. In the current analysis,

prestige was thought to predict SEI because of past explorations with OID and prestige (Mael &

Ashforth, 1992; Reade, 2001). Once again, SIT's connection to self-esteem brings the two

constructs together. A membership to a highly thought of (i.e., prestigious) sport organization is

likely to boost the member's self-esteem (cf. Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

Indeed, there was a significant path between SO and prestige. The significant path is an

indication that the past accolades and respect of the sport organization plays a part in the

identification processes of sport employees. That is, being a member of a prestigious sport

organization helps the identification process of sport employees. Individuals gravitate to groups

that allow them to feel pride as it improves their self-esteem (Hogg & Terry, 2012). Much like

with past organizational identification examinations, prestige was once again found to be an

antecedent of a specific form of social identification. Additionally, perceived organizational

prestige was also an antecedent of SC. Much like the self-esteem improvement concept with SO,

here it appears as if when sport employees are members of prestigious sport organizations they

are able to better identify with the organization due to the positive reputation of the sport

organization. Sport employees appear to be less concerned with the current accomplishments

(i.e., organizational success) than the past reputation or fame (i.e., prestige) of their sport

organization in terms of their identification processes.

Todd and Kent (2009) posited that sport employees would value both the organizational

success and the prestige of their sport organizations due to their supposed positive social

identification with their sport organization. In turn, Oja et al. (2015) also proposed that both would lead to SEI. The results of the analysis indicate that there is limited support for organizational success as an antecedent, but prestige as an antecedent of SEI is fully supported. Theoretically, the rational for this finding is likely grounded in the sport employees' perceived impact of both constructs to their internal definitions. Restated, the prestige construct potentially offered a broader means for the sport employees to identify with the sport organization. While the two constructs are similar, their difference lies in the position of success. Organizational success measures the current accomplishments, while prestige is more closely related to the past accomplishments of the sport organization. As such, prestige appears to be a stronger pull for sport employees in the development of their identification with their sport organization.

The sixth hypothesis is that perceived distinctiveness will have a relationship with SEI. The results of the analysis indicate that distinctiveness of the sport organization is an antecedent of both dimensions of SEI with the paths between distinctiveness and SC at $\beta = .18$ and SO at $\beta = .27$. Distinctiveness is a critical aspect within social identification processes due to the necessity for individuals to spate groups from one another. If an individual cannot differentiate between two or more groups the identification process becomes difficult – if not impossible (Tajfel, 1978). One must accept and understand their membership to a group for social identification to occur. Sport provides an ideal platform for organizations to be distinct. The singular geographic locations, team nicknames, colors, and logos are some features that allow sport organizations to differentiate from others. Thus, theoretically one would expect perceived distinctiveness to support the SEI process. The current results appear to support this concept.

Perceived distinctiveness had a significant path to SO. This finding informs that when sport organizations distinguish themselves from others sport employees are able to better identify

with the sport organization. This is akin to a sport employee identifying with the sport organization in some part because of the policies or actions of the team/s. A sport employee could identify with their sport organization due to the fact that there is only one organization that represents the state, city, or school and their membership is then exclusive. When the boundaries between organizations are not blurred not everyone can claim membership to the separate groups. In turn, this improves the ability of sport employees to identify with their sport organization due to the established boundaries and exclusive memberships.

The SC dimension of SEI also had a significant path from distinctiveness. The interpretation of this discovery is that when sport employees work for a known sport organization their ability to identify with the sport organization is enhanced. That is, when a sport employee is able to inform others that he/she works for a sport team as opposed to a general business organization the identification process moves forward. Based on the results of Study One, being a part of a sport organization or group is an important feature of the internalized view for a sport employee. For such individuals, it is important that they are aligned with sport in terms of whom they work for. By being distinctly a sport organization their identification process with their employer is thus enriched.

The seventh hypothesis was that the visibility of the organization and of the specific team or department would both be antecedents of SEI. The results of the analysis were mixed. In regards to the visibility of the organization as an antecedent of SEI, there was a significant path from SC $\beta = .13$, but this was at a lower threshold for statistical significance (i.e., $p < .05$). Further, the path from SO $\beta = .10$ was not statistically significant. For the visibility of the team or department – a more micro view of organizational visibility – both paths to SC $\beta = .19$ and SO $\beta = .21$ were significant. The visibility construct represents the popularity of the overall sport

organization and the specific departments or teams. A visible sport organization is one that is known by many people within a given community. Visibility was proposed as an antecedent to SEI due to past responses of sport employees that concerned the visibility of their sport organization (Oja et al., 2015), and that visibility has thought to play a role in the identities of sport employees due to the popularity of sport (Todd & Kent, 2009). Sport employees reported that they enjoyed working for highly visible and popular teams. Being able to tell their families and friends that they worked for a well-known sport organization helped them to identify as a member of that organization (Oja et al., 2015). Others have noted the connection between visibility and organizational identification (Smidts et al., 2001). Interestingly the visibility of the sport organization was not a strong predictor of either dimension of SEI, but the more specific version of visibility – team or department – did have significant paths to both dimensions of SEI.

The significance of the more specific form of visibility statistically supporting its status as an antecedent of SEI, but the general visibility construct failing to do so is likely rooted in sport employees valuing their role within the sport organization. In turn, the role – as signified by the department or team by which the sport employee is a member of – plays a role with how sport employees identify with their sport organization. This could mean that sport employees like to be seen as certified athletic trainers, equipment managers, or football team employees as opposed to just sport employees. This is due to the departments or teams' ability to stand out from the overall sport organization. For example, a basketball team might be more popular or visible than other teams at an American university. Working specifically for the basketball team might improve the identification processes with the sport organization. It appears as if just working for a visible sport organization was not enough to trigger identification processes, but

working for a visible team or department within a sport organization did impact the identification processes for sport employees.

Visibility as an antecedent to the SO dimension of SEI had conflicting results. Visibility of the sport organization did not predict SO, while visibility of the specific team or department did predict SO. This confounding result is likely due to the depth of the constructs. The broader form of visibility is representative of the overall organization, thus it would connect sport employees to the prominence of the sport organization. However, the more defined visibility construct would allow sport employees to use the popularity of their department *and* that of the overall sport organization. This may explain why the broad visibility path was insignificant, but the specific visibility path was significant for SO. Further, visibility has been known as an antecedent of organizational identification (Smidts et al., 2001). The findings of this analysis support this concept, but only with a more defined version of visibility. The connection between visibility and social identification stems from individuals improving their self-esteem via the popularity of the organization. People can receive a psychological benefit from being associated with a visible organization. Here, sport employees who are members of visible sport departments or teams draw from that visibility to augment their identification process.

The SC dimension had a significant path from both versions of the visibility construct, although the path from the broad form of visibility has a greater chance of error. These connections can be described as a sport employee valuing an enhanced connection to sport. That is, a sport employee likely yearns to be associated with sport and being a part of a visible sport organization and department or team within that organization likely facilitates the sport employee identifying as a sport employee thus cognitively establishing the connection to sport. Not only does the sport employee understand that they work and are associated with a sport

organization, but due to the visibility of the sport organization and teams or departments others recognize the connection to sport as well. When one considers that it is *others* who help us define ourselves and the groups we belong to (Jenkins, 2006), the importance of visibility to the identification process of sport employees becomes clear.

The next three hypotheses were charismatic leadership, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation will predict SEI. The results of the analysis show support for the hypotheses. The paths from charismatic leadership to SC was $\beta = .16$ and to SO was $\beta = .22$. The paths from individualized consideration to SC was $\beta = .20$ and to SO was .26. Lastly, the paths from intellectual stimulation to SC was $\beta = .23$ and to SO was .27. All paths were statistically significant. The significant paths from the three forms of Bass's (1990) transformational leadership construct indicate that leadership does play a role in the ability of sport employees to identify with their sport organization. The theoretical principle that drives the connection between transformational leadership and the two constructs of SEI is that charismatic leaders will create standards or value systems that in turn the sport employees will adhere to (cf. Carmeli et al., 2007). Leaders who take the time to interact and motivate employees consequently improve the sense of belonging to the sport organization. This notion is exemplified by the individualized consideration construct. The individual attention positively influences the employee's identification with the organization. Moreover, leaders can inspire their employees to improve their work performance or mental capacity. This form of leadership, known as intellectual stimulation, allows the employee to feel a part of the organization due to the inspiration they receive from his or her supervisor. It appears as if these circumstances hold true for sport employees.

The SO construct of SEI was predicted by all three of the antecedent forms of transformational leadership. Past scholars have noted the use of transformational leadership to predict identification processes (Carmeli et al., 2007; Epitropaki & Martin, 2001; Martin & Epitropaki, 2005; Shamir et al., 1993; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). In the current analysis similar results are found. It appears that sport employees – much like non-sport employees – are positively affected by transformational leadership with regards to their identification processes. When sport employees work for charismatic leaders, receive personal attention from their superiors, or are intellectually challenged by their supervisors they are likely to feel as if they belong to the sport organization, which then facilitates their identification processes. Furthermore, the positive effect of transformational leadership is not limited to the organizational identification aspect of SEI, but also to the sport centric aspect of SEI.

The connection between the SC construct and transformational leadership could be a product of the coaching aspect of sport. Sport employees might view their leaders or supervisors in a coach-like role. Also, much like the SO dimension, having a leader incorporate them into the sport organization by treating them well, providing them with individual attention, and motivating them to think critically about the issues at hand will help the sport employee cognitively accept their membership with the group (i.e., sport organization). More research is required to better understand the theoretical principles for why transformational leadership specifically improves a sport centric identification for a sport employee.

Study Three

The previous two studies helped define the SEI construct and provided statistical and theoretical evidence for the existence of antecedents for SEI. The purpose of the third study is to test the proposed outcomes of SEI. Oja et al. (2015) and Todd and Kent (2009) proposed most of

the hypothesized outcomes (i.e., OCBs, job satisfaction, turnover intentions). Additionally, CWBs were examined as well. The results of the analysis indicate that the SO dimension predicted some of the posited outcomes, but SC failed to have any predictive value.

The eleventh hypothesis was that SEI will have a significant path to OCBs. The results of the analysis had partial support for the eleventh hypothesis. The SC dimension of SEI did not have a significant path to OCBs in the structural model with a regression weight of $\beta = .-12$, but the path to SO was significant $\beta = .47$. The theoretical concept that SEI would predict OCBs was based on previous examinations of social identity theory and OCBs. When an employee has an organizational identity, they view themselves and the organization as one entity. In short, they represent the organization. The relationship to OCBs is a product of the sense of oneness that identified employees have. When an employee conducts extra role behaviors (i.e., OCBs) their behaviors impact the organization, but due to the identification with the organization the employee likely feels as if they are helping not only the organization but also themselves. More so, the burden of the extra roles or behaviors might not be as large for the identified employee since the identified employee would not consider the extra efforts to be for not – they would impact something the employee is deeply connected with.

In the current analysis, the SO dimension of SEI did have a significant path to OCBs. This is consistent with past examinations of OID and OCBs. This finding indicates that when sport employees are identified with their sport organization they are more likely to produce OCBs. As previously discussed, identified employees are likely to be so engrained in the organization that the extra role behaviors do not seem burdensome or taxing. Instead, such behaviors would be an occurrence that is willfully done as it improves the organization and thus the self for the identified sport employee.

The SC dimension did not significantly impact OCBs. Interestingly, the path between SC and OCBs was negative, which indicates that when considering the sport centric aspect of being a sport employee, such employees are less likely to produce OCBs. This is an intriguing possibility due to the potential ramifications. It would give credence to the concern that sport organizations are said to have about sport employees should not become too invested in the outcomes of athletic contests. However, the lack of statistical significance for the negative path prevents a generalized application of the finding. The insignificant path informs that the amount that a sport employee identifies with the sport aspect of the organization will not meaningfully impact their willingness to produce OCBs for the sport organization. Restated, sport employees' identification with being a former athlete or the importance that they place on sport is unlikely to affect their willingness to go above and beyond their assigned duties to help the sport organization.

The twelfth hypothesis was that SEI would lead to less turnover intentions. Importantly, the scores for the turnover intentions construct were reverse scored, which means that a positive path indicates that a sport employee would be less likely to leave their sport organization. The results from the current analysis provide varied support for the hypothesis. The SC dimension of SEI failed to predict turnover intentions $\beta = -.07$, but SO did have a significant path to turnover intentions $\beta = .46$. The contrast in results is likely due to the mechanism for identification. Scholars have noted the decrease in turnover intentions for identified employees (Abrams et al., 1998; Abrams & de Moura, 2012; Mael & Ashforth, 1995). Theoretically this relationship stems from the relationships built within the organization (Bartel & Dutton, 2012), and that identified employees – due to their sense of oneness with the organization – have likely developed a kinship for the organization and leaving the organization would serve as a betrayal of the

cognitive process of identification. That is, departing from a group that one is identified with would go against the membership aspect of social identification. If a sport employee identifies as a member of a specific sport organization (e.g., I am a member of the University of Kansas Jayhawks) then the decision to leave that membership would not be a simple task.

The significant path from SO to turnover intentions is supported by past examinations of organizational identification and turnover intentions. The results of the current study imply that identified sport employees are less likely to leave their sport organizations. SEI has been proposed as a form of social identification (Oja et al., 2015). Thus, identified sport employees feel connected to a specific organization as opposed to the role of a sport employee (i.e., role identification). Those sport employees who are identified then would seek to maintain their membership with the sport organization as opposed to attempt to leave the organization. Doing so would conflict with their psychological connection to the sport organization. Restated, the identity examined here (i.e., SEI and more specifically SO) is an identification with a specific sport organization. To such an employee, being a Kansas Jayhawk would be a critical component of their internal definition. Accordingly, the strong relationship between SO and turnover intentions is not surprising.

The absence of a statistically significant path between SC and turnover intentions is interesting given the strong connection for SO and turnover intentions. However, the nature of the SC construct is likely the cause of the different results. SEI is viewed as a form of social identification and not a role identity. That is, the SC construct does not measure how sport employees identify with the role of working in a sport organization through an affinity to sport. As previously discussed, a sport employees' identification with a specific sport organization is essential to SEI. The SO dimension facilitates the connection to a specific sport organization.

However, the SC dimension is a broad psychological construct that is focused on the sport

employees' connection to sport. While the SC dimension necessitates the identification with a

group (i.e., sport organization), it is a broad construct that is not dependent on an identification

with a specific organization. Instead, a sport employee could effortlessly transfer the

identification with the sport aspect of the organization to a similar sport organization. Many sport

organizations could provide the source of the identification for the SC dimension. Thus,

transferring to another sport organization likely would not affect the SC component of SEI. This

could explain why there was not a statistical significant path between SC and turnover intentions.

The manner by which sport employees are identified with their sport organization due to the

connection to sport is unlikely to affect sport employees' intentions to leave their current sport

organization.

The thirteenth hypothesis was that SEI would influence the job satisfaction of sport

employees. Once again, the hypothesis had mixed support from the results. SC did not

significantly predict job satisfaction β = .-.13, but SO did predict job satisfaction β = .53. SEI, as

a form of social identification was posited to predict job satisfaction based on past scholarship

(Swanson & Kent, 2015; Van Dick et al., 2004). Further, there is theoretical support for the

directionality of the relationship. Sport employees might gain a sense of job satisfaction due to

their identification with the sport organization (Todd & Kent, 2009). The satisfaction from

having a job in the sport industry was thought to come from the popularity of sport, and how it is

likely fun or thrilling to work for such a popular entity (Todd & Kent, 2009). More broadly,

identified employees are likely to more positively evaluate their job in order to maintain their

organizational identity (Van Dick et al., 2004). In the current analysis there appears to be a

partial divergence from this previously established concept. Yet, one dimension of SEI did strongly predict the job satisfaction of sport employees.

The SO dimension of SEI was a strong predictor of job satisfaction for sport employees. The results for the SO dimension of SEI support the established theory regarding organizational identification and job satisfaction. With regards to the current analysis, this finding indicates that identified sport employees are satisfied with their jobs. More specifically, the identification with the sport organization improves the job satisfaction of sport employees. Based on the items in the SO dimension, this is likely a result of the increase in self-esteem due to the vicarious achievements with the sport organization. An identified sport employee would take pleasure the success of the sport organization because he or she would view such accomplishments as his or her own. In turn, this shared success is expected to contribute to the satisfaction a sport employee has with their job.

Conversely, the SC dimension did not have a significant relationship with the job satisfaction of sport employees. Yet, the path was nearly significant $p = .06$ and was negative. This is an interesting finding given that past examinations of SIT and job satisfaction indicates a positive relationship between the two constructs. In the current analysis, the results – though not statistically significant – are that a negative relationship exists. This means that identified sport employees are less satisfied with their jobs or duties within the sport organization in terms of their identification with the sport aspect of the organization. This negative relationship could be caused by the sport employees desire to be more intimately involved with the administration of the sport aspects or the actual games. The SC dimension represents a connection to sport, and how being a part of a specifically sport organization aids the sport employee with their identification processes. Here, working in a sport organization might not be enough for sport

employees. They might desire to be more involved in the decision-making or wish they were still participating in athletic contests. Working in a sport organization might remind sport employees that they are unable to do the things they truly wish to do; hence, the potential source of the negative relationship between SC and job satisfaction. Still, the negative relationship was not statistically significant so any generalization or credence to the finding or interpretation must be met with caution. More research is needed to better understand the effects of the SC dimension of SEI on the job satisfaction of sport employees.

The final hypothesis was that CWBs will have a negative relationship with SEI. That is, sport employees who are identified with their sport organization will not display CWBs. This hypothesis was not supported as both dimensions had insignificant paths with CWBs. The SC construct's path was $\beta = .13$ and the SO construct's was $\beta = .-12$. Unlike with turnover intentions, the scores for CWBs were not reverse scored. This means that a negative path represents a decrease CWBs and a positive path represents an increase in CWBs. The insignificant results diminish the generalization and interpretation of the results. However, past explorations of CWBs and social identities have found a significant negative relationship between the two constructs (e.g., Bolton et al., 2011; Brimecombe, 2012; Norman et al., 2010). Similar to the identification processes of sport employees with OCBs, a sport employee who is identified is likely to feel a sense of oneness with the organization. Thus, they are unlikely to behave in a matter that would harm the organization because doing so would be harming themselves. As sport employees might produce OCBs because it helps the organization and in turn themselves, the same reasoning is applied here – but in the inverse. Harming the sport organization by performing CWBs would be harming the self for identified sport employees.

Though both paths to CWBs were insignificant, the reasoning for the insignificance warrants further discussion. The path from the SO dimension to CWBs was negative, which signifies that identified sport employees are less likely to commit CWBs. This is in accordance with the previously mentioned examinations of social identity and CWBs. The identified sport employee would not willingly harm the sport organization by conducting behavior that is detrimental to the sport organization. More interesting is the positive relationship between the SC dimension and CWBs. This finding, although statistically insignificant, is an indication that sport employees will come in late to work or be less productive for their sport organization when they are identified with the sport centric aspect of the organization. The concept might be related to the idea of fandom in the sport workplace. After difficult losses or thrilling victories, sport employees might be CORFing or BIRGing respectively. Their emotional responses to the athletic contests of the sport organization might prevent them from not harming the group via CWBs. This specific interpretation requires more examination, but it could offer an explanation for the positive relationship between the SC dimension of SEI and CWBs. The actual relationships between constructs for both dimensions of SEI are presented in Figures 5 and 6. Also, the results of the testing of the hypotheses can be found in Table 25.
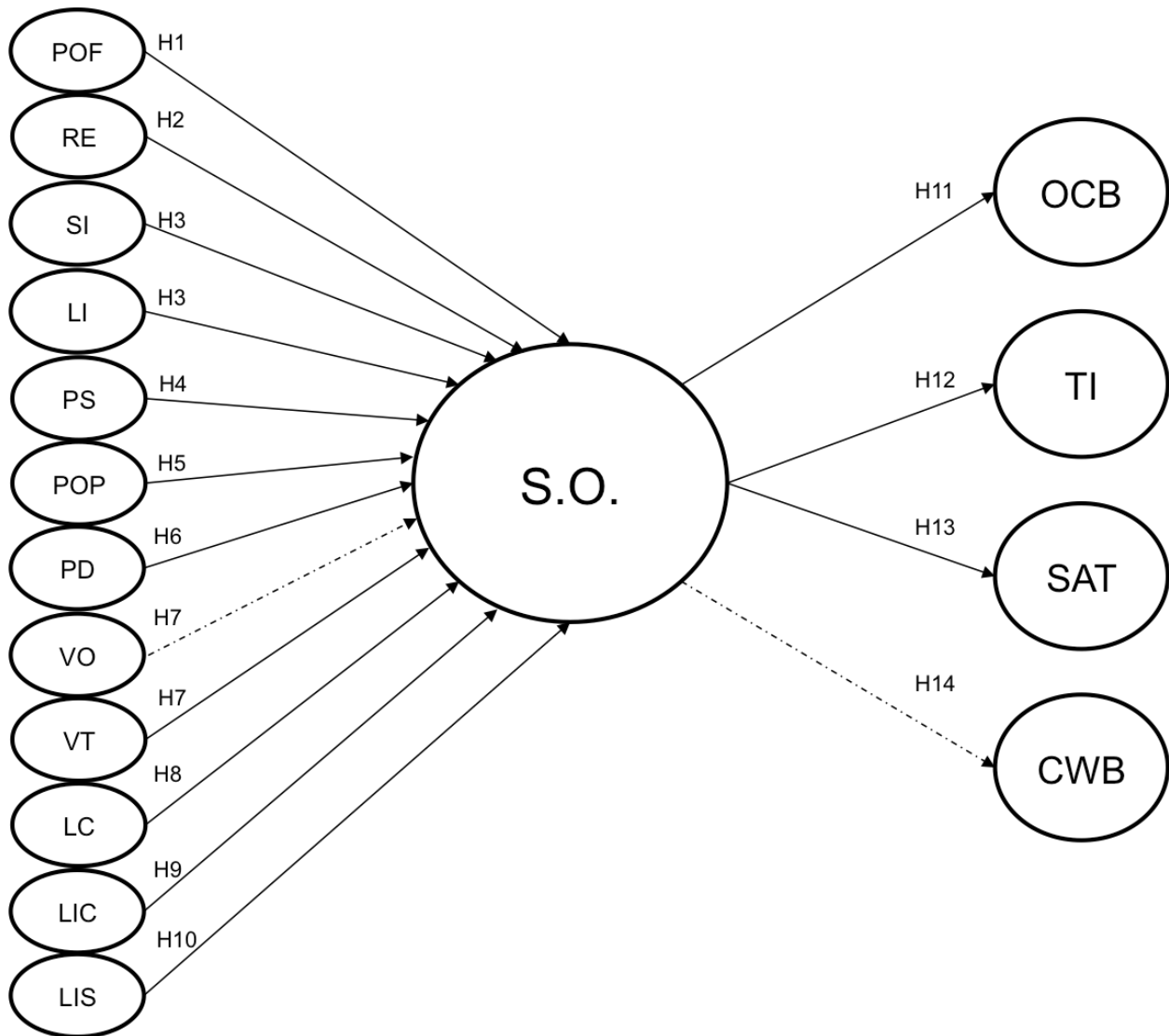
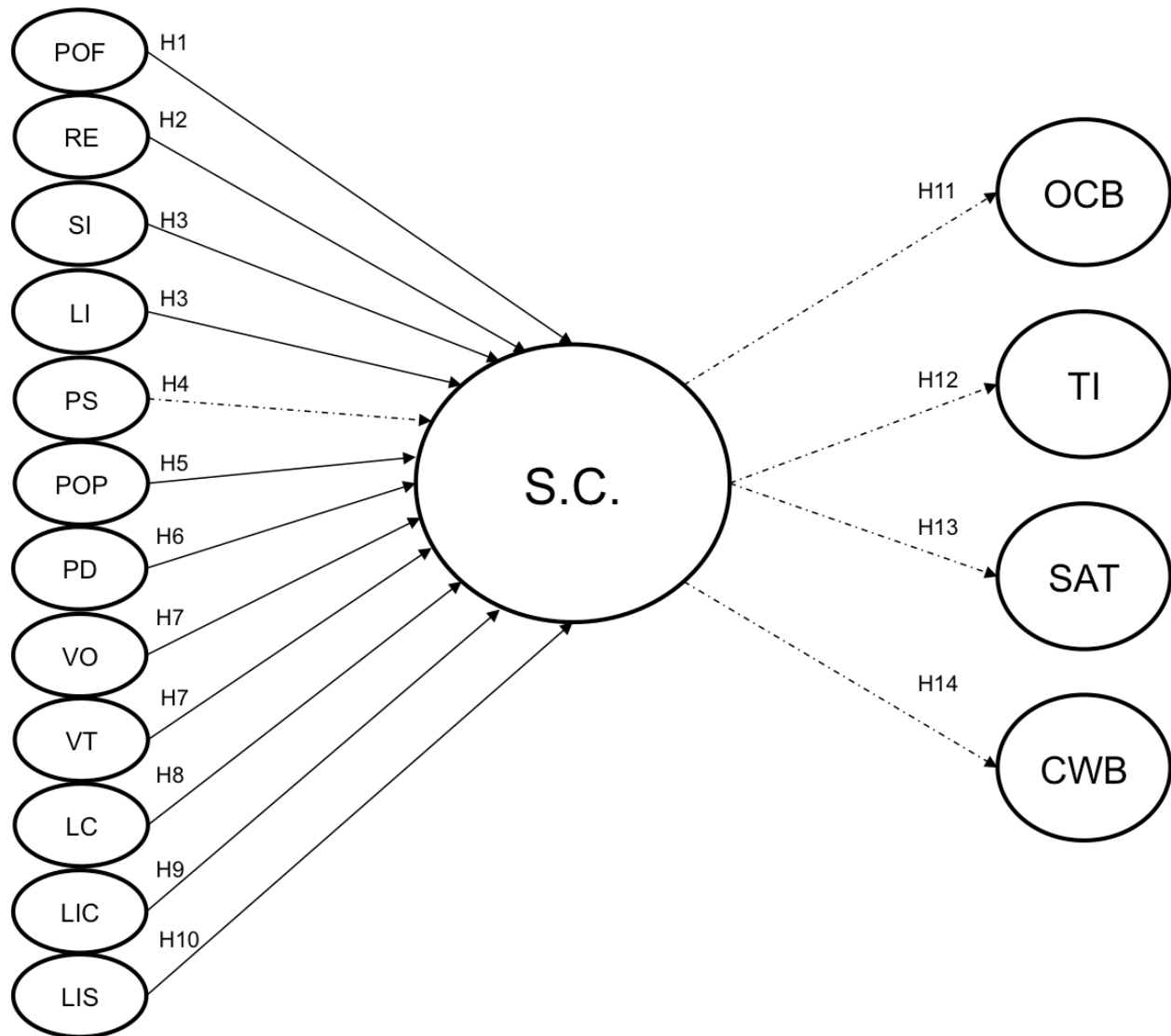*Figure 5*. SO dimension global model. Each hypothesis was performed individually.

Figure 6. SC dimension global model. Each hypothesis was performed individually.

Table 25

Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	SC Construct	SO Construct
H$_1$: Person-organization fit will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_2$: Positive relationships with employees will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_3$: Sport interest – generally and local interest – will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_4$: Perceived organizational success will predict improved SEI.	Not Supported	Supported
H$_5$: Perceived organizational prestige will predict	Supported	Supported

improved SEI.		
H$_6$: Perceived organizational distinctiveness will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_7$: Visibility of the organization and team/department will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Not Supported
H$_8$: Charismatic leadership will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_9$: Individualized consideration will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_{10}$: Intellectual stimulation will predict improved SEI.	Supported	Supported
H$_{11}$: SEI will predict an increase in OCBs of sport employees.	Not Supported	Supported
H$_{12}$: SEI will predict lower turnover intentions of sport employees.	Not Supported	Supported
H$_{13}$: SEI will predict higher job satisfaction of sport employees.	Not Supported	Supported
H$_{14}$: SEI will predict a decrease in CWBs of sport employees.	Not Supported	Not Supported

Practical Implications

Study one. The development of the SEI construct offers a plethora of implications for

practitioners of the sport industry. First, the creation of the construct lends new insights into the

mind of the contemporary sport employee. Further, the SEI instrument has been constructed in a

manner that should allow for its use by a wide range of sport organizations in a variety of

fashions. The wide range of applicability is a product of the instruments simple language and

broad platform. That is, many individuals will be able to comprehend the instrument's items and

it can be modified to fit with any sport organization. Further, despite the simplistic items the

instrument has been scientifically vetted. As a practical example, an athletic director could

administer this instrument to his or her employees and analyze the data. An analysis of the

results from the instrument would inform the athletic director to what degree the employees are

identified with the sport organization.

The instrument was built using both collegiate and professional level sport employees. Thus, the items were not formulated by only collegiate sport employees' psychological processes. In general, the results from Study One are indications that sport employees value being a member of sport organizations that allow them to experience an increase to their self-esteem all while being connected to the larger edifice of sport. Sport organizations that emphasize the essence of sport are likely to have identified sport employees. That is, allowing sport employees to take part in sharing the victories of the sport organization would likely increase their identification with the sport organization. Some examples of activities that would potentially be a part of the identification process for sport employees include being involved in the team picture, recognizing the contributions of support staff at the end of season gatherings, or bringing support staff with to tournaments or contests that take place on the road. In short, public displays of inclusion for the sport employee that emphasize the connection to sport will likely strengthen the employee's identification with the sport organization due to the increase in the acknowledgement of membership to the sport organization. This informs the employee that he or she is a member or the organization, but it also facilities the recognition of others that he or she is a member of the organization. Administering the survey to sport employees would give the administrators of the sport organization a better understanding of how well their employees feel as if they are a part of the sport organization (i.e., identification). Furthermore, the use of the SEI instrument will allow sport administrators to have a better understanding of their sport employees.

Study two. The purpose of Study Two was to examine the proposed antecedents of SEI and how they influenced the SEI construct. From a practitioner standpoint, the results are indications that sport administrators have the means to build or improve their sport employees'

identification with the sport organization. Transformational leadership positively influences SEI. If sport administrators or supervisors seek to improve the identification of their employees they should attempt to hire adept transformational leaders or improve their own leadership skills. Such leaders advance the sense of inclusion to the sport organization for their subordinates. Thus sport administrators who display the qualities of transformational leaders should see an improvement in the identification of their sport employees. Examples of transformational leadership qualities include charismatic leadership, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1990). Specifically, leaders might attempt to spend more time with their employees, set up professional development seminars or functions to advance the intellectual capacity of the sport organization's employees, and show general concern for their sport employees beyond the scope of their professional life.

The results of the individual antecedents of SEI provided support for many of the hypothesized relationships. These relationships inform that certain individuals are more likely to be highly identified with their sport organization. First, both forms of sport interest were found to have a positive relationship with both dimensions of SEI. These relationships are particularly intriguing due to the concerns of sport administrators of hiring sport fans. Sport employees who have a general interest in sport or have an interest in their organization's team/s are likely to have higher levels of SEI. Looking ahead to the results of Study Three, being an identified sport employee is not likely to induce behavior that would be detrimental to the organization. Thus, being a fan of sport or of the specific team/s associated with the sport organization might not be as damaging to the sport organization as once believed. There are also varying levels of interest in sport teams (i.e., fandom). The current analysis is unable to deduct what form of fandom or sport interest the participants were. Yet, sport employees are likely to have an attraction to sport

as seen by the presence of the SC dimension. The current results are indications that sport organizations need not preclude fans of sport or their specific team/s from employment. Rather, there appear to be positive outcomes associated with hiring sport employees who have an interest in sport due to the relationships with SEI. More scholarship is needed to better understand the level of fandom in sport employees and the relationships that exist with it and SEI and other relevant constructs.

Sport employees who feel a sense of fit or value congruence with their sport organization are also likely to experience an identification with their sport organization. In turn, sport organizations should consider hiring individuals who they believe will fit in with their sport organization to have a better chance of reaping the benefits of SEI. A shared sense of values or perspective of organizational values constitutes the alignment of attitudes. As such, during the recruiting or hiring processes sport administrators might consider avoiding those potential sport employees who they do not feel would prescribe to or endorse existing organizational values if they wish to hire employees who will one day identify with the sport organization.

The last individual antecedent tested was relationships with other employees. Positive relationships with others in the sport organization will tend to advance the identification processes for the sport employee. Sport administrators who want identified employees could implement a variety of programs to improve the relationships with employees. Many sport organizations have annual all staff meetings near the start of the academic year. While formal events are likely to facilitate the forming of social connections between employees, sport administrators may consider implementing policies that ease restrictions on informal gatherings among employees that may or may not be exclusive from those in the administration. Sport employees who are allowed to interact with their coworkers as opposed to being forced to

completely focus on their professional duties are more likely to identify with their sport

organizations. Further, hiring employees who fit in well (i.e., PO Fit) with the organization

should also contribute to positive relationships with other employees. These policies should lead

to a stronger identification with the sport organization, which in turn will provide a variety of

benefits for the organization.

There are also practices or procedures that the contemporary sport organization can do at

a broader or macro level that will improve the identification of their sport employees. These

concepts are known as organizational antecedents. Many of the proposed organizational

antecedents had positive relationships with the two dimensions of SEI. The distinctiveness of the

organization – as perceived by the sport employee – will positively impact the identification of

employees. To increase the distinctiveness of the sport organization, sport administrators should

work to create unique logos that represent the team/s or organization, avoid sharing similar

marks or colors with other sport organizations, and to generally operate the organization in a

inimitable manner. Doing so will promote the identification with the sport organization by the

organization's employees, which should lead to the benefits associated with the SEI variable.

Sport employees' perceived organizational prestige also positively impacted both

dimensions of SEI. To build their employees' identification with the sport organization, sport

administrators should celebrate the past achievements of the organization's team/s. This should

be done inside and outside of the sport workplace. It is essential for not only the sport employee

to perceive the prestige, but also the sport employee must feel that *others* sense that the sport

organization is prestigious. The prestige factor is potentially difficult for some sport

organizations – especially if the team/s of the organization do not have a long history of

existence or success. However, this aspect of building SEI among sport employees could be

viewed as another incentive for sport organizations to be seen as a respect and well-run body. Spending extra resources to improve the organizational foundations might not only improve the outputs or success of the sport organization, but it might also improve the sense of prestige for the sport employees and those they interact with.

The visibility of the sport organization and the specific team/department had mixed results in terms of positively improving the SEI of sport employees. The overall visibility of the organization construct did positively impact one dimension (i.e., SC) of SEI, but not the other. Thus, a visible sport organization will help improve the identification processes of sport employees, but with only one facet of the sport employee identity. The visibility of the organization could be improved with impactful marketing initiatives, agreeing to have athletic contests televised as often as possible, and to engage in local community projects. These activities – in addition to other benefits – will likely help sport employees become more identified with the sport organization. Moreover, sport administrators might also consider increasing the visibility of the specific teams or departments of their organization due to the established relationships with both of the dimensions of SEI. To do so, sport administrators could allow the various departments or teams to make official garments that specifically represent the team or department to which they belong, highlight the various roles of each department or team in annual media guides, and avoid policies that prevent the glorification of individual teams or departments. The visibility of the specific department or team to which a sport employee belongs is likely to have a much greater impact on their identification than that of the visibility of the general organization. In turn, sport administrators should consider focusing on displaying the specific teams and departments within their sport organization if they seek to enhance the identification of their employees.

Study three. In Study Three of the analysis the hypothesized outcomes of SEI were examined. In this investigation the SEI construct's ability to influence relevant organizational outcomes were explored. The findings include information that is pertinent to the contemporary environment of the sport workplace. There was no relationship found between SEI and CWBs. This finding is a signal that being an identified sport employee does not lead one to commit negative work behaviors. That is, placing a cognitive importance on membership to the organization and the sport centric aspect of the organization will not impact sport employees' behavior that is detrimental to the organization. The interpretation of the results does not lead to a conclusion that being identified with the sport organization will induce or prevent a sport employee from coming in late to work, not being productive, or stealing from the organization. This discovery is particularly interesting when one considers the concern of sport administrators have for hiring fans and the SC dimension of SEI. The SC dimension is the identification that sport employees have with the sport aspect of their organization. The dimension represents a connection to sport, although this should not be interpreted as fandom. Despite the fears of some sport administrators, this connection to sport did not lead to negative behaviors by the sport employee. Thus, sport administrators should not preclude those who have a passion for sport from working for their sport organization based on fears of their passion clouding their judgments, emotions, and behaviors. In short, SEI does not have a relationship with CWBs.

Conversely, there was a partial relationship found between SEI and OCBs. The SO dimension had a strong relationship with OCBs, but the SC dimension did not have a meaningful relationship with OCBs. The OCB construct is the inverse of the CWB construct. That is, OCBs are the extra roles that an employee willingly provides his or her organization. Having identified sport employees will likely result in extra efforts by those employees. This is an incentive for

sport organizations to attempt to increase the identification of their sport employees. Sport employees who identify with their sport organization are likely to help other members, stay late to accomplish tasks, or use their own resources to improve the organization. These behaviors are valuable to sport organizations not only due to the extra production, but also for the improvement to the organizational culture. However, the relationship with SEI and OCBs is strictly from the SO dimension. This means that sport administrators who wish to increase OCBs produced by their sport employees should focus on building their identification with the sport organization by improving their sense of belonging or their membership to the organization (i.e., the SO dimension).

There was also a partial relationship found between SEI and job satisfaction. As with OCBs, the SO dimension had a relationship with job satisfaction, but SC did not. Job satisfaction is the degree to which an employee derives pleasure from the duties they are required to perform as part of their job. In this situation, the more a sport employee feels a sense of membership and belonging the more likely they are to be satisfied with their role with the organization. Thus, sport administrators should attempt to increase the sense of belonging to the organization to improve their employees' job satisfaction. Based on the SO dimension, initiatives designed to increase the participation within the organization would likely contribute to the identification processes of the sport employee.

Lastly, turnover intentions of sport employees were examined. There was a relationship between the SO dimension of SEI and turnover intentions, but not with the SC dimension. Here sport employees are less likely to leave their sport organization when they feel like they belong to that sport organization. As previously discussed, turnover has detrimental financial and morale consequences for organizations. As such, sport administrators should attempt to increase the

identification sport employees have with their sport organization. Based on the significant relationship between SO and turnover intentions, sport administrators would be best served by concentrating on the sense of inclusion that sport employees have with the organization. In general, the SC dimension did not have a statistically viable relationship with any of the outcome variables. However, the SO dimension did have relevant relationships with all but one of the hypothesized outcomes. As such, sport administrators should focus on building a sense of membership or inclusion with their sport employees to improve the variables examined in this analysis.

Limitations

There are limitations to the current examination of SEI. The first limitation is the nature of the data collection. The instruments included in the survey asked participants to self-report their thoughts or behaviors. This is particularly problematic for the CWB and OCB measures, as participants might have responded in a socially acceptable manner instead of providing their actual behaviors. This is evidenced with the lack of variance in the responses to the CWB instrument. Thus, the lack of significant paths between SEI and CWBs is questionable.

The SEI instrument was created using both collegiate and professional level sport employees. This was done to widen the applicability of the instrument. However, Study Two and Study Three had samples that consisted of only collegiate level sport employees. This decision was made based off of convenience. Many professional level sport organizations do not publicly list their employees' emails, but nearly all of the collegiate level sport organizations do. The convenient sample was still taken from an applicable population, but the generalizability of the results are diminished. The relationships between the variables examined (i.e., SEI, antecedents, and outcomes) are limited to collegiate level sport employees.

The SC dimension of SEI did not have any predictability. While the SO dimension was statistically related to three of the outcome variables, the SC dimension was not linked to any. This is likely due to a lack of theory that explains the SC dimension as it was hypothesized only recently (see Oja et al., 2015). Many of the hypothesized outcomes were used due their previously established relationships with OID. This could be the reason for a lack of any statistically relevant relationships between SC and the outcome variables tested. Regardless, the lack of such relationships limits the interpretability of the SC dimension. The analysis of data indicates there are antecedents of the SC dimension, but currently there are no known outcomes.

Future Research Directions

There are several avenues for future research concerning the SEI construct and the understanding of sport employees in general. As previously mentioned, the SC dimension of SEI requires more research to better understand the variable and to theorize potential relevant outcomes. Qualitative methods would likely be the best method to procure data that would better inform researchers about the SC dimension as it provides deep and rich data. Relatedly, more research must be conducted to scientifically investigate the fandom of sport employees. This would provide sport administrators with relevant knowledge that could aid their hiring and retaining procedures. Further, the variables tested in the current analysis are not a full list of possible antecedents and outcomes of SEI. More scientific investigations are needed to test other antecedents and outcomes that might be related to SEI. Lastly, the SEI instrument – although it has been vetted with four different samples and a panel of experts – still requires more use to achieve true validation. Future researchers are hereby encouraged to utilize and adapt the instrument discussed here.

Conclusion

The current study offers several advancements in the theoretical development of SEI. First and foremost, a theoretically and statistically sound instrument was developed using Churchill's (1979) procedure. This is a critical development for the advancement of knowledge concerning sport employees. Without a valid and reliable instrument, the construct would be very difficult to generalize and apply to various sport employees. The conceptual model of SEI has also been refurbished to better describe the identities of sport employees. While organizational identification did remain a part of the conceptual model, the original concept that team identification would also serve as an identification factor was not supported. Instead, the second dimension was repositioned to reflect less of a fan construct and more of an attachment to sport principal. That is, being united with a sport organization is an important feature of SEI. This is an interesting discovery and deserves more academic inquiry.

The overall theoretical model proposed in the study received varying degrees of support. Many of the hypothesized antecedent relationships were supported. This further informs sport management scholars of the potential possibilities to garner SEI for sport employees. Interestingly, sport interest had a strong path to SEI. This is not surprising given that sport employees have been found to enjoy sport (Andrew et al., 2006; Todd & Andrew, 2008). The relationship between sport interest and SEI is another signal that the enjoyment of sport and working sport are intertwined. However, there were several statistical issues with concluding that sport interest is antecedent of SEI. There was a lack of discriminant validity between sport interest and the SC dimension. Also, the local sport interest variable did not have an adequate reliability level. This could be the result of the adaptation of the sport interest scale for the study. Other strong connections to SEI include PO Fit and relationships with other employees. This finding is an indication that SEI is aided when sport organizations consist of people who share

similar values and get along with one another. In turn, this would seem to imply that culture is a concept that might be related to the development of SEI for sport employees. Sharing similar values and having a positive work environment that facilitates the social connections between employees would embody an organizational culture that would promote the identification of sport employees – no matter the typology or form of organizational culture.

The results concerning the hypothesized outcomes of SEI had different degrees of success. SEI and CWBs did not share a significant relationship. This is a finding that weakens the argument that sport employees should not be fans of their organization's sport team/s because their fandom would interfere with their work. Yet, Study Three failed to find that there was a negative relationship between SEI and CWBs – only that there was no relationship at all. Unfortunately, this is likely due to a lack of variance with the responses from the participants. Many respondents marked that they had never committed various CWBs. Although this could be true, it is more likely that the respondents answered the questions in a socially acceptable manner. Restated, the participants might have responded in a manner in which they would be viewed favorably if their answers were known. Still, the lack of a significant relationship between SEI and CWBs is noteworthy due to the knowledge that is provided by the finding.

The SC dimension of SEI did not have a relationship with any of the proposed outcomes, but the SO dimension did with job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and OCBs. The SO dimension's relationship with the outcomes is a critical development for SEI. It allows practitioners and researchers to use the full theoretical model to better understand the value of SEI. As previously stated, having a usable instrument to measure SEI is essential. Then, the antecedents are able to inform sport industry professionals or researchers how to build or develop SEI. Yet, without relevant consequences or outcomes for SEI the practicality and meaningfulness

of the construct would be in question. The presence of the relationships between SEI and the proposed outcome variables permit grander theoretical developments and practical implications for the construct of SEI. The existence of the SC dimension is still valuable to the overall construct. The SC dimension is a unique feature of SEI as it is not based on a previous instrument and is only loosely related to other theoretical constructs. Further, even though there were no significant paths from SC to any of the hypothesized outcomes does not mean the construct is devoid of outcomes. More research needs to be conducted to improve the understanding of the SC dimension. In turn, this would likely lead to the discovery of relevant and significant outcomes from SC.

Lastly, a few words about sport employees. Many sport management students are currently seeking a career in sport. As such, it is very likely that these students will one day come to be sport employees – specifically those examined here. Whereas other professional sectors (e.g., coaches and athletics directors) have – deservedly so – received a plethora of academic inquiries, but the general sport employee has largely been absent from such investigation. Hopefully these studies, along with other innovative explorations of sport employees, will continue to gain momentum in the sport management discipline. If nothing else, this line of research serves to improve the comprehension of psychological processes of the individuals that many sport management students strive to become. In turn, having an improved understanding of sport employees will not only help practitioners better serve their employees, but it will also assist sport management teachers and professors progress the professional development that students receive while matriculating at a college or university. For example, the theoretical growth of SEI would allow professors to specifically curtail sections of their classes to better-fit future sport employees or even design entire classes on SEI. In conclusion, the SEI construct is

still in its infancy, but the studies described here offer significant advancement in the theoretical understanding of SEI. Much future research is still required to have a complete understanding of SEI and the contemporary sport employee, but the development of the construct is off to a promising start.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Questions

1. How did you come to work at KU? Where did you go to KU? Do you have other experiences at other schools?

2. Do you root KU's teams in and out of the workplace? Why or why not? How often have you devoted time to watching a game when you were "off the clock"? Was this similar at other jobs?

3. Why do you think others in the department root for KU?

4. Do you root for past employers? If so, why?

5. How do wins and losses affect the daily activities at work? Could you explain what the mood is like after a big win and after a difficult loss?

6. Have you become increasingly personally invested with the performance of KU's teams as the years have gone by? How so?

7. When the teams of KU do well, do you feel like you had a part in the success? Why or why not?

8. Please describe how you feel when someone praises the athletic accomplishments of KU and when the praise is directed at other accomplishments such as academics or the arts.

9. Can you tell me about your thoughts KU's rival teams? Do you root against rival teams? What about previous school's rivals?

10. Tell me about your relationship with KU and/or KU's teams? Is this similar to other to other professional experiences in and out of sport?

Original Items

1. When someone criticizes my organization, it feels like a personal insult
   Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
   Original Item: When someone criticizes (name of school), it feels like a personal insult
2. I am very interested of what others think about my organization
   Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
   Original Item: I am very interested in what others think about (name of school)
3. When I talk about my organization, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'
   Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
   Original Item: When I talk about this school, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'
4. My organization's success are my successes

Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
Original Item: This school's successes are my successes

5. When someone praises my organization it feels like a personal compliment
Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
Original Item: When someone praises this school, it feels like a personal compliment

6. If a story in the media criticizes my organization I would feel embarrassed
Modified from Mael & Ashforth (1992)
Original Item: If a story in the media criticized the school, I would feel embarrassed

7. It is important to me that our team/s win
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How important to YOU is it that the K.U. basketball team wins?

8. I strongly consider myself a fan of my organization's team/s
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How strongly do YOU see YOURSELF as a fan of the K.U. basketball team?

9. My friends see me as a fan of the team/s of my organization
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How strongly do your FRIENDS see YOU as a fan of the K.U. basketball team?

10. During the season I closely follow my organization's team/s in person, on television, on the radio, or on televised news or newspapers
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: During the season, how closely do you follow the K.U. basketball team via ANY of the following: a) in person or on television, b) on the radio, or c) television news or a newspaper?

11. Being a fan of my organization's team/s is important to me
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How important is being a fan of K.U. basketball to YOU?

12. I dislike the greatest rivals of my organization's team/s
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How much do YOU dislike K.U. basketball's greatest rivals?

13. I display my organization's name or insignia at my place of work, where I live, or on my clothing
Modified from Wann & Branscombe (1993)
Original Item: How often do YOU display the K.U. basketball team's name or insignia at your place of work, where you live, or on your clothing?

14. Knowing athletes, coaches, and other staff members allows me to share in the success of the team
Derived from Focus Group

15. If my organization wins a big game, I feel personal success
Derived from Focus Group

16. I feel a part of the success of my organization because of my relationships with the athletes
Derived from Focus Group

17. The bond between myself and my organization is strengthened because of my relationships with athletes, coaches, and other staff members

Derived from Focus Group

18. I cheer for my organization's team/s because of my personal relationships within the organization

Derived from Focus Group

19. I see myself as part of my organization because I assist in the success of my organization

Derived from Focus Group

20. I feel as if I am a part of the team/s I work with

Derived from Focus Group

21. I feel guilty if I do not support those I know in my organization

Derived from Focus Group

22. Victories allow me to feel recognition for my hard work

Derived from Focus Group

23. I am a competitor, working in athletics supports my competitive nature

Derived from Focus Group

24. Working in sport allows me to retain my identity as an athlete

Derived from Focus Group

25. Working in sport allows me to stay involved in sport

Derived from Focus Group

26. Athletics matters to me; it is part of who I am

Derived from Focus Group

27. I enjoy the passion and emotions that comes with working in a sport organization

Derived from Focus Group

28. I feel comfortable working in the sport setting

Derived from Focus Group

29. Being involved in sport is all that I know; I can't see myself doing anything else

Derived from Focus Group

30. Sport is a fundamental part of who I am

Derived from Focus Group

31. I will watch our team/s compete when I am 'off the clock'

Derived from Focus Group

32. The mood in the office is solemn the after a loss

Derived from Focus Group

33. The mood in the office is upbeat the day after a win

Derived from Focus Group

34. I feel disdain for the rival teams of my organization

Derived from Focus Group

35. I openly cheer against the rivals of my organization

Derived from Focus Group

36. I like being a part of something bigger than me; working in sport does that

Derived from Focus Group

37. Being a sport employee is unique and neat

Derived from Focus Group

Biographical Sketch

Brent Darren Oja was born in Saint Cloud, Minnesota on April 8, 1983. He graduated from Melrose Area High School in 2002. He attended the University of Minnesota and in 2006 was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Bachelor of Science degree in Sport Studies. Brent then worked as an athletics equipment manager for five years at various universities. During his time as an equipment manager, he received a Master of Science degree in Sport Management from West Virginia University. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Physical Education from the University of Kansas in 2016. Following commencement, he is currently employed as an Assistant Professor of Sport Administration at the University of Northern Colorado.