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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

GIVE THE FANS WHAT THEY WANT: A MARKET  
SEGMENTATION APPROACH TO SPORT  
FANS' SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Kerry Dale Fischer

College of Natural Health Sciences  
School of Sport and Exercise Science  
Sport Administration

December 2019

This Dissertation by: Kerry Dale Fischer

Entitled: *Give the Fans What They Want: A Market Segmentation Approach to Sport Fans' Social Media Usage*

has been approved as meeting the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in College of Natural Health Sciences in School of Sport and Exercise Science, Program of Sport Administration

Accepted by the Doctoral Committee

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Accepted by the Graduate School

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## ABSTRACT

Fischer, Kerry D. *Give the Fans What They Want: A Market Segmentation Approach to Sport Fans' Social Media Usage*. Published Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2019.

The purpose of this study was to construct a model that segments fans of professional sport based on the type of social media platform they preferred to use as well as their social media usage motivations. In addition, the current study sought to investigate whether previously identified motives like escape and socialization, have transformed into more selfish motives such as narcissism.

Convenience and snowball sampling techniques were used to collect data from fans of professional sport who specifically used social media to consume sport, resulting in a total sample size of 176. The online survey instrument was comprised of items from the previously validated Motivation Scale for Sport Online Consumption (MSSOC; Seo & Green, 2008) scale and the Narcissism Personality Inventory-16 (NPI-16; Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006) scale. In addition, several frequency, usage, and duration items, including how often respondents used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, were generated to gauge how often respondents spent time on social media consuming sport. Composite scores were calculated for the MSSOC and NPI-16 responses.

Hierarchical cluster analysis revealed three distinct social media preference groups labeled a) Facebook Devotees ( $n=51$ ), b) Infrequent Users ( $n=71$ ), and c) Social Media Aficionados ( $n=54$ ). Facebook Devotees generally preferred to use Facebook more than any

other social media platform, while the Social Media Aficionados had the highest mean usage rates for Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Descriptive discriminant analysis indicated that 67% of the differences among Facebook Devotees, Infrequent Users, and Social Media Aficionados can be attributed to social media preference. With regard to social media usage motivation, hierarchical cluster analysis identified two groups labeled a) Multifaceted Fans ( $n=72$ ) and b) Casual Supporter ( $n=104$ ). Multifaceted fans exhibited high levels of motivation for nearly all usage motivations, while Casual Supporters had high motivation mean scores for only two motivations, “passing the time,” and “information.” Descriptive discriminant analysis revealed that 61% of the differences between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters was explained by social media usage motivation. Finally, a Pearson correlation analysis (two-tailed) revealed no statistically significant correlations between narcissism and social media usage motivation.

Overall, the findings from this study provide sport organizations with valuable marketing and communication information. The fan segments uncovered in the results reveal that fans have different motivations for consuming sport via social media. Sport organizations can use this information to tailor their social media strategy to specific fan segments, increasing engagement, strengthening fans’ brand loyalty, and ultimately generating more revenue.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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To Dr. Morse, you joined my committee right after you joined the Northern Colorado faculty, and then willingly stepped into the position of chair when I was forced to make a committee change. I can never thank you enough for your willingness to serve in this role and for helping me figure out what to do when I found myself needing to make even more committee changes. Northern Colorado is truly blessed to have you as a member of the faculty, and the Sport Administration program could not ask for a better program leader. I hope I am half the professor you have become.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Dennis. Even though we never had the chance to form a father-daughter relationship because you were taken from me too soon, I know you have been with me every day of my life, shared my elation and grief, and helped me through the stress of pursuing my doctorate. I know you are proud of this accomplishment. I love you!

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the Internet has reimagined how individuals receive information. Rather than subscribe to a newspaper or wait for the television news to air, individuals with an Internet connection can easily search millions of websites for pertinent news and information. Additionally, the Internet is easy to use; simply type in a few key words to an Internet search engine, hit search, and the search engine returns thousands of possible links that may be of interest. This ease of use feature likely has contributed to the Internet's exponential growth and popularity. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, 90% of U.S. adults used the Internet in 2019 (Anderson, Perrin, Jiang, & Kumar, 2019). Furthermore, 53% of the world's population—or more than four billion people—accessed the Internet in 2018 (Kemp, 2018). To put these numbers in perspective, the penetration rate for Internet usage in 2000 was just 7%, or 738 million people (Davidson, 2015). This proliferation allows users to customize the types of information they receive because they can easily search for specific information that is of interest at a given moment. Moreover, the majority of content providers offer free access to their web sites, making Internet information gathering and online purchasing extremely cost-effective for consumers.

At the same time, the Internet has fostered new ways for people to communicate and has led to the creation and rise of online social networks, also known as social media. Social media has changed the way we communicate because it offers several different applications that suit the needs of a variety of individuals. For instance, Twitter, a micro-blogging site, offers real-time

conversations truncated to 280-character “tweets” with whomever that Twitter user chooses to follow. Facebook, another social networking website, is a multi-purpose application that allows users to post status updates, share picture and video links, comment on other users’ walls, and even play games. Alternatively, there are the picture-based social media applications like Instagram and Snapchat that allow users to post pictures and short video clips to their profiles that any other user may view. Furthermore, these online social networks permit users to interact with each other, celebrities, athletes, organizations, and even government officials without going through a third-party mediator like a publicist, public relations specialist, or human resources employee (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh, & Greenwell, 2010; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010).

When it comes to social media use, Facebook led the way with more than 2.32 billion users worldwide in 2019 (Statista, 2019). In addition, Instagram (1 billion users), Twitter (330 million users), and Snapchat (287 million users) are ranked sixth, twelfth, and seventeenth, respectively, in the top-20 largest social media networks in the world as of April 2019 (Statista, 2019). In terms of reasons for use, 67% of people reported that keeping in touch with current friends was the number one reason they use social media (Statistic Brain Research Institute, 2016). Other salient reasons include keeping in touch with family (64%), connecting with friends with whom they have lost touch (50%), connecting with others who share similar interests or hobbies (14%), and making new friends (9%). Perhaps the most staggering statistic regarding social media use is the fact that the majority of users live outside the United States. In 2018, the Philippines was the most engaged country on social media; users spent an average of nearly four hours per day on social media sites (Kemp, 2018). By contrast, the United States ranks 24th, where U.S. citizens spend an average of two hours a day on social media. These statistics suggest that social media shows no sign of slowing down in the foreseeable future. However, it should be

noted that social media usage statistics change so quickly that the figures reported above are also subject to change from year to year.

The sport world has also embraced the popularity of social media. Teams from the big four professional leagues, the National Basketball Association (NBA), National Football League (NFL), National Hockey League (NHL), and Major League Baseball (MLB) all have official accounts for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest. While each team manages its accounts differently, they all use them to connect and engage with fans while bolstering their brand. In fact, the NBA and NFL were among the most popular brands on Instagram in 2017, with the NBA coming in second to soccer (Wagner, 2017). It is not out of the realm of possibility to say that social media and sports have a symbiotic relationship. Therefore, research investigating just how close the relationship between sports and social media appears is necessary both from an academic and practical standpoint. For academia, social media studies continue to peel back the layers of each application and shed new light on various relationships within sport. For practitioners, a deeper, more well-rounded understanding of social media and fan motivations paves the way for more targeted communication and marketing strategies. Relationship building is critical for any corporate-consumer pairing, and sports are no different. Social media has the potential to further solidify and strengthen the ever-important organization-fan relationship; it provides unfettered access to teams and players, and it allows the team to directly interact with allegiant and casual fans. These interactions lead to increased fandom and more consumers for the future.

### **Problem Statement**

While social media has been readily embraced by sport fans and sport organizations alike (See Broughton, 2013; Laird, 2012a; Laird, 2012b), it is still in its infancy in terms of academic

research. Exploratory and introductory studies have emerged to scrutinize social media and its effects on communication and marketing. The majority of the research to date has focused on how athletes use social media, particularly Twitter (Clavio & Kian, 2010; Clavio, Walsh, & Vooris, 2013; Pegoraro, 2010), or how social media can be utilized as a branding, marketing, and communication tool (Wallace, Wilson, & Miloch, 2011; Witkemper, Lim, & Waldburger, 2012). In addition, several studies have examined social media usage motivations among different sport populations (Frederick, Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Stavros, Meng, Westberg, & Farrelly, 2014). Sport management scholars have also begun to explore newer social media such as Instagram and Snapchat (Billings, Qiao, Conlin, & Nie, 2015; Lebel & Harman, 2014), but these remain exploratory in nature. Despite these studies, there remains a gap in the literature regarding whether the usage motives identified in previous studies are applicable to all social media, including the image-based applications like Instagram and Twitter, or whether these motives apply to a specific social media application.

Furthermore, it is necessary to examine whether previously identified motives (e.g., information gathering, entertainment, escape, socialization) have transformed into different motives as social media becomes more and more prevalent. For example, many early studies identified socialization as a motive for social media use; perhaps that socialization motive has reformed into a more selfish motive such as narcissism. A quick look on any social media platform reveals a prevalence of selfie pictures by users. Thus, it is natural to wonder if narcissism has usurped motives like socialization as a major reason for social media use.

Moreover, to my knowledge, there has not been a study conducted within the sport management field that applies market segmentation within the context of social media usage and motivations. It is possible that unique consumer segments exist based not only on the type of



social medium used (e.g., text-based or image-based), but also by the salient motives for social media use. Developing a segmentation model that separates fans by motives and/or social media preference provides an opportunity for sport organizations to create and distribute targeted marketing and communication efforts to fans based on their social media preferences and reasons for using social media. These targeted efforts not only provide fans with the information they want, they also provide the information in a delivery format that more deeply resonates with fans. For instance, fans who primarily use Instagram to consume material from their favorite sport teams may appreciate team information that is presented in picture format with a short caption containing pertinent details, as opposed to fans who primarily use Twitter and want short bursts of information with links to more in-depth stories and features. These targeted marketing and communication strategies may lead to an increase in purchase intention, a stronger identification with the team, and assurance that these fans remain fans for life.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Therefore, the purpose of this study was twofold: 1) construct a model that segmented sport fans based on the type of social media used and/or their social media usage motivations, and 2) investigate to what extent narcissism related to other social media usage motivations. Gaining empirical answers to these questions allowed sport organizations to specifically tailor their marketing and communication efforts for social media consumption, thereby reaching various segments of the fan base more directly and fortifying the bond between fan and organization.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

- Q1 Can unique consumer segments be identified based upon a fan's social media preference? (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat)

- H1 Different consumer segments will be distinguishable based on a fan's social media preference.
- Q2 Can unique consumer segments be identified based upon a fan's social media usage motives?
- H2 Different consumer segments will be distinguishable based on a fan's social media motives.
- Q3 How will social media motivational profiles of sport fans differ according to consumer segments uncovered from the market segmentation analysis?
- H3a Fans who prefer Facebook and Twitter will be more likely to use social media for informational purposes.
- H3b Fans who prefer Instagram and Snapchat will be more likely to use social media for entertainment purposes.
- Q4 To what extent does narcissism relate to social media usage motivations?
- Q5 Will social media motivational similarities and differences exist between males and females?
- H5 There will be no significant differences in motivation for social media use between males and females.

### **Need for the Study**

According to a Perform Sports Media Group study, one in four fans consumed sport content through social media in 2013, up from 15% in 2012 (Laird, 2012b). The author also found almost 90% of those surveyed use Facebook for their sports news (Laird, 2012b).

Additionally, a *Sports Business Journal* article reported that more than half of avid sports fans who use social media do so while watching a sporting event (Broughton, 2013). These findings suggest social media is a primary source of sports-related news and information for fans.

Sport organizations are also beginning to realize social media's potential to enhance their connection to fans. The NBA was the first sport league to put its social media handle on all game balls and fans were able to vote for the 2016 All-Star MVP exclusively through Twitter (Laird,

2016a). The 2016 All-Star Game was the first to feature custom emojis (cartoon images) for each of the 24 all-stars selected as well as the TNT broadcast team (Laird, 2016a). Fans simply had to tweet the player's first and last name with a hashtag for the emoji to appear. In 2012, NBA fans were able to vote for the slam-dunk contest winner at the All-Star game via social media (Laird, 2012c). That same year, the league began honoring players with postseason awards based solely on social media use (Laird, 2016a). In the NHL, fans hijacked the online All-Star Game voting system and created a hashtag that was disseminated on Twitter in order to vote a virtually unknown player, one who is recognized more for his fighting skills than his scoring skills, into the 2016 All-Star Game (Laird, 2016b). Finally, on April 5, 2016, the NFL announced that Twitter had won a deal to broadcast Thursday night NFL games on its platform (Toonkel & Medhora, 2016). Twitter livestreamed 10 games for free to its more than 800 million registered users as well as non-registered users (Brown, 2016; Toonkel & Medhora, 2016). These examples are just a sampling of how sport organizations have recognized the power of social media and harnessed it effectively to enhance the interconnectivity among its fans, teams, and athletes.

Researchers have consistently identified several social media usage motivations, but they have all been based on text-based mediums such as Facebook and Twitter. While it is important to delve as deeply as possible into user motivations for these platforms, researchers must also examine whether those uses and motivations hold true on newer platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), there is no systematic way to categorize social media. Therefore, we cannot assume that the motives and uses scholars have identified with respect to Facebook and Twitter will be the same for those who utilize other social networking sites (SNS). Thus, research into user motivations is still necessary in order to

discover what drives individuals to choose specific SNS over others, and what reasons they have for using given platforms.

A deeper understanding into why fans select certain social media for sport consumption added another layer to the sport marketing and communication literature. More immediately, developing a segmentation model using social media motives assisted sport organizations in reaching their fan bases more directly and permitted them to create marketing strategies that are meant specifically for social media consumption. Perhaps sport organizations discovered that their fans prefer social media consumption to televised consumption because it provided a more satisfying experience. Regardless, it was necessary to evaluate how sport fans might be segmented in terms of social media consumption in order to provide a better experience and give the fans what they want.

### **Delimitations**

According to Simon and Goes (2013), delimitations are the boundaries of a study imposed by the researcher based on specific decisions regarding the study design. The current study focuses on usage motivations for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. These four social media platforms were chosen based on popularity among fans and sport organizations alike, and they represent two broad types of social media: text-based (Facebook and Twitter), and image-based (Instagram and Snapchat). Additionally, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are fairly time-bound, in that it is possible that additional social media platforms may develop in the future, so the current study is limited to the forms of social media in current use.

The current study focused on one level of sport competition: professional sport, in an effort to keep the study manageable. Professional sport was chosen as the research setting

because there is an abundance of professional teams across the country, which provided a broad range of motivations and captured a more diverse sample of sport fans.

### **Limitations**

1. The survey questionnaire was administered through an online survey platform. The survey was taken voluntarily and it is assumed that responses reflect the participants' true feelings and opinions.
2. To obtain an adequate sample size, convenience and snowball sampling were utilized, which limits the generalizability of this research to the target population.
3. This study relied solely on quantitative data to explain sport fans' motivations for using social media and to ascertain which social media platforms fans preferred. Therefore, it may be assumed that these findings may differ from those discovered through qualitative analysis.
4. Due to logistical constraints associated with survey research, authors are forced to focus on a limited number of variables believed to be the most influential in explaining a given outcome. Thus, it is impractical to believe that one study can fully explain the underlying reasons why sport fans use social media to engage with sport organizations. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe there are several other factors not analyzed in this study that contribute to sport fan social media usage and platform preference.
5. Using cluster analysis to segment study participants resulted in unequal group sizes. Unequal group sizes can cause violations of MANOVA statistical assumptions such as homogeneity of variance or normal distribution. While MANOVA is considered to be a robust analysis technique that can overcome certain assumption violations (Fan

& Hancock, 2012), results should be interpreted with caution, as several assumptions were violated.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Social Media:* A group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

*Uses and Gratifications:* Uses and gratifications is a theory that posits that audience members actively select the communication mediums that provide the greatest satisfaction for their particular needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). Furthermore, users repeatedly return to those same mediums because their initial use gratified the user's particular needs, leading to habitual use (Weibull, 1985). The key assumption in this theory is that audience members are active and goal-directed. In other words, the onus of satisfaction lies with the audience member rather than the mass media.

*Market Segmentation:* Viewing a heterogeneous market as a number of smaller homogeneous markets based on differing preferences, which are attributable to the desires of customers that more precisely satisfy their varying wants (Smith, 1956).

*Narcissism:* A tendency to consider one's self to be better than others, to constantly seek veneration from others, and to engage in self-centered thinking and behavior (Panek, Nardis, & Konrath, 2013).

CHAPTER II  
LITERATURE REVIEW  
**Social Media**

Social media is essentially electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). It is more effective than conventional communication because it creates a “viral replication of messages” from person to person, or from business to person (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013, p 91). Consumer-generated media can be seen as the most honest source of information available because the perceived protection that comes from communicating through a computer may make users more likely to be candid in their posting (Foux, 2006). Additionally, social media’s reach can go far beyond that of traditional media because consumers are not content to be merely bystanders (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Consumers now live in a cluttered media market, and they “expect to be active participants in the media process” (Hanna et al., 2011, p. 276). Thus, social media has created a new precedent for audience involvement. Moreover, effective communication and marketing strategies mean blending traditional media with social media to expand a company’s reach, increase intimacy with consumers, and engage its consumers (Hanna et al., 2011). Therefore, it is in the best interests of marketers and managers to understand this popular communication channel so they can begin to utilize social media to its full potential. For sport marketers in particular, a better understanding of social media may boost an organization’s ties to fans outside the team’s home market (Stavros et al., 2014).

Social media has roots in the Web 2.0 platform, which is characterized by a collaborative and participatory effort to modify World Wide Web content and applications for users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In other words, any person with an Internet connection can create web content and publish it to the masses. In turn, the others can modify that original content and re-publish it for the masses. Ultimately, Web 2.0 creates two-way communication rather than one-way communication, which is where a single user creates and publishes information without any input from others. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), when Web 2.0 reflects the ideal foundation, the summation of all the ways in which people use social media can be considered user generated content (UGC). UGC is content that is publically available and created by all users. However, in order for content to be considered user generated, it must meet three requirements:

First, it needs to be published either on a publically accessible website or on a social networking site accessible to a selected group of people; second, it needs to show a certain amount of creative effort, and finally, it needs to have been created outside of professional routines and practices. (p. 61)

Thus, these three conditions exclude content such as emails, instant messages, advertisements, and posts of existing newspaper or magazine articles without modification or comments because they fail to satisfy at least one of the requirements for UGC.

Sanderson (2011) states that social media “are inherently designed to facilitate human connections” (p. 494). The cost-effectiveness of the Internet has allowed human connection to expand because individuals can more easily get online to access content and build their own content through personal web sites, social media accounts, blogs, mobile phones, and even gaming consoles (Pegoraro, 2010). Additionally, social media help users make social



connections and boost self-esteem, but above all social media were designed to share information in a fun, informal fashion (Hambrick et al., 2010). Moreover, the technology that comes with social media provides opportunities for interactions and experiences that can help strengthen relationships on a global scale (Stavros et al., 2014).

Understanding the nuances of Web 2.0 and UGC becomes essential when crafting a definition of social media. While there is no single definition that perfectly captures the essence of social media, Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) definition is the most widely accepted among researchers. They define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (p. 61). However, they also caution that it is nearly impossible to systematically categorize the various social media applications. Despite this difficulty, Kaplan and Haenlein explain that two of the key elements in social media applications—self-presentation and self-disclosure—make it a bit easier to separate social mediums. Both elements speak to the social dimension of social media and find support in existing theory. For instance, self-presentation posits that people have a desire to control other people's impressions of themselves (Goffman, 1959; as cited in Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). People want to make a positive impression on others as a way to gain recognition, but they also want that impression to consistently reflect their identity. In order to create this positive impression, people must be willing to disclose personal information about themselves that is consistent with the image they want to reflect. This process is known as self-disclosure and is a critical step in fostering deeper relationships. Using these two social theories and the theories of media richness and social presence, Kaplan and Haenlein developed six different categories for classifying social media: 1) blogs, 2) collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia), 3) social networking sites (e.g., Facebook,

Twitter), 4) content communities (e.g., YouTube), 5) virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life), and 6) virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft). Overall, social media has changed the way we communicate because it offers several different applications that suit the needs of a variety of individuals.

Social media has been a popular research topic across various fields of study. Some of the first studies on social networking sites (SNS) examined motivations for “friending” on SNS (boyd, 2006), and motivations for joining particular online communities (Backstrom, Huttenlocher, Kleinberg, & Lan, 2006). In fact, Donath and boyd (2004), in one of the first studies on social media, suggest that SNS have three main assumptions driving their existence, “that there is a need for people to make more connections, that using a network for existing connections is the best way to do so (make connections), and that making this easy to do is a great benefit” (p. 71). Given the exponential growth and immense popularity of SNS 15 years after Donath and boyd’s observations, it is fair to say that these assumptions are accurate. Furthermore, Donath and boyd posit that the public displays of connections on SNS are “one of the most salient features” (p. 72), and offer numerous social implications. For instance, an individual can gather information (e.g., musical taste, social status, political beliefs, etc.) about someone just from his or her social connections, whether they are physical or virtual. Displays of social connection also foster trust with a new relationship because two previously unacquainted people who are connected through a mutual friend already know and trust that mutual friend (Donath & boyd, 2004). Ultimately, Donath and boyd suggest that SNS streamline the growth of people’s social networks. However, the amount of energy an individual invests in maintaining a SNS connection varies and can be a sign of how much value SNS have to that person.

The bulk of early research into SNS was concerned with impression management and friendship performance, networks and network structure, online/offline connections, and privacy issues (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Boyd (2006) points out that the term “friend” has different connotations on and offline. A friend in an online setting does not necessarily equate to a close relationship with that person. Rather, an online friend represents a “variety of different relationships” as a way for the SNS user to bolster his or her self-presentation (p. 4). Thus, a SNS user could potentially have thousands of “friends” listed on his or her profile, but the bulk of those connections are meaningless.

More than 10 years later, SNS research remains focused on the same four categories as early research. However, there have been extensions of SNS research that have investigated user influence (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto, & Gummadi, 2010), addiction (Song, LaRose, Eastin, & Lin, 2004), social media ecosystems (Hanna et al., 2011), networking experiences (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009), and diffusion (Chiang, 2013). Additionally, studying SNS in conjunction with personality has become a popular avenue of research. A plethora of studies have used the Big Five personality factors—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—concurrently with SNS (Hughes, Rowe, Batey, & Lee, 2012; Moore & McElroy, 2012; Ross et al., 2009). For instance, Hughes et al. (2012) found that preference for a specific SNS—Twitter or Facebook in this case—is associated with differences in personality. Results from Moore and McElroy (2012) reveal that more extroverted Facebook users had significantly wider social networks than introverts, while users who are less emotionally stable (neurotic) spend more time on Facebook and users who rated high on agreeableness were more likely to post Facebook wall content about themselves.

## Facebook and Twitter

When it comes to studying social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter far outpace any other platform. This can be attributed to the length of time these two mediums have been available; Facebook was launched in 2004 (Facebook, 2019) and Twitter followed two years later in 2006 (Twitter, 2016). Both Facebook and Twitter are primarily text-based mediums. While both allow users to post pictures, the functionality of each focuses more on text tools. For instance, Facebook permits users to post status updates, comment on another user's wall, post picture and video links (often accompanied by status messages or captions), and "like" various posts and pages. In February 2016, Facebook introduced "reactions" (Stinton, 2016) which are enhancements to the "like" feature Facebook introduced in 2009 (Kincaid, 2009). Now users have options as to how they "like" a post. The new reactions include: 1) love, 2) haha, 3) wow, 4) angry, and 5) sad (Stinton, 2016). Reactions were introduced as a way to add more nuances to the "like" button, which was not always appropriate for posts that reflect negative emotion. In the same vein, Twitter offers real-time conversations truncated to 140-character "tweets" with whomever that Twitter user chooses to follow. Again, images and short videos accompanied by captions and hashtags may also be posted to the site.

An overwhelming majority of studies have focused on Facebook (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Smock, Ellison, Lampe, & Wohn, 2011). A meta-analysis by Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) reviewed 42 Facebook studies and concluded that there are two main reasons why individuals use Facebook: the need to belong and the need for self-presentation. They define the need to belong as an "intrinsic drive to affiliate with others and gain social acceptance" (p. 245), and the need for self-presentation as a "continuous process of impression management" (p. 245). While they emphasize that the two

factors co-exist, they can also work individually to influence Facebook use. They also point out that these two main factors are influenced by myriad other factors including, but not limited to: cultural background, sociodemographics, personality traits, self-esteem, and self-worth.

### **Instagram and Snapchat**

**Instagram.** Founded in 2010, Instagram is a photo-sharing site that allows users to take pictures and videos on their smartphones to upload to their personal account (Instagram FAQ, 2019). Other users are able to “like” and comment on photos, akin to Facebook. What makes Instagram unique from other photo services like Flickr is the fact that it is strictly a mobile application; there is no official web interface (Weilenmann, Hillman, & Jungselius, 2013). According to Instagram’s website, “a world more connected through photos” is the driving mission of the company (Instagram FAQ, 2019). Instagram’s key feature is the photo filter, which is a digital layer that gives the appearance of professional editing once it is applied to a photo (Buck, 2012). Applied filters can give a raw photo a vintage appearance, enhance dark and/or light aspects in the photo, turn it black and white, and provide enhanced color (Buck, 2012). Moreover, Instagram users can snap, upload, and edit photos all from the mobile app, reducing unnecessary clutter on a user’s smartphone because they do not have to download separate photo-editing apps. The popularity of Instagram caught the eye of Facebook, which acquired the site for \$1 billion in April 2012 (Buck, 2012). According to Constine (2018), the photo-sharing site boasts more than one billion active users, with 88% of those users residing outside the United States (Clarke, 2019). Furthermore, more than 100 million photos are posted to the site each day that generate nearly 4.2 billion likes daily (Aslam, 2019).

There is a dearth of academic research examining Instagram simply because it is still a relatively new social media application. The few studies that have investigated Instagram have

approached it from the producer angle. For instance, Weilenmann et al. (2013) explored how museum visitors communicated their experience with others through Instagram. They found that visitors were in essence “re-curating” (p. 8) the exhibits they were viewing in the museum. In other words, the museum visitors were re-organizing the exhibits in their own way through their selection of a photo subject and decisions about how to shoot it, frame it, and caption it (Weilenmann et al., 2013). The researchers also found that museum visitors did not use Instagram in isolation. Rather, they connected their Instagram accounts with other social media such as Facebook and Twitter, allowing their conversations to spread beyond just Instagram. In essence, visitors are extending the museum experience beyond the physical building, garnering the interest of new visitors and patrons. A study by Alper (2014) examined the popularity of Instagram among photojournalists covering the war in Afghanistan. She found that images taken with mobile applications like Instagram and tagged with “#nofilter” (p. 1244) are the photographer’s attempt to delineate raw footage from editorialized footage. Alper explained that “a photo taken by an embedded photojournalist on the front page of the NYT (New York Times) is at its essence contractually censored” (p. 1245); on the other hand, photos taken with Instagram are meant to provide viewers with a different view of the war; one that is not controlled by the media. The findings from these studies imply that Instagram allows users to present the world through their own perspectives, offering unique and uncommon worldviews to anyone who dares to follow them on Instagram.

Scholars are beginning to investigate Instagram from the user perspective. E. Lee, J. Lee, Moon, and Sung (2015) examined motivation for using Instagram and found that Instagram users have five primary motives for using the site: 1) social interaction, 2) archiving, 3) self-expression, 4) escapism, and 5) peeking, which explained 62% of the variance in Instagram

usage. Social interaction referred to interacting with other users and keeping up on what was happening around the user. Archiving was concerned with recording daily events through photos, keeping track of various locations, and uploading photos that had been edited with filters. Self-expression was defined by showing off on Instagram, being noticeable to others, and express oneself. Escapism referred to forgetting about troubles and avoiding loneliness, while peeking referred to browsing photos and videos from other users, including celebrities. Lee et al. were also interested in understanding which of the five aforementioned motives predicted attitude toward and intention to use Instagram. The authors found that archiving and peeking motives were the strongest predictors of attitude toward Instagram and intention to use Instagram, while the other three motives were not significant. These findings suggest that being able to manipulate raw photos and experience photos from other users are key reasons why people use Instagram. From a marketing perspective, marketers should make it a priority to upload interesting or “fancy” photos of their brand to increase the likelihood of gathering more followers, which will in turn generate brand awareness, and ultimately, brand loyalty.

The limited research into Instagram combined with the growing user base of Instagram warrants further study into its use. All indications point to Instagram continuing to grow in popularity; thus it behooves researchers to continue to study this photo-sharing site, as it shows no signs of slowing down in the future.

**Snapchat.** Snapchat was launched in 2011 into an already crowded social media scene (Crook & Escher, 2015; Singh, 2014). By April 2012, the site, which is strictly mobile like Instagram, had more than 100,000 users (Crook & Escher, 2015). According to Snap Inc.’s investor website (2019), As of the second quarter of 2019, Snapchat has more than 200 million daily active users. What sets Snapchat apart from Instagram is the fact that photos and videos up

to 10 seconds that are sent, or “snapped” to a user’s followers disappear after 10 seconds (Singh, 2014). According to Snapchat’s privacy policy, the site automatically deletes the content of snaps once it determines that a particular snap has either been opened or has expired (Snapchat, 2019). Snapchat cautions that a user may take a screenshot of a snap he or she received, thereby preserving the image, but the user who sent the snap receives a notification anytime someone takes a screenshot. Another important feature for Snapchat is its “stories” feature. Stories are “stitched-together (pictures and) videos from friends and celebrities organized around topics” (Flynn, 2015, para. 3). Stories can be posted to a user’s feed, can be replayed as often as a user wants, but they are only available for viewing for 24 hours (App, 2013; Singh, 2014). Other features include live chatting and video chatting, which facilitate real-time conversation; the ability to draw, or doodle, on your images; and filters (Singh, 2014). The most recent feature, and one that has exponentially increased Snapchat’s popularity, is “our stories,” which was introduced in 2014 (Flynn, 2015). This feature allows users to access stories without having to follow specific accounts and is presented to them in real time. According to Flynn, live stories attract between 10 and 20 million viewers. Live stories also allow organizations to create content that they can share with everyone, creating a strong avenue for marketing and outreach (Anderson, 2015).

Despite its relative infancy compared to other social networks, Snapchat was rated as the third most popular social application among Millennials in August 2014 (Perez, 2014). Millennials—anyone born in or after 1982 (Howe & Strauss, 2000) are “the youngest, most active generation of mobile social networking users” (Perez, 2014, para. 3), and are one of the most sought after groups by marketers and advertisers. According to Perez, Snapchat’s high penetration rate of adults aged 18-24 (nearly 80% in 2018; Smith & Anderson, 2018) suggest



that apps that are not text-heavy, like Facebook or Twitter, can be just as popular. In fact, in April 2019 Snapchat was valued at \$15 billion (Feiner, 2019).

Snapchat is also popular in the sport world. The social media platform has partnered with all the major professional sport leagues in the United States, as well as the NCAA, as a way to grow the user base and increase revenue (Flynn, 2015). The National Basketball Association (NBA) was the first league to join Snapchat, doing so in February 2014 (Flynn, 2015). Major League Baseball (MLB) was second, followed by The National Hockey League (NHL) in October 2014, and the National Football League (NFL) in April 2015 (Flynn, 2015). In the NFL, the New Orleans Saints and Philadelphia Eagles were the first two teams to adopt Snapchat (Silverman, 2014). According to an article from *Street and Smith's SportsBusiness Journal*, the Saints reached a Snapchat following of more than 28,000 fans within a few months of incorporating the picture-sharing site into its social media marketing strategy (the team joined Snapchat in October 2013; App, 2013). The biggest takeaway the team has seen is that fans see Snapchat posts, or snaps, from the team as personal messages, which is an important perception given that the user base for Snapchat is comprised mostly of younger users (Silverman, 2014). The Saints were quick to capitalize on this personal messaging perception by having individual players reach out to the team's fan base. Not only do players post video messages to the team's official Snapchat account, but they also share pictures from team meetings and activities that have previously been inaccessible by fans, such as inside the locker room and practice meetings. Silverman (2014) emphasizes that since Snapchat is strictly a mobile site, the key to growing a team's Snapchat followers is word-of-mouth promotion, which, as Mangold and Faulds (2009) suggested, is the basic premise of social media. In fact, the social media manager for the Saints attributed the team's large Snapchat following to fans telling other fans about the platform.

Other professional leagues have also embraced the popularity of Snapchat. On March 11, 2016, Major League Baseball (MLB) introduced Snapchat Day for the fans (Cwik, 2016). For the first time, MLB players are allowed to use their smartphones during games so they can snap pictures and videos to the official MLB account, individual team accounts, and individual player accounts. The agreement between Snapchat and MLB also permits Snapchat to cover baseball games for the 2016 season and future seasons (Cwik, 2016). The live stories feature has become a centerpiece of Snapchat since its introduction in 2014, and sport leagues have wholeheartedly embraced it. The NBA has worked on 12 such stories with Snapchat, the NHL has three, and MLB worked with Snapchat on a story chronicling Derek Jeter's final game at Yankee Stadium in September 2014 (Flynn, 2015).

As previously indicated, there has been a dearth of research on Snapchat within the academic sphere, perhaps because of its relatively short lifespan, and perhaps because of its self-destructing nature in terms of content. A handful of studies have been published that have examined ephemeral social interaction (Anderson, 2015; Bayer, Ellison, Schoenebeck, & Falk, 2015; Charteris, Gregory, & Masters, 2014; Piwek, & Joinson, 2016; Roesner, Gill, & Kohno, 2014), sexting (Poltash, 2012), and jealousy (Utz, Muscanell, & Khalid, 2015). Perhaps not surprisingly, the self-destructing data aspect of Snapchat has been a popular area of study among scholars. For instance, Bayer et al. (2015) conducted a mixed methods study to examine how users are communicating on Snapchat. Their quantitative findings suggest that Snapchat interactions were more enjoyable than texting, email, and Facebook, but less supportive than face-to-face conversation, voice calls, texting, email, and Twitter. Snapchat use was also associated with a more positive mood compared to texting, email, and Facebook, but it was associated with a more negative mood when compared to face-to-face interaction. Interestingly,

Snapchat use was also rated as having lower levels of arousal than face-to-face communication, which suggests that despite the real-time conversation aspects of Snapchat, face-to-face interaction is still considered superior, even among younger demographics. The qualitative aspect of Bayer et al.'s study was concerned with the type of content users post to Snapchat, the perceptions of the medium, and the types of interactions users engage in on Snapchat. They found that most content posted are mundane, "snippets" of everyday life. According to Bayer et al., participants shared everything from "a cute pet" to "nice, outdoor scenes" (p. 12). Further, participants reported interacting most frequently with close ties, and that most participants viewed Snapchat as a messaging application rather than a photo- and video-sharing site. In their closing remarks, Bayer et al. suggest that Snapchat's position in the social media landscape is one of "a lightweight channel for sharing spontaneous experiences with trusted ties" (p. 18), and that the value of Snapchat is comparable to that of small talk, and shared eye contact in public.

In a similar study, Piwek and Joinson (2016) surveyed Snapchat users in England and found that nearly half of respondents (47%) started using Snapchat because their friends were using it. Furthermore, nearly 80% use the platform to interact with only a dozen followers on a regular basis, supporting research by Bayer et al. (2015) that suggests most Snapchat interaction occurs among close ties. In terms of content, Piwek and Joinson found that nearly 75% of participants sent a picture with a doodle as their most recent Snapchat post, and half reported sending a selfie. Snapchat communication mostly occurred between the user and another individual rather than a group of people, and the most common individuals were close friends, family members, and romantic partners. Perhaps the most interesting finding from Piwek and Joinson dealt with relationship building. The authors found that more frequent Snapchat use was more highly associated with bonding rather than bridging social capital, suggesting that Snapchat

is better for more intimate relationships because of its more private, conversational nature. This particular result is contrary to findings from Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007), who found that more frequent Facebook use is associated with bridging social capital rather than bonding social capital. Bridging social capital is concerned with “weak ties” (Piwek & Joinson, 2016, p. 364), loose connections between individuals that provide useful information but are not strong in emotional support. Bonding capital, on the other hand, focuses on emotional support between strong ties, which are those connections that are more intimate. Ultimately, Piwek and Joinson argue that Snapchat has carved out a unique place in the social media landscape, one that has created a “new form of digital narrative...that is achieved by seamless and playful use of smartphones to capture and share content-rich moments that seem to exist a second later” (p. 365).

A study by Roesner et al. (2014) examined usage patterns and security on Snapchat. They found that the majority of their respondents do not worry about the security, or potential lack of security, on Snapchat because most do not send sensitive content such as intimate pictures or legal documents, although 25% admitted to doing so experimentally. Other pertinent results from Roesner et al. suggest that Snapchat users do not mind when another user screenshots their content. They find it to be common and expected rather than a violation of trust, as they understand content can be recovered, and that security concerns are overshadowed by other reasons for using Snapchat, such as ease of use, simplicity, and enjoyment. These results suggest that despite the lack of content security on Snapchat, users still prefer to use it for the fun, silly aspect, and most do not worry about the security concerns because they either do not send images of a sensitive nature in the first place, or they send sensitive images only to close ties whom they trust.

There is no question that Snapchat will continue to grow in popularity. Despite the challenges associated with the self-destruct content on Snapchat, research into both user and organization motivation is necessary to generate a more complete picture of Snapchat's utility and potential as a marketing and communication tool.

### **Social Media and Sport**

From a sport perspective, social media acts as a communication channel for fans of a particular team, player, or league without going through a third party like a publicist (Pegoraro, 2010). Therefore, it is not out of line to suggest that social media is “a fantastic compliment to sports that's good for both fans and the TV networks...” (van Grove, 2009, para. 23).

Social media has been a popular area of study among sport management scholars. Exploratory and introductory studies have emerged to scrutinize social media and its effects on communication and marketing. The majority of the research has focused on how athletes use social media, particularly Twitter, (Clavio & Kian, 2010; Clavio, Walsh, & Vooris, 2013; Hambrick, et al., 2010; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Pegoraro, 2010) and how social media can be utilized as a branding, marketing, and communication tool (Frederick, Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Wallace, Wilson, & Miloch, 2011; Waters, Burke, Jackson, & Buning, 2011; Williams & Chinn, 2010; Witkemper, Lim, & Waldburger, 2012). For example, Pegoraro (2010) examined professional athletes' Twitter use to determine how and why certain athletes used Twitter. She found that NFL players were the most active on Twitter, accounting for more than 50% of the total number of Tweets collected. Her findings also reveal that the majority of athlete tweets were responding to fans or talking about their personal lives.

Hambrick et al. (2010) conducted a content analysis of 101 professional athlete Twitter accounts to determine what athletes were saying. The researchers then classified the tweets into

one of six categories: interactivity, diversion, information sharing, content, fanship, and promotional. They found 62% of athlete tweets were classified as either interactivity (i.e., interacting with fans or friends) or diversion (discussing non sport-related activities such as what they had for dinner or what movies they had seen recently), suggesting athletes are using social media primarily to connect with fans and reveal a behind-the-scenes look at their lives.

Sport branding, marketing, and communication studies have examined how the National Collegiate Athletic Association and Big 12 Conference use Facebook (Wallace et al., 2011), the motivations and constraints of Twitter users (Witkemper et al., 2012), and stewardship strategies among National Football League teams as a way to build relationships with fans (Waters et al., 2011). Wallace et al. (2011) found that links and status updates were the most common forms of content on the various collegiate sport organization Facebook pages, stifling the potential for interaction. These results led the authors to suggest that the capabilities of the medium, for the most part, were underutilized. The Waters et al. (2011) study found that NFL teams used their websites more than Facebook in facilitating relationship management, which may be because of a lack of flexibility in social media formats or a lack of measurable return on investment. However, all of these researchers have emphasized that social media is a critical part of the marketing and communication mix for sport organizations, as it provides a cost-effective way to broaden the organization's fan base and cultivate lasting relationships with potential corporate sponsors and advertisers.

In regards to examining social media use from the fan's perspective, sport management scholars have also made inroads. For example, Frederick et al. (2012) examined the differences between fan motivations for following a parasocial (one who does not interact with followers) versus a social (one who regularly engages with followers) athlete on Twitter. They found that

followers of the parasocial athlete read tweets for a longer period of time than followers of the social athlete. Conversely, followers of the social athlete were more likely to retweet the athlete's content and send an @reply to their athlete. The social athlete's followers were more willing to engage in some sort of interaction than followers of the parasocial athlete. Furthermore, the interactive tendency among the social athlete's followers continued to exist despite the fact that the athlete did not interact with many of the survey respondents.

In another study, Stavros et al. (2014) were interested in understanding fans' motivations for communicating on NBA team Facebook pages. Through a qualitative examination of fan postings on several NBA team Facebook pages, they categorized fan postings into one of four categories: passion, hope, esteem, and camaraderie. Two-way interaction was facilitated not only by the fan posts but also by the team posting material that encouraged fan engagement. Unsurprisingly, passion posts were the most numerous, suggesting that fans find pleasure in expressing a connection to a team.

Fans expressed hope through favorable assessments of the development of the team or the potential of the players, which Stavros et al. (2014) suggest allow the fans a measure of control in the sport environment. Fans have no say whatsoever in personnel decisions for sport organizations, but by discussing their hopes on the team's Facebook page with other fans, they have the perception that their thoughts and feelings matter in team decisions.

Esteem postings generally occurred through negative comments involving poor team performance or management decision-making. They manifested in three ways: venting, sharing of experiences, and demonstrating superior knowledge of the sport and team. For instance, several fans posted suggested strategies and tactics the team should consider implementing, and these statements generally fostered discussion among other fans. Stavros et al. (2014) suggest the

anonymity that comes with social media allows fans to “feel less accountable and inhibited, and more in control” of what they post online (p. 10). These particular findings also lend credence to previous suggestions that fans may have a propensity for expressing themselves more forcefully and authoritatively through social media because there is less fear of backlash than with face-to-face communication (Qualman, 2010).

The final posting category was camaraderie. Stavros et al. (2014) point out that social media by definition facilitate a strong group dynamic and sport is particularly adept at harnessing that group dynamic. They found that fans tended to post non-sport related posts to the NBA team Facebook page, which highlights the strong power of social media to link people together and generate a broad range of interaction and friendship. Perhaps most surprising in this study was that fans were generally accepting of contributions from fans of other teams, as long as those comments were not overly critical of their team. Stavros et al. attributed this finding to the fact that the study took place during the off-season, so rivalries and bad blood between fans likely were muted.

Within the sport management field, relatively little research has examined Instagram, and studies that have explored Instagram have approached it only from the producer perspective (Bowles, 2016; Geurin-Eagleman, & Burch, 2015; Lebel & Harman, 2014). For instance, both Lebel and Harman (2014) and Geurin-Eagleman and Burch (2015) examined the self-presentation of female athletes on Instagram. Geurin-Eagleman and Burch focused on Olympic athletes, both male and female. They found that personal life photos were the most popular category of post, accounting for 60% of the content analysis sample, followed by business life (23%), Internet meme, or screen capture (6.4%). Interestingly, photos of the athletes’ sport consisted of only 1.5% of the sample, suggesting that athletes prefer to use Instagram to



showcase their personal lives rather than their athletic lives. Further results indicated that female athletes were more likely to post photos of themselves than male athletes. Male athletes were more likely to post photos of athletic action than females, but were less likely to post non-sport photos than females. Surprisingly, sexually suggestive photos posted by the athlete were the most liked and commented on by fans/followers, which supports the old adage that sex sells. Ultimately, Guerin-Eagleman and Burch's findings support the idea that social media is an important channel for developing and cultivating an athlete's personal brand. The authors emphasize that a strong personal brand, especially for Olympic athletes, can foster more sponsorships, fan following, and public exposure both on and off the athletic field. In their closing remarks, Guerin-Eagleman and Burch caution that athletes must be "cognizant of the impressions they project to the public of themselves" (p. 142) so as not to damage their personal brand.

In a different producer vein, Bowles (2016) examined how athletic departments for each of the universities in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) use Instagram to connect to various stakeholders. Six themes emerged from Bowles' analysis: action, behind the scenes, fans, landmark, promotional, and success. Interestingly, the fan category comprised only 11.7% of the total sample of photos and videos. Bowles explains that "while there is no 'correct' way to use any type of social network" (p. 18) it is clear that the athletic departments of the SEC universities are using Instagram to brand themselves to the masses. Bowles clarifies that Instagram, and what each school chooses to share on its official athletics Instagram account, is "part of the 'ethos', or the guiding spirit of the athletic department" (p. 18). Ultimately, Instagram can enhance how others see the overall brand, and how it can become a powerful tool for any organization, sport or otherwise.

Sport management scholars have also begun exploring Snapchat from the fan perspective. For instance, Billings et al. (2015) examined how much time sport fans spend on Snapchat relative to other social media applications, and which motives for use were most salient among fans. They found that time spent on Snapchat was not significantly different from the time respondents reported spending on Facebook, but it was significantly different compared to Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. In other words, respondents reported spending more time following sports on Snapchat than on Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. When it came to motivations for using Snapchat for sport consumption, significant differences were found between Snapchat and other social media platforms for information seeking, relaxation, and social interaction. Snapchat was less likely to be used for information-seeking reasons than Facebook or Twitter, less likely to be used for relaxation than Twitter, less likely to be used for social interaction than Facebook, but more likely to be used for social interaction than Pinterest. When it came to escape motivation, Snapchat was not significantly different from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Pinterest. Among Billings et al.'s other findings, the top three reasons for using Snapchat for sport-related consumption were that Snapchat was a great place to socialize, it provided moments of team activities that they usually did not experience, and it offered several creative features. Finally, results indicated that those who had higher self-reported team fandom were more likely to use Snapchat to follow sports, and those with higher levels of sport identification were more likely to use Snapchat to follow sports. Overall, Billings et al.'s results emphasize that Snapchat users use the platform "at a rate roughly equivalent to Twitter" (p. 12): a significant finding considering that Twitter has received much more scholarly attention. Furthermore, Snapchat appears to be superior in terms of socialization, creativity, and fan experience relative to other, more established social media, which is perhaps the reason Snapchat

has become so popular among younger demographics of sport fans. Interestingly, the biggest complaint about Snapchat was a lack of understanding of how to follow favorite teams or athletes, which contrasts with previous Snapchat research that suggests ease of use was a positive influence in Snapchat use (Roesner et al., 2014). Overall, the Billings et al. study suggests that Snapchat is appealing to sport fans and that it has “emerged as a primary player in the mediated reflection of sports fandom” (p. 14).

It is clear that social media research is boundless and unexplored avenues still remain. Social media show no signs of slowing down, and the increasing mobile access to social media has only served to increase user numbers. Scholars have only scratched the surface into this area of research. Continued research is necessary when examining social media from the fan perspective because a deeper understanding of user motives and the reasons why fans consume sport through social media will serve to validate the research already conducted. Moreover, continued research into social media from the fan perspective will also give sport marketing and communication professionals a clearer understanding of their fans and allow sport organizations to connect more fully with their fans, which may lead to a strengthening of the fan-athlete-organization bond.

### **Uses and Gratifications**

The theory of uses and gratifications has roots in communication literature and posits that audience members actively select the mediums that provide the greatest satisfaction for their particular needs, such as a need for emotional connection or for information (Chen, 2011; Clavio, 2011; Johnson & Yang, 2009; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Additionally, users repeatedly return to those same mediums because their initial use gratified the users’ particular needs, leading to habitual use (Weibull, 1985). Since there are so many mass media options

available to users, the desire to habitually gratify needs becomes even more important because all of these mediums are competing for user attention; audience members are goal-oriented and seek out those mediums that will meet their goals. Therefore, one of the core components of uses and gratification theory is that the audience is active rather than passive.

While there is not one specific source for the uses and gratification theory, most scholars agree that the theory developed from paradigms in sociology and psychology (Blumler & Katz, 1974). Early exploratory research in the 1940s and 1950s focused on describing, “audience subgroup orientations to selected media content forms” (Blumler & Katz, 1974, p. 13). The aim of these initial studies was to illuminate how strongly audiences attached themselves to mass communication channels. Like the developers of any new theory, these early researchers were simply trying to get a feel for which mass communication channels audiences tended to gravitate towards. Therefore, findings were presented to reveal how specific bodies of content served specific functions, or that one medium better satisfied a specific need over another medium (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). These findings are simply cataloguing media activity rather than explaining the differences in media selection among audience members. In the 1960s, the research shifted to more of an operationalization focus. According to Blumler and Katz (1974), uses and gratifications researchers were concerned with identifying and operationally defining the social and psychological variables that influenced differing patterns of media consumption. These researchers assumed that these variables could be measured and analyzed quantitatively, a direction that the earlier researchers did not pursue. As the research moved into its maturity in the 1970s, the focus became one of explaining how uses and gratifications of mass media are connected to other facets of the communication process. The uses and gratification theory was deliberately developed to be a broad theory, which makes it capable of encompassing a wide

range of new theoretical developments in other disciplines rather than remaining static and stagnant in the communication field of study. This broad nature is perhaps one of the biggest reasons that the theory is so popular among communications scholars; the theory can be applied to any form of mass communication and remain robust.

There are some basic assumptions that comprise the uses and gratifications paradigm: (1) the audience is active and goal-directed; (2) linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member; (3) media compete with other sources to satisfy audience needs; (4) audience members are self-aware and able to report their interests and motives in particular cases; (5) judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms (Katz et al., 1974, pp. 21-22). Thus, in its simplest form, uses and gratifications theory explores how an individual uses communication to satisfy his or her needs and achieve specific goals (Katz et al., 1974). As mentioned above, the key component to this theory is that audience members are actively rather than passively engaged in their media uses. This assumption is critical to uses and gratifications because it puts the onus of satisfaction on the audience rather than the mass media. The assumption that audiences are active in their media selection also lends credence to the idea that audience members know what they want and will seek out those communication channels that give them the most satisfaction. In other words, individuals will select those mass communication mediums that fulfill their specific set of needs and goals.

In terms of sources of media gratification, Katz et al. (1974) offer three distinct sources: (a) media content; (b) exposure to the media, and (c) social context. The authors point out that much of the research into uses and gratifications has focused almost exclusively on media content, to the detriment of the other sources. Nevertheless, Katz et al. and other early

researchers were able to decipher that each mass medium (e.g., television, radio, newspapers/magazines, books, movies, etc.) offers a combination of (1) characteristic contents (stereotypically perceived), (2) typical attributes (print vs. broadcasting mode of transmission; reading vs. audio or audio/visual reception) and (3) typical exposure situations such as at home or alone vs. being with others (p. 25). The logical question, then, is what combination of these individual media attributes influence audience media choice with respect to satisfying different needs? This question has been the driving force of uses and gratifications research since its inception.

In a review of the development and future direction of uses and gratifications theory, Ruggiero (2000) suggests that the Internet and all its related technologies is a logical step for further study and application, and these emerging technologies may have even revived the theory. He suggests that the deregulation of the communications industry paired with the convergence of mass media and digital technology are two of the biggest reasons for why uses and gratifications research is enjoying resurgence. New technologies provide audience members with even more media choices, which in turn make motivation and satisfaction increasingly crucial components of audience analysis.

Ruggiero (2000) also suggests that online communication blurs the line between message sender and message receiver. Furthermore, online communication channels like the Internet introduce three attributes not found in traditional media like newspapers, radio, and television: (a) interactivity, (b) demassification, and (c) asynchronicity. Interactivity refers to the control an individual user possesses in the communication process. Interactivity offers the means to develop new channels of communication that may also greatly increase user activity (Ruggiero, 2000).

Demassification is the degree of control the individual user has over the medium itself. Ruggiero (2000) argues that the Internet offers “selectivity characteristics that allow individuals to tailor messages to their needs” (p. 16). Asynchronicity refers to the concept of messages being sendable and receivable at different times. Put another way, the Internet allows user A to send a message to user B in the morning, and user B can then respond at his or her convenience and send a reply hours later, but the two users are still interacting and communicating within the medium.

Uses and gratifications theory also relies on the concept of needs as its central psychological concept (Katz et al., 1974; Ruggiero, 2000). Accordingly, Ruggiero (2000) suggests that “needs are inherent in every individual and central to human experience” (p. 27), and are susceptible to outside influences that change or modify not only the need formation but also how that need is gratified. Therefore, to understand needs, one must also investigate the motivations for satisfying those needs. Researchers applying uses and gratification theory to general Internet usage have consistently identified several motivations that help explain online consumption (Hambrick et al., 2010) including accessing information and other technical knowledge (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Ruggiero, 2000), seeking out entertainment and diversion (Ruggiero, 2000), communicating with users that are likeminded (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008), and developing personal identities and keeping in touch with the world at large (Ruggiero, 2000).

One of the strengths of the uses and gratifications theory is its flexibility; it is easily adaptable to new communication technologies (Clavio, 2008; Ruggiero, 2000). Additionally, uses and gratifications theory examines media consumption from the audience perspective (Swanson, 1979). As Chen (2011) notes, “the core of the U&G approach is that it asks what

people do with the media, not what the media does to people” (p. 759). Thus, uses and gratifications theory is well suited to studies examining social media. Ruggiero (2000) expresses this sentiment nicely, “as new communication technologies rapidly materialize, the range of possible topics for U&G researchers also multiplies” (p. 28). He further emphasizes that the Internet will lead to profound changes in a media user’s personal and social habits (p. 28). However, for uses and gratifications researchers, the basic questions remain: “Why do people become involved in one particular type of mediated communication or another, and what gratifications do they receive from it” (Ruggiero, 2000, p. 29). Ruggiero hypothesizes that even in this digital age, researchers will continue to use the traditional uses and gratifications typologies and tools that emerged in the 1970s, but they must also be willing to expand the current theoretical models to include aspects of mediated online communication such as interactivity and asynchronicity. If researchers can combine the traditional aspects of the theory with new aspects that develop, the theory will be “highly serviceable” (p. 29) for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Market Segmentation**

Market segmentation can be defined as parceling a large, heterogeneous market into smaller, more homogeneous groups that are connected by similar wants or needs (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014; Smith, 1956). According to Beane and Ennis (1987), segmentation is possible only under the auspices that the original overall market is not completely homogenous. Furthermore, Beane and Ennis suggest two major reasons for segmentation: “(1) to look for new product opportunities or areas which may be receptive to current product repositioning; (2) to create improved advertising messages by gaining a better understanding of one’s customers” (p. 20). Thus, if neither of these conditions exists, or if segmentation does not provide meaningful returns (Mullin et al., 2014), it is not an appropriate technique. As Dickson and Ginter (1987)



explain, even if a group of consumers share a common product perception, “it would be unusual to expect all consumers to respond equally to a market offering” (p. 5).

In order to properly segment a market, three characteristics must exist: identifiability, accessibility, and responsiveness (Beane & Ennis, 1987; Mullin et al., 2014). Identifiability is concerned with the size and purchase power of the segment. Accessibility refers to the ability of marketers to gain access to groups of consumers without disrupting marketing efforts for other segments, and responsiveness is how well the product matches the segment (Mullin et al., 2014). In other words, is the product what that particular segment wants and, from the consumer perspective, is a given segment significant enough to justify targeted marketing efforts (Mullin et al., 2014)? Furthermore, a market segmentation analysis should, among other things, inform the marketer:

about his product’s and brand’s positioning in the market with respect to possible substitutes (as perceived by customers), the ways in which his product or service is distinguishable from others by consumers, and the psychological aspects of the consumers that predispose them to buy or not buy within the product class. (Boote, 1981, p. 30)

Thus, segmentation is not just concerned with the product itself, but the consumer base for which the product is initially targeted. It is possible to have a mismatch of product and consumer, and a segmentation analysis would reveal such a disparity before the product is released on the market. By exploiting given segments, a marketer can maximize consumer satisfaction and establish a more secure position in an increasingly crowded market (Smith, 1956). Ultimately, more highly satisfied customers improve the bottom line for the product company, and consumer product loyalty begins to emerge (Kennett, Sneath, & Henson, 2001).

Traditionally, there have been four main segmentation bases: state of being, state of mind, product benefits, and product usage (Mullin et al., 2014). The most common basis for segmentation is state of being, which includes demographic characteristics such as age, gender, geographic location, ethnicity, income, and education level (Beane & Ennis, 1987; Mullin et al., 2014). Demographic segmentation is also the easiest basis to understand and measure. Men and women do not have the same wants just as children and adults differ in what they need to feel satisfied with a product. However, Beane and Ennis (1987), as well as most marketing scholars, caution that demographics are poor descriptors of a market if those segments do not clearly exist.

State of mind segmentation revolves around psychographic characteristics such as personality traits, attitude, opinion, and perception (Beane & Ennis, 1987). Psychographics are not as easily measurable because they are not clearly definable characteristics. It can be the next step in segmentation if demographic characteristics do not produce clear segments.

Psychographics examine “the inner person rather than the outward expression of the person” (Beane & Ennis, 1987, p. 22). Psychographics provide a more in-depth picture of the target market and allow marketers to more effectively communicate with and market to a given segment (Wells, 1975).

Product benefit segmentation is closely related to state of mind segmentation and delineates the market based on what the consumer wants from a product, such as convenience or prestige (Beane & Ennis, 1987). Beane and Ennis (1987) explain that one of the appeals of benefit segmentation is that marketers do not have to describe the market after the fact. Benefit segmentation approaches the market from a “why” perspective rather than a “what” perspective, which is what demographic and psychographic segmentation do. Benefit segmentation aims to understand why a consumer buys a product and assumes that similar people will likewise

purchase the product based on a given benefit if it is communicated to them (Beane & Ennis, 1987). Benefit segmentation has been a prolific area of marketing research for more than 50 years (see Haley, 1968; Myers, 1976; Yankelovich, 1964).

The final segmentation basis is product usage. Consumers are segmented into smaller groups based on the rate of usage and are usually divided into light, medium, and heavy users (Beane & Ennis, 1987). Marketers should strive to move fans into more involvement with a sport organization, a concept known as the consumer escalator (Mullin et al., 2014). The goal is to move consumers from light users to medium users, and then from medium users to heavy users (Mullin et al., 2014). Ultimately, heavy users become life-long fans and consumers and are brand loyal. The concern with product usage segmentation, according to Mullin et al. (2014), is that marketers tend to focus on the heavy users. Typically, heavy users tend to be a smaller group than light or medium users, but they consume a disproportionately large amount of the total consumption of a product, which can skew the market segments and perhaps create ineffective marketing strategies. While product usage segmentation is important, marketers should be aware that consumers consume at different rates, and the level of consumption will likely vary by age group and other demographic characteristics (Mullin et al., 2014).

Interestingly, Beane and Ennis (1987) make a case for a fifth basis of segmentation: image. The authors explain that image segmentation focuses on a consumer's self-image or self-concept in relation to the product. There is a large body of research devoted to image segmentation (for a critical review, see Sirgy, 1982). At the time of Beane and Ennis's article, the cigarette industry provided a strong example of image segmentation. Cigarette companies such as Marlboro and Salem positioned their cigarettes in the market based on the image using the product would create. For instance, Salem promoted the image of being a young, outdoor-

oriented female, whereas Marlboro was much more concerned with highlighting masculinity and working with one's hands (Beane & Ennis, 1987). In today's market, image-based segmentation is most prevalent in travel/tourism research (Hall, 1999; C. Lee, Y. Lee, & Wicks, 2004; Leisen, 2001) and retail research (Lockshin, Spawton, & Macintosh, 1997; Steenkamp & Wedel, 1991). According to Beane and Ennis, in order to segment by image, there must be a distinctive feature that entices consumers to consistently buy that product. These features can be product-oriented, service-oriented, or image-oriented. If marketers can successfully create and establish an image-based feature, the product will enjoy lengthy consumer loyalty. Overall, market segmentation is crucial to understanding an organization's consumers.

### **Market Segmentation and Online Consumers**

The arrival of the Internet introduced new avenues of research for nearly all fields of study, and market segmentation research is no different. Researchers have attempted to segment online shoppers (Allred, Smith, & Swinyard, 2006; Jayawardhena, Tiu Wright, & Dennis, 2007), online gamers (S. Lee, Suh, Kim, & K. Lee, 2004), and social media users (Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2011; Foster, West, & Francescucci, 2011). For instance, Jayawardhena et al. (2007) examined the purchase intentions of online retail shoppers segmented by purchase orientation. The authors segmented shoppers into five distinct segments: active shoppers, price sensitive shoppers, discerning shoppers, brand loyal shoppers, and convenience-oriented shoppers. They also found no significant direct effects in purchase intention based on their shopping orientation, suggesting that there are other factors that more strongly influence purchase intention.

In a similar study, Allred et al. (2006) segmented Internet users into online and non-online shoppers. Their results revealed six distinct segments: three each for online shoppers and

non-online shoppers. The shopper segments were socializers, e-shopping lovers, and e-value leaders, while the non-shopper segments were fearful conservatives, shopping averters, and technology muddlers. Socializers were the smallest segment, use their computers least often, and are comprised mostly of women. E-shoppers are the second-largest segment and are the youngest of the segments. They represent the majority of online spending and find shopping in brick-and-mortar stores tiresome. E-value leaders are the largest and wealthiest segment. They spend the most time on their computers compared to any other segment and feel the Internet offers a better selection of products. Fearful conservatives are the smallest segment. They tend to have the lowest income, heavily distrust online retailers, and prefer to see something in person before purchasing. Shopping averters simply avoid shopping online, even though they have high computer competence and report average income levels. Finally, technology muddlers are those with below-average education and have the lowest income of all six segments. They also have the lowest computer competence and do not know how to shop online. Ultimately, Allred et al. concluded that online shoppers and non-shoppers are quite distinct from each other. Online shoppers tend to be younger, wealthier, better educated, and are bigger retail spenders.

From a different perspective, Foster et al. (2011) attempted to segment social media users based on three types of online activities: creating/contributing material for other users to view, socializing/connecting with others online, and seeking information by viewing material posted by others to aid in decision making. Their analysis produced four distinct segments, and each was substantial in size: minimally involved users, socializers, info seekers, and social media technology mavens. The minimally involved cluster is characterized by low social and informational needs, socializers are high on social needs and low on informational needs, the info seekers are high on informational needs, but low on social needs, and the mavens

demonstrate high social and informational needs. Their results support the idea that social media users are not a homogenous group (which is how many marketing professionals have treated them), but rather they use social media to satisfy different needs. Thus, marketers need to be aware of the differences for social media use among their consumers so as to provide content that drives brand loyalty and top-of-mind awareness.

### **Market Segmentation and Sports**

Within the sport world, researchers have applied segmentation to fantasy sport participants (Dwyer & Drayer, 2010), game attendance (Clowes & Tapp, 2003), fan satisfaction (Kennett et al., 2001), sportswear (Ko et al., 2012; Rohm, Milne, & McDonald, 2006), and sport brand association (Ross, 2007). For example, Dwyer and Drayer (2010) segmented fantasy football participants into four consumption groups: light consumption, fantasy dominant, favorite team dominant, and heavy consumption. Each group had distinct behavioral patterns. For instance, favorite team dominant participants indicated that their psychological commitment remained with their favorite team, and they supported this notion by watching more programming related to their favorite team instead of their fantasy team. Fantasy dominants were also more likely to watch sports at a restaurant or bar. Those segmented into the heavy consumption group reported more psychological commitment to their favorite team rather than players on their fantasy team, which was an unexpected finding. Fantasy dominant members tended to have stronger levels of attachment to individual players, but their game day consumption habits are remarkably similar to the heavy consumption group. Not surprisingly, the light consumption group reported playing fantasy football for the least amount of time and had less psychological commitment to a favorite team. Ultimately, Dwyer and Drayer suggest that

the NFL would be wise to understand the differing segments of football consumers in order to maximize profit potential.

In a mixed method study that examined market segmentation of running shoe consumers, Rohm et al. (2006) developed four separate groups: healthy joggers, social competitors, actualized athletes, and devotees. Healthy joggers ran for mental and physical fitness, ran the least amount of miles per week of any of the groups, and tended to be over 40. Social competitors ran the most miles per week, and had the most running experience, with nearly 80% reporting they had been runners for five or more years. Actualized athletes were the least experienced group of runners, the youngest, and boasted the most females. Finally, devotees ran the most days per week and preferred the longer running competitions and marathons. Rohm et al. emphasized that the biggest takeaway from their study lies in the methods. Using qualitative data in segmentation studies can “help validate subsequent quantitative clusters” (p. 38) and help in developing segment profiles.

### **Narcissism**

According to Panek et al. (2013), narcissism can be defined as a tendency to consider one’s self to be better than others, to constantly seek veneration from others, and to engage in self-centered thinking and behavior (p. 2005). Furthermore, narcissism tends to manifest in paradoxical behaviors (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). For instance, narcissistic individuals are constantly seeking self-aggrandizement and are self-absorbed, but they are also overly sensitive to criticism and easily get angry or threatening when trying to defend their self-absorbed behavior (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Moreover, narcissists have an inflated self-concept and often entertain fantasies about being famous and powerful (Campbell et al., 2002). Narcissists also have a high level of vanity, seek constant

admiration from followers, and are willing to exploit others in order to achieve that admiration (Campbell et al., 2002; McHoskey, 1995; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). In fact, according to Morf and Rhodewalt (2001), a core characteristic of narcissism is an “insatiable pursuit of affirming self-knowledge through...manipulation of their social environment” (p. 178). Thus, narcissists generally lack caring and empathy, and their interpersonal relationships rarely exhibit any kind of relatedness or substance (Campbell et al., 2002). However, narcissists are skilled at initiating relationships and using them to look popular and important (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008).

Interestingly, some researchers have suggested that narcissism is not necessarily a negative quality. Campbell et al. (2002) explain that there are correlations between narcissists and those with high self-esteem. Both groups of people have positive views of themselves, but narcissists “like themselves in unlikable ways” (p. 366), such as being highly intellectual and extroverted compared to others, which suggests a more agentic basis of their self-concept. On the other hand, those with high self-esteem also view themselves as highly intelligent and extroverted in comparison to others, yet they also exhibit morality and are more considerate of others, which suggests their self-concept is based on both agentic and communal traits. In their concluding remarks, Campbell et al. sum up the differences in narcissists and high self-esteem individuals by saying that narcissists want to be admired, but high self-esteem individuals want to be popular, and their self-concept bases reflect those end goals. Thus, according to the authors, the biggest reason narcissism has such a negative connotation in society is because those individuals reinforce their self-concept at the expense of others.

Researchers have also suggested that narcissism is not simply a static individual trait, but rather a personality process (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001; Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991). Raskin et al. (1991) investigated the relationships among hostility, grandiosity, dominance,



overall narcissism, and self-esteem in three separate samples of more than 50 participants and found that hostility, grandiosity, dominance, and narcissism consistently grouped together across the three samples. Furthermore, the common variance among all variables was substantially related to self-reported high self-esteem ratings. Thus, the authors suggest that the negative aspects of narcissism like dominance, hostility, and a need to control their social environment are defenses that narcissists employ to protect themselves from self-doubt and fear. Raskin et al. conclude that narcissism is a form of self-esteem regulation and perhaps narcissists' constant need for attention and lack of empathy are protections against low self-esteem.

### **Narcissism and Social Media**

Given the self-absorbed, self-aggrandizing nature of narcissists, it is logical to wonder if social networking sites (SNS) enhance narcissistic behavior. The very purpose of SNS is to engage in positive self-presentation, and perhaps what began as a need to connect with likeminded others has morphed into a more narcissistic tendency. There has been substantial research into whether there is a connection between narcissism and SNS (S. Bergman, Fearington, Davenport, & J. Bergman, 2011; Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Leung, 2013; McKinney, Kelly, & Duran, 2012; Panek et al., 2013). For instance, in one of the early studies into the connection between narcissism and SNS, Buffardi and Campbell (2008) examined how narcissism manifested on Facebook. They were concerned with discovering whether narcissism predicted overall activity on an SNS and whether narcissism was apparent in the content individuals posted to SNS. Buffardi and Campbell suggest that SNS contribute to narcissistic tendencies for two reasons. First, narcissists function exceptionally well in shallow relationships, and SNS are built on "friendships" that are more superficial than meaningful. Second, SNS operate within boundaries and are controlled by the individual. Each SNS user has complete

control over his or her self-presentation. For instance, users can select the most attractive photos of themselves to post to their personal accounts, and they can be selective in what they write about themselves in order to present the best version of themselves to others. Buffardi and Campbell found that narcissism was highly correlated to quantity of interaction on Facebook. In other words, those who scored higher on the Narcissistic Personality Index (NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988), tended to have more interaction with others on Facebook. Their results also indicated a marginal positive correlation with narcissism scores and self-promoting information on their Facebook pages, and a positive correlation between narcissism and perception of narcissism. In other words, others perceived narcissistic users as more narcissistic. Ultimately, Buffardi and Campbell's study suggests that narcissistic expression online is similar to narcissistic expression in other social settings. However, their research does not answer the question of whether participation in online communities contributes to rising levels of narcissism over time, a research gap they encourage future researchers to explore.

A similar study by Kauten, Lui, Stary, and Barry (2015) supported Buffardi and Campbell's (2008) research. Kauten et al.'s study examined whether users who posted narcissistic status updates on SNS were perceived as likeable and successful, and whether the perceiver would want to be friends with the narcissistic poster. Kauten et al. also examined whether the gender of both perceiver and poster moderated the relationship between narcissism and perception. The researchers conducted three separate studies in which they created hypothetical Facebook profiles, some with narcissistic status updates and some with neutral updates. They asked participants to rate the status messages for likeability, successfulness, and likelihood of being friends with the status poster. Their results indicate that participants in all three studies perceived narcissistic Facebook status updates more negatively than neutral status

updates in terms of likeability, successfulness, and likelihood of being a good friend. The biggest takeaway from Kauten et al.'s study was the finding that participants who self-reported higher levels of narcissism found narcissistic posters more likeable, successful, and good candidates for friendship, which supports previous research (Hart & Adams, 2014) and theoretical underpinnings that people tend to like others who are similar to themselves (Byrne, 1997). In their discussion, Kauten et al. suggest that with SNS interaction, a person's perception of others is partially influenced by what others post on SNS. It is possible that the bias created from online interaction could spill over into face-to-face interaction, thus tainting the relationship. Overall, Kauten et al.'s study highlights the complex nature of narcissism and the difficulty in studying the construct, an aspect that Morf and Rhodewalt (2001) praised for the scholarly interest in narcissism as an object of study.

Research examining millennial SNS use and narcissism has also received significant attention. For instance, McKinney et al. (2012) investigated whether using SNS—Facebook and Twitter in this case—to provide information about oneself reflects a positive attitude about sharing information with a social network rather than reflecting narcissism. They found that narcissism is unrelated to the frequency of using Facebook to post about oneself, but it is related to the number of Facebook friends, which supports Buffardi and Campbell's (2008) findings. Interestingly, narcissism was significantly related to using Twitter to send tweets about oneself. Finally, McKinney et al.'s study found that an attitude about being open to sharing information about oneself was significantly related to the frequency of Facebook and Twitter use. Overall, these findings suggest that how often millennials are on SNS has no bearing on narcissistic tendencies. Rather, these results spotlight the “communicative and relationship maintenance functions of SNSs” (pp. 115-116), suggesting that the majority of SNS users want to share

moments of their lives with their social network. Perhaps the biggest contribution of McKinney et al.'s study was that it was the first to examine the connection between narcissism and Twitter. The results suggest that Twitter may be the preferred SNS for narcissists, as participants who had high Narcissistic Personality Index scores reported sending more tweets about themselves to their followers, but further research regarding Twitter and narcissism is necessary.

A study by Leung (2013) investigated generational differences in SNS content creation and looked at the roles of gratifications sought and narcissism. Leung identified five socio-psychological needs that SNS use satisfied: showing affection, venting negative feelings, gaining recognition, getting entertainment, and fulfilling cognitive needs. Those who wished to satisfy social needs and a need for affection tended to use Facebook and blogs, while those who wanted to communicate grievances turned to online forums. In addition, Leung's results indicate that the exhibitionism aspect of narcissism significantly correlated with Facebook and forums, only partially supporting his hypothesis that SNS users who are more narcissistic will generate SNS content more frequently than those who are not narcissistic. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in terms of gratifications sought from SNS use among generations, which may account for why SNS use has grown across all generations of users. Moreover, there were a few generational differences in motivation to use SNS to generate content. Net Geners (those born between 1977 and 1997) used Facebook, blogs, and forums for entertainment, but Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) favored forums only. Overall, Leung's study suggests that SNS are "good platforms for narcissists to self-regulate and exert control over self-presentation" (p. 1004) and generally supports previous research indicating that SNS users are motivated by a need to belong and a need to manage their self-presentation.

Overall, researchers have made inroads in connecting social media usage and narcissism. Much of the literature suggests that there are some connections between narcissism and social media usage, although most of the findings include various other variables in their consideration, such as personality or perception from non-narcissistic social media users. Investigation into narcissism among sport fans is lacking, and more research is necessary to fully explore this complex tendency. It is possible that narcissistic tendencies exist among sport fans, particularly those who consider themselves to be die-hard fans. If sport fandom is a large part of their self-identity, it may be plausible that these die-hard fans perceive attacks against their favorite teams from other social media users as personal attacks, and may seek to reinforce their self-identity at the expense of others, which was a discussion raised by Campbell, Aiken, and Kent (2012).

### **Chapter Summary**

Generally speaking, there is a plethora of literature examining social media usage and motivation, market segmentation, uses and gratifications theory, and narcissism. As previously mentioned, sport management scholars have made several inroads into social media research, although much of the research is from the organizational or athlete perspective. More research into the social media usage motivations of sport fans is needed to continue to expand this avenue of study. Furthermore, studies examining previously unrelated variables (e.g., narcissism) only enhance the credibility of social media research and provide additional empirical support for variables, like usage motivations, that have already been examined by sport management scholars.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The methods used to investigate the research objectives are discussed in this chapter and are divided into four sections: 1) sample, 2) instrumentation, 3) procedure, and 4) data analysis. The sample section includes a description of the sample and the sampling frame. The instrumentation section provides information on the scales used to measure the variables of interest, while the procedure section details the type of survey selected and the processes that were implemented in order to complete the study. Finally, the data analysis section elaborates on the various statistical techniques that were used to answer each research question. The study employed a non-experimental design using a self-report survey questionnaire that was administered online using the University of Northern Colorado's Qualtrics platform. Qualtrics is a web-based survey software that allows for digital survey distribution and data collection.

#### **Sample**

##### **Population**

The target population for this study was adults (18 years of age or older) who consider themselves fans of professional sport, and who use social media to consume sport. Sport consumption on social media can come in many forms, including following sport teams and individual athletes on social media, clicking on sport story links that were posted by sport journalists, discussing sports news with social media followers, posting or reposting sport-related pictures or videos, or simply reading sport-related content on one's news feed. The critical criterion for the target population is that they must be users of social media. In the context of this

study, users were identified as those individuals who accessed their social media applications at least once a month. Furthermore, specific professional sport teams were not targeted, but rather fans of professional sports in general in an effort to gather responses from fans of professional sport beyond the four major leagues in the U.S. (e.g., NFL, NBA, NHL, and MLB), such as NASCAR and Major League Lacrosse (MLL).

### **Sampling Frame**

A sampling frame is used to identify the specific elements of a target population (Groves et al., 2009). The frame is used to identify potential respondents who are representative of the target population based on the specific elements previously identified. In this instance, the sampling frame consisted of individuals who were self-reported professional sport fans and used at least one of the following social media: 1) Facebook, 2) Twitter, 3) Instagram, or 4) Snapchat. Professional sport was chosen as the sport level of interest due to the abundance of professional sport leagues and organizations in the United States (e.g., NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, NASCAR) and the variety of different sport offerings. Furthermore, nearly every professional sport league and team maintains official social media accounts that boast thousands of followers. Moreover, the aforementioned social media applications were selected based on their popularity and functionality. Facebook boasts more than 1 billion active monthly users (users who log into their account at least once a month), Twitter has 304 million active users, Instagram claims 400 million active monthly users, and while Snapchat does not release user numbers, many analysts estimate it has more users than Twitter (Arthur, 2015; McAlone & Heath, 2015).

For the sample, social media users who were also fans of professional sport were targeted. The non-probability sampling techniques of convenience and snowball sampling were used in order to capture respondents who were active on social media and used social media to

consume sport. Many of my own social media connections are self-described sport fans, and most list favorite professional sport teams in their social media profile descriptions. Non-probability sampling techniques are common among sport management researchers who study social media (see Clavio & Kian, 2010; Clavio & Walsh, 2014; Gibbs, O'Reilly, & Brunette, 2014).

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected from June 1, 2016 to July 1, 2016, and from September 15, 2016 to October 31, 2016. Two data collection periods were used in an effort to capture the current season of several professional sports, including MLB, NFL, NHL, NBA, Major League Soccer, and NASCAR. Once the Institutional Review Board application was approved by the university (see Appendix B), the survey link was posted on my social media accounts and emailed to colleagues in locations across the country in an effort to capture data that encompass a wide geographical range, thus bolstering the chance for a sample that is more representative of the target population. The colleagues selected were other sport management doctoral students who taught undergraduate sport management classes at various-sized universities (e.g., Division I through Division III). These colleagues were also fans of professional sport and some have worked in the sport industry. The survey link was also emailed to sport management undergraduate students at a small Division III university in the Northeast.

### **Participants**

A total of 206 respondents completed the survey. Of the 206 completed surveys, three were deleted because they indicated on the second piping question that they had not used any social media application within the last 30 days. Another 27 were removed from further analysis because they did not complete all sections of the survey. The final sample was 176 ( $N=176$ ). The



demographic analysis was reduced to a total size of 166, as a further 10 respondents did not answer the demographic items on the survey. Of the 166 respondents, age ranged from 18 to 69, with a mean of 32.42 years. The majority of the sample was male (60.24%), Caucasian (83.73%), had completed a Bachelor's Degree (25.3%), and reported an annual income of \$100,000 or more (27.1%). Due to the nature of the sampling techniques, it was not possible to obtain a response rate, as it is impossible to know how many people received the survey link.

Overall, the sample was an accurate representation of the target population. According to Jones (2017) nearly 60% of U.S. adults are sport fans. In addition, sport fans are comprised of more males than females and tend to be more educated and affluent (Jones, 2017). In terms of age, 66% of people ages 18-29 claimed to be sports fans, while more than 50% of people ages 50 or older also said they were sport fans (Jones, 2017).

### **Instrumentation**

The online questionnaire consisted of multiple scales and items for which previous evidence of reliability and validity supported their use as measures of constructs of interest. All questions posed in the survey were designed to garner both continuous and categorical data in order to examine differences among groups and/or segments, and investigate the strength and direction of relationships among the variables.

The survey instrument was comprised of four sections: 1) amount of time spent with social media, 2) social media usage motivations, 3) narcissism, and 4) demographics. In addition to the four sections of the survey, there were two "piping" questions at the very beginning to determine whether a respondent was 18 years of age or older and whether he or she used social media in the last 30 days. The decision was made to cap social media use at 30 days because the major social media applications measure their user base in active monthly users. Furthermore,

according to a Pew Research Center study, nearly half of Americans visit a social media site at least once a day, while three quarters of Americans visit these sites at least once a week (Social Media Fact Sheet, 2019). Thus, a 30-day window was appropriate for measuring active social media usage. Piping questions direct a respondent to various items on the survey based on his or her answer to that specific question. If a respondent answered “yes” to the piping question asking if he or she is 18 or older, that person was sent to Question 1. An answer of “no” to either of the preliminary questions redirected that participant to the end of the survey with a message thanking them for their interest. Demographic items appeared at the end of the survey and inquired about participants’ age, gender, ethnicity, and level of completed education. Each demographic characteristic was measured with one item.

### **Amount of Time Spent with the Medium**

For this section of the survey, several items were generated to gauge how long respondents had specific social media accounts, how often they accessed, posted, and interacted on social media, how often they used social media for sport-related consumption, and which professional sport leagues or teams they followed on social media. There was a total of eight items in this section. Sample questions include, “How long have you been using social media for sport-related purposes (i.e., reading about/interacting/following teams, athletes, sport news organizations, etc.)?” and “On average, how often do you access your social media account(s)?” Response options for items regarding access, posting, and interaction were assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by “less than once a week” (1) and “2 or more times per day” (5). The item regarding how often respondents used each of the following four social media applications — Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, or Instagram — was assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by “never” (1) to “all the time” (5). The item inquiring about the

leagues/teams respondents followed was designed as a select-all-that-apply item, so any leagues selected were coded as 1 while any leagues not selected were coded as 0. For instance, a respondent who selected the NFL and the NBA as leagues they follow was coded as 1 on the data spreadsheet, but the remaining leagues in the list were coded as 0 because the respondent did not select them. All of the items in this section were treated as individual variables and were not summed for composite scores.

### **Social Media Usage Motivation**

Couched in the uses and gratifications paradigm (Katz et al., 1974), the Motivation Scale for Sport Online Consumption (MSSOC) was developed by Seo and Green (2008) as a way to understand the motives that drive consumer interest in sport websites. Seo and Green recognized that the appeal of sport websites was due in large part to the passion of sport fans “who need their daily fix of information” (p. 83). The researchers also recognized that websites are a more cost-effective way for organizations to reach fans and perhaps convert casual fans into more highly committed fans who attend games. Thus, they set out to develop a scale that measured dimensions of Internet motivation specific to sport fans. The MSSOC is a 30-item scale that encompasses 10 constructs of fan motivation: (1) technical knowledge, (2) interpersonal communication, (3), information, (4) fanship, (5) entertainment, (6) economic, (7) pass time, (8) escape, (9) team support, and (10) fan expression. Each construct contains three items measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Interestingly, Seo and Green (2008) explain that the items measuring fan expression came from the literature on interpersonal communication, but they are clearly “celebratory in nature” (p. 105), which is more consistent with expression than interpersonal communication. Furthermore, Seo and Green emphasize that the 10 dimensions of the MSSOC can be used

together to obtain an overall motivation profile for sport fans, or they can be used separately to examine particular motives for using sport websites. For the current study, each subscale was scored separately and the items summed to create separate composite scores. From a practical standpoint, the MSSOC may be helpful in segmenting sport fans based on motives: sport organizations may perhaps create marketing strategies tailored to light, moderate, and heavy website users, for example.

For the purposes of this study, only nine of the 10 constructs were measured. Technical knowledge was eliminated because it was not applicable in this case. Social media offer ways to engage with others in a quick-response format, and team social media accounts do not include information regarding league rules, technical aspects of the sport, or team strategy, which the technical knowledge items specifically measure in the original MSSOC.

For the current study, MSSOC items were adapted to reflect social media usage. For instance, the original wording, “I use the team’s Web site because it is exciting” became “I follow the team on social media because it is exciting.” Each subscale score was created by summing the items to create a subscale composite score, for a possible score range of three to 21, with higher numbers reflecting stronger motivations for using social media to follow sport teams.

Scores on the MSSOC have been shown in prior studies concerning Internet users (Seo & Green, 2008), Twitter users (Clavio & Kian, 2010; Witkemper et al., 2012), celebrity endorsers on social media (Hambrick & Mahoney, 2011), and fantasy sports participants (Suh, Lim, Kwan, & Pedersen, 2010) to be both valid and reliable. With regard to the scale creation, scores on all 10 dimensions of the scale have been found to be internally consistent, with inter-item correlations ranging from .52 (team support) to .75 (interpersonal communication) based on a convenience sample of students (Seo & Green, 2008). These students were asked to send the

online survey link to nonstudents in an effort to obtain a more representative sample, and the total sample size was 319 (Seo & Green, 2008). These values are above the minimum range (.40 to .50) suggested by Clark and Watson (1995).

Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates, another measure of internal consistency, for scores on the MSSOC ranged from .77 for the team support subscale to .90 for the interpersonal communication subscale in the convenience sample of 319 students and nonstudents, which were within acceptable ranges suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). In the current study, reliability estimates were also examined and found to be within an acceptable range. Table 1 provides the Cronbach's alpha value for scores on each MSSOC subscale. As evidence in the table, Fan Expression had the lowest Cronbach's alpha (.66). While this falls within acceptable range, according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), it is a low reliability, indicating that one third of the variance in scores for fan expression is random measurement error.

Table 1

*Reliability Estimates for the 9 MSSOC Subscales*

Subscale	$\alpha$
Pass Time	.73
Interpersonal Communication	.71
Fanship	.89
Fan Expression	.66
Information	.84
Escape	.74
Team Support	.87
Entertainment	.75
Economic	.82

Convergent validity evidence for scores on the MSSOC has also been obtained using convenience and snowball sampling (Seo & Green, 2008). According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), if scores from a measure highly correlate with scores from another variable with which it

should theoretically correlate, then inferences from scores on the measure can be considered valid. Scores on the MSSOC were found to correlate with scores on a measure of web commitment (correlations ranged from .20 to .63). The Information (.20), Fanship (.34), and Economic (.31) subscales had the lowest correlations with web commitment, according to Seo and Green's (2008) initial validity analysis, which suggests discriminant validity since those three MSSOC subscales share between 4% and 11% of the variance with the measure of web-commitment. Thus, Seo and Green's analysis provides limited validity support for the use of the scale.

### **Narcissism**

There are a limited number of narcissism measures that are not clinical in nature. The Narcissism Personality Inventory-16 (NPI-16) scale was developed by Ames, Rose, and Anderson (2006) in an effort to create a shorter and more unidimensional measure of narcissism that can be used in social science research. Previous social science research has used the original Narcissism Personality Inventory developed by Raskin and Terry (1988), which includes 40 items that measure several underlying aspects of narcissism such as authority, exhibitionism, superiority, and vanity. Ames et al. argued that the shorter version of the NPI could be more practical since it is shorter and may be more effective for respondents who are limited on time or attention. Furthermore, the NPI-16 aims to capture narcissism as a single construct that represents the various aspects reflected in the original NPI.

The 16 items are presented side-by-side in a semantic differential format and respondents are asked to select the statement that best represents their beliefs and viewpoints. Responses are coded as 1 if the respondent chooses the narcissism-consistent statement and 0 if the respondent chooses the narcissism-inconsistent statement. Scores are summed to create a composite score

ranging from zero to 16, and higher scores represent a more narcissistic personality. This measure was used in the current study in its original format with no modification of items. Sample item pairs include “I think I am a special person” (narcissistic response) and “I am no better or no worse than most people” (non-narcissistic response).

In validating inferences from scores on their narcissism scale, Ames et al. (2006) presented the measure to more than 700 undergraduate students. According to Ames et al. scores on the NPI-16 had a Cronbach’s alpha of .72 while the original 40-item NPI’s scores’ Cronbach’s alpha was .84. In addition, the mean inter-item correlations for the NPI-16 were .13 while the 40-item NPI’s mean inter-item correlations were .12. Despite the inter-item correlations being fairly low, the two NPI measures also correlated at  $r = .90$  ( $p < .001$ ). Ames et al. concluded that the NPI-16 “showed satisfactory internal consistency” (p. 443). Subsequent studies by Ames et al. examined additional convergent validity and predictive validity evidence. Ames et al. administered their scale to a different adult population: 167 graduate MBA students. The NPI-16 had a Cronbach’s alpha of .68. To test divergent validity, Ames et al. administered their NPI-16 scale alongside a survey on dispositionism, which they hypothesized would not correlate with narcissism. Their results supported their hypothesis, as there was no significant correlation between scores on the narcissism and dispositionism measures. Furthermore, Ames et al. presented additional evidence for the validity of inferences based on scores from the NPI-16 by discussing another narcissism scale that was not published at the time of their study. The unpublished measure was a 15-item scale for narcissism that concentrated more on the leadership/authority component of narcissism (Armor, 2002; as cited in Ames et al., 2006), but Cronbach’s alpha values and correlations were similar to those obtained on scores from both the NPI-16 and the original 40-item scale (Ames et al., 2006). Ames et al. concluded that scores

based on their NPI-16 were reliable and valid for measuring non-clinical narcissism. For the current study, the Cronbach's alpha for the scores on the NPI-16 was .76, which is acceptable based on the rules of thumb suggested by George and Mallery (2003).

### **Procedure**

This study employed an online survey protocol to investigate the research objectives. Moreover, the survey was cross-sectional in nature, meaning data were collected at one point in time (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), cross-sectional surveys are useful for investigating attitudes, beliefs, or opinions. Surveys are widely accepted as an appropriate method of research in the social sciences (Creswell, 2014; Fowler, 2014; Groves et al., 2009). The study used the nonprobability sampling technique of convenience sampling to obtain participants. This sampling technique has been utilized in several studies pertaining to social media (Chen, 2011; Clavio & Kian, 2010; Clavio & Walsh, 2014), and while it reduces the generalizability of the results, it does allow for a more targeted reach of a specific group of interest. Since social media are web-based applications, it was deemed appropriate to use this sampling method to specifically target respondents who are Internet-savvy and familiar with social media. This study also employed snowball sampling, which allows the researcher to supplement a sampling frame by having respondents identify other individuals who possess similar target characteristics (Groves et al., 2009; Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015). In this case, snowball sampling allowed me to bolster sample size and obtain richer data by asking respondents to send the survey link to others who use social media to consume sport to whom I may not have access otherwise.

Web-based surveys have a number of advantages compared to traditional mail or telephone surveys (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Web-based surveys are faster, more cost effective,



and offer the best way to reach a broad range of individuals who regularly use the Internet, including those who would be difficult to reach through the paper method (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003; Couper & Miller, 2008; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004; Sheehan, 2001; Wright, 2005). In cases where the majority of a society has Internet access and high Internet efficacy, the drawback of a lack of representativeness of the target population is reduced (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Since this study focused on U.S. sport fans who use social media for sport consumption, a web-based survey was an appropriate choice because more than 80% of U.S. adults use the Internet (Perrin & Duggan, 2015). Further, sport fans are 67% more likely to use Twitter than non-sport fans (DiMoro, 2015). Another advantage is web-based surveys allow for automated data collection, reducing the chance for data entry error on my part (Evans & Mathur, 2005; Wright, 2005). Web-based surveys also allow researchers to utilize a graphical interface to make the survey more aesthetically pleasing (Evans & Mathur, 2005) as well as provide an easy way to randomize questions, require question completion, and control outside stimuli (Couper & Miller, 2008; Evans & Mathur, 2005). Web-based surveys also provide flexibility. They can be disseminated in email format with either an embedded survey or the survey link/URL, or as a link on a specific website (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Finally, web-based surveys are convenient (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Respondents may take the survey at a time that best works for them, and unlike phone surveys, respondents may take as much time as they need to complete the survey (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

Being able to use online survey software also allowed me to design the survey to be simple and easy to follow and understand. Qualtrics provided question diversity (e.g., dichotomous, rank-order, Likert, open-ended, and multiple choice questions) and gave me

complete control over how questions were structured and arranged (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Qualtrics also permitted me to create a mobile-friendly version of the survey (Buskirk & Andres, 2013), which may combat low response rate because respondents can complete the survey on the go from their smartphone. According to Buskirk and Andres (2013), mobile-friendly surveys keep the graphical interface and subsequent text proportionate to the phone screen, minimize horizontal scrolling, and prominently display the next or back button at the bottom of each page of the mobile survey, making the survey more user-friendly and convenient.

Web-based surveys also have several disadvantages that must be addressed. For instance, web-based surveys suffer from uncertain validity due to implementation or design concerns (Wright, 2005). An Internet survey that includes bold, bright colors or an excess of flash graphics or animations may prevent someone from taking the survey due to slow loading speeds or a feeling of being overwhelmed. The solution is to keep the survey simple and user-friendly, which was the case in the present study. Questions were presented in a simple format with minimal drop-down answer options and clear instructions. Another disadvantage is sampling issues (Andrews et al., 2003; Dillman et al., 2009; Wright, 2005). The very nature of the Internet reduces opportunities for random sampling, which may lead to non-response bias because the survey targets specific populations that have higher Internet access rates and skill levels (Andrews et al., 2003; Dillman et al., 2009). However, for this study, I was specifically targeting Internet-savvy respondents, so a web-based survey made sense as I was recruiting intense Internet users who are online often. To further refute the sampling disadvantage, it is important to note that the rise of mobile technology allows respondents to complete the survey on their smartphone, rather than a desktop or laptop computer. This provides additional access to respondents who may not have a computer or access to broadband Internet. According to a Pew

Research Center study, 64% of adults in the United States owned a smartphone in 2015 and 19% relied on their smartphone for primary Internet access because they lacked other options for being online (Smith, 2015).

Perhaps the biggest disadvantage is that web-based surveys are plagued by low response rates (Kaplowitz et al., 2004). As Sheehan (2001), Andrews et al. (2003), and Kaplowitz et al. (2004) suggest, one potential reason for low response rates could be issue salience. According to Sheehan, issue salience has a strong positive correlation with response rate, meaning the more personally invested in an issue or topic the respondent is, the more likely he is to complete the survey. Using nonprobability sampling curtailed some of the low response rate since I wanted fans who use social media to consume sport to take the survey, and I wanted them to send the link to their own online network of friends and acquaintances as well. As mentioned under the “Participants” section in this chapter, despite using non-probability sampling to improve response rate, I was not able to compute an actual response rate because it was impossible to determine how many people actually had access to the survey.

The survey link included an introductory message asking followers to take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire, as well as a message asking followers to post the link to their own social media accounts and encourage their followers to complete the questionnaire. Again, this snowballing approach encourages a larger sample size by recruiting additional respondents from those respondents who have already taken the survey (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015). Once respondents clicked on the survey link, they were taken to the first page of the survey, which was the standard informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study, the risks associated with participation, the steps that will be taken to protect respondent identity, and a paragraph explaining that the respondent may withdraw at any time without consequence. The survey link

was reposted on my social media accounts once a week for three weeks in an attempt to capture as many respondents as possible. While the survey link was only emailed once to colleagues around the country, several text messages were exchanged encouraging those colleagues to post the survey link to their social media and disseminate the link to their students.

The survey was also made available to undergraduate sport management students at a small university in the Northeast region of the U.S. Reminder emails were sent to students once a week for three weeks in an attempt to increase response rate and overall sample size. The students were rewarded with extra credit if they completed the survey and sent a screen shot of their submission.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Descriptive Analysis**

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 24 and R lavaan. Initial analysis included an examination of descriptive characteristics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and skewness and kurtosis values, and additional methods to assess normality and general distributional characteristics of the data. Furthermore, an examination of the descriptive characteristics allowed me to identify any outliers that may have affected the results.

### **Factor Analysis**

The items from the MSSOC were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm the relationship between observed variables and their latent constructs. CFAs are most often used in scale development and as a method to provide construct validity evidence, but they are also useful in research that has a strong empirical or conceptual foundation (Brown & Moore, 2014). CFAs allow the researcher to specify the number of factors and the item-loading pattern in advance, in order to determine how well the solution reproduces the sample covariance matrix

(Brown & Moore, 2014). In other words, the CFA was conducted to double check that the items “loaded” in a factor pattern consistent with the intent of the authors for the original measures. In terms of evaluating model fit, Hu and Bentler (1999) recommended cutoff values close to .95 for the comparative fit index (CFI), values close to .06 or below for the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) below .08 for acceptable model fit.

To conduct the CFA, the weighted least squares means and variance (WLSMV) parameter estimation method was used as it is designed to work with ordinal data (Beauducel & Herzberg, 2006). According to Beauducel and Herzberg (2006), WLSMV is a refinement of weighted least squares estimation, which “assumes that the observed ordinal variables stem from a set of underlying continuous variables” (pp. 186-187). Muthén, du Toit, and Spisic (1997) also argued that WLSMV performs well with a smaller sample size and is predicated on the addition of covariates that allow for the means of the outcome variables to vary across individuals within the sample.

Internal consistency reliability for the CFA was estimated using Cronbach’s alpha. Internal consistency examines how well responses to a set of variables or items, intended to measure one unidimensional construct, are consistent (Cronbach, 1951; Revelle, 1979). Ultimately, the question of interest is, do the items on a scale or subscale “produce consistent scores” (Tang, Cui, & Babenko, 2014, p. 206)? Cronbach’s alpha coefficients can range from zero to 1.0, with .70 being an acceptable cut-off value for some purposes (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). A Cronbach’s alpha of .8 or greater is considered good for most purposes, while a value of .9 or higher is excellent and generally suitable for measures used for high-stakes purposes (George & Mallery, 2003).

## Cluster Analysis

Cluster analysis was conducted to determine whether sport fans can be segmented into homogenous groups based on their social media usage motivation and their social media preference, answering research questions one and two. According to Everitt, Landau, Leese, and Stahl (2011), most uses of cluster analysis seek “a partition of the data” (p. 5), which simply means that each individual or object belongs to a single cluster, and the complete set of clusters contains all individuals. In this sense, there can be as many clusters as there are individuals in the data, although overlapping clusters may offer a better solution to the researcher (Everitt et al., 2011). Furthermore, Everitt et al. suggest that segmenting consumers is one of the basic strategies of marketing. Since the main purpose of the current study was to segment fans of professional sport into smaller groups based on their social media usage motivations, cluster analysis is an appropriate method of analysis. Moreover, it was expected that each cluster would have different motivations for using social media to consume sport, so cluster analysis allowed me to identify groups based on differing social media usage motivations and provide insight into how each group uses social media to consume sport. For instance, it is possible that one cluster of professional sport fans uses social media for information and news purposes, while another cluster uses social media for entertainment and to express their fandom.

There are a variety of clustering methods, and this study employed hierarchical clustering using the complete linkage method. Due to the exploratory nature of this research, hierarchical clustering was chosen because it does not require the researcher to specify the number of clusters *a priori* (Kodali, 2016). Rather, it is an agglomerative method (Everitt et al., 2011), whereby a hierarchy in the data is partitioned from the bottom up, beginning with each individual representing a cluster. These clusters are then merged together based on similarity, until the

solution ultimately results in a single cluster that contains all individuals from a data set (Everitt et al., 2011; Kodali, 2016; Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014). Therefore, the onus is on the researcher to decide when to stop the clustering. For the current study, the dendrograms were examined to help decide when to stop clustering. Dendrograms are a graphical representation of the cluster solution and provide a visual look at the data. Because of the nature of hierarchical clustering, the dendrograms are not included in the results because they are not easily readable when included in a document. However, they are available upon request. Furthermore, the complete linkage method was chosen because it assumes that the distance between two clusters is predicated on the maximum distance between any two points in two different clusters (Kodali, 2016; Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014). In other words, complete linkage looks at how dissimilar two neighboring clusters may be (Everitt et al., 2011). According to Sarstedt and Mooi (2014), complete linkage is strongly affected by outliers in the data and clusters from this linkage are usually tightly clustered. Again, based on the exploratory nature of this research, complete linkage was an appropriate algorithm to use because it does take outliers into account.

Hierarchical cluster analysis was used for the nine MSSOC subscales as well as on the responses regarding how often participants used each of the four major social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. In assessing the dendrograms for the nine MSSOC subscales, a two-cluster solution was clearly visible, while the dendrogram for social media preference (e.g., how often respondents said they used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat for consuming professional sport), revealed a three-cluster solution.

MANOVAs were used to further interpret and refine the clusters derived from the hierarchical clustering analysis. The reason for using MANOVA was to attempt to isolate which of the nine MSSOC variables were contributing the most to differences among the clusters as a

way to provide empirical evidence that fans of professional sport use social media for different reasons. MANOVAs for social media preference were an attempt to determine if certain social media platforms were more popular for one cluster over another. A further explanation of MANOVA, including assumptions, is presented later in this section.

### **Correlation**

Since narcissism has not been examined in previous research regarding sport fans and social media usage motivations, bivariate correlation analysis was run to examine the strength of the relationship between narcissism scores and scores from each of the subscales of the social media usage motivations identified from the CFA, which answers research question 4. In general, according to Cohen (1988), correlations below .30 suggest a weak relationship between the variables, correlations between .30 and .49 suggest a moderate relationship, and correlations above .49 are indicative of a strong relationship.

### **Tests of Differences**

**Multivariate analysis of variance.** MANOVA was employed to determine which fan segments differed in their social media usage motivations as well as in their social media preference. Specifically, MANOVA was used to answer research questions one, two, and five. The Wilks' lambda value and associated p-values for each MANOVA were examined. Analyses on MANOVA assumptions, such as multivariate normal distribution, linearity, and homogeneity of variance/covariance, were also conducted (French, Macedo, Poulsen, Waterson, & Yu, 2008; Tinsley & Brown, 2000). MANOVA is considered to be robust to non-normality as long as it is not caused by outliers in the data (French et al., 2008). Thus, testing for outliers is important before running MANOVA. In order to determine whether outliers existed in the data, z-scores were created for all dependent variables, and then frequencies were run to determine if any of the



z-scores were more than three standard deviations from the mean scores. None of the z-scores for any MANOVA dependent variables were more than three standard deviations from the means, so this assumption was not violated. Violating linearity, which assumes that there are linear relationships among the dependent variables in the MANOVA, affects the power of the analysis. This assumption was assessed by determining whether the dependent variables were correlated. With regard to homogeneity of variance/covariance, an examination of the Box's M test indicates whether this assumption has been violated. If the Box's M p-value was statistically significant, suggesting a violation of homogeneity of variance/covariance. The log determinants for the covariance matrices were also examined to determine if violation of the assumption increased the risk of type I or type II error for the MANOVA. Perhaps the most important MANOVA assumption is independence of observation, which assumes that "every observation is statistically independent of every other observation" (Tinsley & Brown, 2000, p. 20). Using non-probability sampling, specifically snowball sampling, could introduce non-independence into the data. The simplest way to compensate for violating this assumption is to use an adjusted alpha value. Initially, MANOVAs were conducted using an alpha of .05, but after testing assumptions, an adjusted alpha of .001 was used in an effort to counteract potential violation of the independence of observation assumption. Finally, MANOVA is sensitive to unequal group sizes, which affects correlation between main effects and interactions (French et al., 2008). While not an assumption, having group sizes that are substantially different could lead to a higher likelihood of violating the homogeneity of variance/covariance assumption.

**Descriptive discriminant analysis.** When the omnibus MANOVA results for research questions one and two were significant at an adjusted alpha of .001, descriptive discriminant analysis (DDA) was used as a post hoc procedure to determine which social media usage

motivations, or social media preferences, differed the most among the fan segments uncovered from the cluster analysis procedure. DDA was used to answer research question three. DDA is an appropriate follow-up technique to MANOVA because it allows researchers to compare two or more groups based on one or more variables (Brown & Wicker, 2000; Huberty, 1975), which is essentially what MANOVA does. However, DDA tells the researcher which variable or variables contribute(s) most to differences among groups while the MANOVA simply tells the researcher *if* there are significant differences among groups. In other words, DDA, which only works with continuous independent variables (e.g., composite scores), identifies the specific ways in which groups differ. Although DDA and MANOVA are identical, mathematically, in DDA the dependent variables and independent variables switch places from the corresponding MANOVA, meaning the dependent variables become the predictor variables and the independent variables become the dependent variables (Brown & Wicker, 2000). According to Huberty (1975), DDA is more than just a classification tool, and its use as a post hoc procedure for MANOVA cannot be understated.

Like MANOVA, there are several assumptions for DDA. First, there must be two or more mutually exclusive groups with at least two cases per group (Klecka, 1980). Second, according to Klecka (1980), the covariance matrices for each group must be approximately equal, and third, each group should come from a population with a normal distribution. Despite these assumptions, DDA is a robust analysis and violating these assumptions does not invalidate results (Dolenz, 1993; Huberty, 1975; Klecka, 1980).

To evaluate the discriminant analysis, both the structure coefficients and the standardized discriminant function coefficients were examined to determine which of the dependent variables were contributing most to the differences among the segments. The canonical correlation

coefficient was also examined. Squaring the canonical correlation coefficient provides the “percentage of variance accounted for in the discriminant function by the groups” (Dolenz, 1993, p. 10). More simply, the squared canonical correlation tells the researcher just how different the groups are with regard to the variables entered into the analysis. In this case, the squared canonical coefficient for social media usage motivation reveals how much the groups differ based on those usage motivations.

**Logistic regression.** To further explain how fan segments differ, which answers research question three, both binary and multinomial logistic regression were used with categorical explanatory variables such as how often respondents posted content to their social media pages or how often they liked, commented on, or reposted content from other social media accounts they followed. The multinomial logistic regression model also included demographic variables such as ethnicity, level of education, and household income. For both binary and multinomial logistic regression, the fan segments were the dependent variables. According to Peng, Lee, and Ingersoll (2002), logistic regression works well when “describing and testing hypotheses about relationships between a categorical outcome variable and one or more categorical or continuous predictor variables” (p. 4). Hosmer and Lemeshow (2000) further argue that regression is an “integral component” (p. 1) of any analysis that seeks to describe a relationship between an outcome variable and one or more explanatory variables. Binary logistic regression requires that the dependent variable be dichotomous (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000), whereas, multinomial logistic regression allows for more than two categories of the dependent variable (Fagerland & Hosmer, 2012; Starkweather & Moske, 2011).

Logistic regression is not bound by assumptions of normality, linearity, or homoscedasticity, which makes it an attractive analysis (Starkweather & Moske, 2011).

However, there are assumptions that are important with multinomial logistic regression. The first assumption is that there is independence among the categories of the dependent variable (e.g., mutually exclusive categories) and the second is “non-perfect separation” (Starkweather & Moske, 2011, p. 1). Simply put, results will be unrealistic if the outcome variables are perfectly separated by the predictor variables.

To evaluate the logistic regression models, the likelihood ratio chi-square was examined first. If it was significant, it meant at least one of the regression coefficients was not equal to zero. In addition to the likelihood ratio chi-square, the goodness of fit test, the Hosmer and Lemeshow test, was also analyzed to see whether it was significant. A non-significant Hosmer and Lemeshow test indicates that the model fits the data. Second, the likelihood ratio tests were analyzed to see which of the independent variables were statistically significant. Third, the parameter estimates table was inspected to determine which of the statistically significant variables distinguish between each pair of fan segments uncovered from the cluster analysis. In logistic regression models with more than two categories of the dependent variables, it is possible that an independent variable may be statistically significant for the overall model, but only significantly distinguishes between one of the pairs of fan segments. Logistic regression results were interpreted using an adjusted alpha value of .025 to minimize Type I error.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of all analyses used to answer the research questions. It is composed of two sections: 1) descriptive statistics and the preliminary analyses, including the results from the confirmatory factor analysis for sport fan social media usage motives and 2) the findings from the statistical analyses used to answer the research questions.

#### **Descriptive Analysis**

In examining social media usage and access, most respondents indicated they had their social media accounts for 5-7 years (40.61%), accessed their accounts by logging in or checking the mobile app two or more times a day (76.02%), posted content to their own accounts less than once a week (35.20%), and commented, liked, or reposted content posted to another user's account two or more times a day (30.61%). In addition, more than half the sample (62.24%) revealed that they had used their social media accounts to consume sport for five years or more. Among the four major social media sites, Facebook was the most frequently used, with 59.6% of the sample indicating they used the platform often or all the time for sport consumption. Twitter was the second-most used platform (43.1%), followed by Instagram (29%) and Snapchat (15.9%). Table 2 provides the means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis values for social media usage. All items were measured on a 1-5 scale, so the higher the mean, the more often respondents are engaging in that social media behavior.

Table 2

*Social Media Usage Breakdown*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Account Length	3.67	.93	-.08	-.51
Account Access	4.68	.68	-2.64	8.08
Posting Frequency	2.44	1.42	.57	-1.1
“Like” Frequency	3.53	1.36	-.53	-1.0
Sport Usage	4.15	1.29	-1.25	.17

This study focused on professional sport consumption on social media, so respondents were asked which professional sport leagues, or teams within those professional leagues, they followed. The National Football League (NFL) was the most popular, followed by Major League Baseball (MLB), and the National Basketball Association (NBA). Among the sports leagues not listed, the most frequent write-in responses were USA Track and Field, and the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). See Table 3 for the complete list of leagues and popularity.

Table 3

*Professional Leagues and Popularity*

League	<i>f</i>	%
NFL	136	22.86
MLB	124	20.84
NBA	85	14.29
NHL	51	8.57
International Soccer	28	4.71
PGA	20	3.36
MLS	19	3.19
Minor League Baseball	18	3.03
NASCAR	12	2.02
Minor League Hockey	11	1.85
National Lacrosse League	10	1.68
WNBA	7	1.18
Pro. Tennis	6	1.01
IndyCar	5	.84
LPGA	3	.5
Other	60	10.08

**Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

R lavaan (Rosseel, 2012) was used to confirm the latent constructs present in the original MSSOC. Overall, the model  $\chi^2$  was statistically significant at the  $p < .001$  level indicating poor model fit; however, despite the significant  $\chi^2$ , an examination of the descriptive fit indices, parameter estimates, construct correlations, and reliability estimates provided empirical support for the modified Motivation Scale for Sport Online Consumption model. A summary of the fit indices can be found in Table 4.

Table 4

*Fit Indices for both the Hypothesized and Modified CFA Models*

	$\chi^2$	Df	CFI <sup>a</sup>	TLI <sup>b</sup>	RMSEA <sup>c</sup>
Hypothesized MSSOC (27 items)	638.07	288	.94	.93	.083
Modified MSSOC (26 items)	538.52	263	.96	.95	.077

*Note. Weighted Least Squares Means and Variance (WLSMV) estimation was used.*

<sup>a</sup> *Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (Hu & Bentler, 1999): Values  $\geq .95$  indicate good fit.*

<sup>b</sup> *Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) (Hu & Bentler, 1999): Values  $\geq .95$  indicate good fit.*

<sup>c</sup> *Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Hu & Bentler, 1999): Values  $\leq .06$  indicate good fit.*

In addition, all parameter estimates were statistically significant at the  $p < .001$  level, and all items correlated with their corresponding latent variables at over .5, indicating that the items indeed measured the latent construct with which they were associated. See Table 5 for all parameter estimates and item reliability estimates, and Table 6 for all construct correlations. Ultimately, these reliability estimates, which are the R-squared values for each indicator variable, and correlations, were acceptable, indicating that the items under each identified construct (e.g., information, entertainment, interpersonal communication) accurately measure that construct.



Table 5

*Motivation Scale for Sport Online Consumption (MSSOC) with Factors, Items, Standardized Item Loadings, and Reliability Values*

Information	Loadings	Reliability
Social media provides quick and easy access to large volumes of sports information	.70	.50
I use social media because I am able to obtain a wide range of sport information	.94	.89
I use social media because I can learn about things happening in the sports world	.88	.78
Entertainment	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because it is exciting	.87	.76
I use social media because it is cool	.75	.56
I use social media because it is amusing	.65	.43
Interpersonal Communication	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because it shows me how to get along with others	.79	.63
I use social media because I want to be connected to others	.63	.40
I use social media because it allows me to meet others, which helps me cope with personal problems	.78	.61
Escape	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because it allows me to enter a nonthinking, relaxing period	.60	.36
I use social media because I can forget about work or school	.80	.64
Pass Time	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because it gives me something to do to occupy my time	.96	.93
I use social media because it passes the time away, particularly when I am bored	.69	.47
I use social media during my free time	.69	.48
Fanship	Loadings	Reliability
One of the main reasons I use social media is that I consider myself a sport fan	.92	.85
One of the main reasons I use social media is that I am a huge fan of sports in general	.84	.71
One of the main reasons I use social media is that I consider myself to be a big fan of my favorite team(s)	.85	.72
Team Support	Loadings	Reliability
One of the main reasons why I use social media is because of a particular team I am interested in following	.85	.73
I use social media because I believe it is important to support my favorite team(s)	.86	.74
Using social media demonstrates my support for sports in general	.85	.73
Fan Expression	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because I can express myself through the content (i.e., status updates, pictures/videos, like button)	.66	.44
I use social media because I can form my own opinions	.69	.48
I use social media because I enjoy interacting with other fans on social media platforms	.66	.43
Economic	Loadings	Reliability
I use social media because I am able to make purchases through links to other online locations (i.e., team's online store, online retailers, online ticketing sites, etc.)	.89	.81
When I want to buy a big-ticket item, I use the team's social media accounts to search for deals	.82	.67
Social media is a great resource for buying gifts	.74	.55

Table 6

*Correlations among the Latent Variables for the MSSOC.*

	ECO	SUPP	INFO	COMM	ESC	PAST	FAN	EXP	ENT
ECO	1								
SUPP	.66	1							
INFO	.47	.83	1						
COMM	.78	.55	.27	1					
ESC	.63	.49	.24	.75	1				
PAST	.36	.28	.36	.35	.85	1			
FAN	.61	.99	.82	.49	.40	.25	1		
EXP	.66	.63	.46	.90	.63	.42	.64	1	
ENT	.68	.60	.52	.76	.92	.66	.56	.74	1

*Note.* ECO = economic, SUPP = team support, INFO = information, COMM = interpersonal communication, ESC = escape, PAST = pass time, FAN = fanship, EXP = fan expression, ENT = entertainment

Modification indices were examined to identify any potential model misspecifications in the proposed MSSOC model. Modification indices provide information for modifying the proposed model in order to improve overall model fit (Brown, 2006). In other words, they allow the researcher to examine whether any omitted parameters (such as correlations between residuals, item-cross-loadings, etc.) would improve the overall fit of the model if they were estimated or added to the model. With respect to the MSSOC model, modification indices revealed that one item in particular prevented the initial CFA from achieving acceptable model fit. The item, “I use social media because I can escape from reality” (ESC1) had several modification indices over 50, suggesting that the model may improve further if this item was able to double- or triple-load across factors, and it was therefore removed from the model. Once removed, the overall fit of the model improved to within acceptable levels. Therefore, the final CFA reveals a 9-factor structure with 26 total items.

### **Social Media Preference Profile**

The first research question asked whether sport fans could be segmented based upon a fan’s social media preference (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat). Table 7

includes the overall descriptive statistics for the four social media preference variables. Facebook has the highest mean, which indicates that respondents specified they used Facebook for sport consumption often, followed by Twitter sometimes. Snapchat has the lowest mean value, indicating that respondents rarely used it for sport consumption. Twitter and Instagram fall outside the acceptable cutoff kurtosis values (-1 to 1; Huck, 2012), indicating that the distribution of these variables was platykurtic.

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Preference*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Facebook Frequency	3.57	1.32	-.67	-.63
Twitter Frequency	2.9	1.65	.03	-1.65
Instagram Frequency	2.47	1.54	.46	-1.30
Snapchat Frequency	1.86	1.33	1.37	.48

Hierarchical cluster analysis with complete linkage was utilized to discover whether distinct consumer segments would emerge based on social media preference. From the analysis, three distinct clusters emerged, suggesting respondents fell clearly into one of the three groups. This three-class structure supports hypothesis 1, which suggested that different consumer segments would be distinguishable based on a fan's social media preference.

The next step was labeling the three clusters. The first group uses Facebook most often; their mean score of 4.71 out of 5 is by far the highest across the three groups. Interestingly, this group seems to ignore the other three social media platforms, preferring to consume sport solely on Facebook. Thus, this group of 51 people was labeled Facebook Devotees. The second group was the biggest, containing 71 people, and appeared to use all four social media platforms sparingly (means for all four platforms were below 3). Since this group does not seem interested in consuming sport on any social media platform, it was labeled Infrequent Users. Interestingly,

group 3 (54 people) uses Twitter the most for sport consumption (4.72), followed closely by Facebook (3.91) and Instagram (3.24). This group also had the highest mean for Snapchat frequency (2.33) than the other two groups. Since this group likes using multiple platforms to consume sport, it was called Social Media Aficionados. Table 8 presents the full breakdown of means and standard deviations for the three groups.

Table 8

*Descriptive Statistics by Cluster for Social Media Preference*

	Facebook Devotees		Infrequent Users		Social Media Aficionados	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Facebook Frequency	4.71	.46	2.49	1.13	3.91	.96
Twitter Frequency	1.78	.90	2.32	1.50	4.72	.45
Instagram Frequency	2.35	1.62	1.97	1.29	3.24	1.50
Snapchat Frequency	1.59	1.22	1.70	1.20	2.33	1.50

After labeling and describing the three clusters, a MANOVA was run to see whether the three groups differed with regard to social media preference. The four social media frequency scores were entered into the MANOVA as the dependent variables. One of the assumptions for MANOVA is that the covariance matrices among the variables are equal across the levels of the independent variable. An examination of the Box's M test, which tests the assumption that the covariance matrices among groups are equal, was statistically significant (Box's  $M = 128.82$ ,  $F[20, 92,693.70] = 6.22$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), suggesting that the covariances among the variables are not equal among the three groups. However, looking at the log determinants for each group suggests that the F test is more conservative in the presence of the equal covariance assumption violation because the second cluster, Infrequent Users, which is the biggest of the three, had a larger log determinant (1.09), than Facebook Devotees (-.56) and Social Media Aficionados (-.80; Klecka, 1980) so a statistically significant Box's M test is not as much of a concern as the omnibus

MANOVA was statistically significant (Wilks lambda = .18,  $F[8, 340] = 57.66$ ,  $p < .0001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .58$ ) among the three clusters based on social media preference. Moreover, the partial eta squared value suggests a large effect size, which makes it easier to determine that there are actual differences among the three groups.

Descriptive discriminant analysis was employed as a post hoc procedure to further pinpoint how the three identified groups differed based on social media preference. Since I have three groups, the analysis provides two canonical discriminant functions, because the number of possible discriminant functions is always one less than the number of groups (Dolenz, 1993). Overall, both canonical discriminant functions were statistically significant: Discriminant function 1 Wilks' lambda = .18,  $\chi^2 = 294.03$  (8,  $N = 176$ ),  $p < .0001$ ; Discriminant function 2 Wilks' lambda = .55,  $\chi^2 = 103.66$  (3,  $N = 176$ ),  $p < .0001$ . Discriminant function 1 had a canonical correlation of .82, meaning this function explains 67% of difference in social media preference based on fan segment group membership. The second discriminant function had a canonical correlation of .67, suggesting that it explains only 45% of the difference in social media preference.

The next step was to examine the structure matrices and the standardized discriminant function coefficients to determine which social media platforms are contributing the most to differences among the three groups. Table 9 presents the structure matrix for both discriminant functions. The structure matrix treats Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat as a single factor for each function. In both functions, Facebook and Twitter are the biggest contributors to the underlying linear combination of social media preference among the three groups. However, for function 1, Twitter appears to be a bigger contributor to social media preference than Facebook. Further, the second function suggests high Facebook use and low Twitter use, based

on the different signs for these two variables. It may also go the other way, where users have a high Twitter usage frequency and a low Facebook usage frequency.

Table 9

*Structure Matrices for the Discriminant Functions for Social Media Preference*

Variable	Function 1	Function 2
Facebook Frequency	.49	.81*
Twitter Frequency	.61	-.79*
Instagram Frequency	.26*	-.09
Snapchat Frequency	.14	-.17*

Note. \* Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function.

In addition, the standardized discriminant function coefficients for both discriminant functions, which indicate which individual social media platforms among the four are most responsible for the differences between the three groups, reveal that Facebook accounts for the largest difference in social media preference among the Facebook Devotees, Infrequent Users, and Social Media Aficionados. Twitter is a close second, Instagram is third, and Snapchat is a distant fourth. See Table 10 for complete details. In the second function, high Facebook use and low Twitter use seems to be what distinguishes the three groups in terms of social media preference. As indicated above, those who use either Twitter or Facebook frequently tend to not use the other one, whereas in Function 1, users either use both Facebook and Twitter frequently, or they use neither frequently.

Table 10

*Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients for Social Media Preference*

Variable	Function 1	Function 2
Facebook Frequency	.85	.65
Twitter Frequency	.84	-.62
Instagram Frequency	.26	.23
Snapchat Frequency	-.02	-.02

Overall, these results indicate that three distinct groups formed based on social media preference. The Facebook Devotees are the most likely to use Facebook to consume sport, and they eschew the other three social media platforms. The Social Media Aficionados are the most likely to use Twitter first to consume sport, and then Facebook and Instagram. Finally, the Infrequent Users do not seem to prefer one platform over another, although if they do use social media to consume sport, they will likely use Facebook and Twitter over Instagram and Snapchat. In terms of which individual platforms are affecting these three groups, it is not surprising that it is Facebook and Twitter. Facebook was founded in 2004, followed by Twitter in 2006, so as the oldest two platforms, many professional sport fans may feel most comfortable on these two platforms. They are familiar with the nuances of Facebook and Twitter and may be content to rely on the two platforms for their sport consumption. The demographic breakdown for the two platforms may also play a part as to why Facebook and Twitter are so dominant: Twitter users tend to be between the ages of 18 and 29, while the majority of Facebook users are 30 or older (Social Media Fact Sheet, 2019).

### **Social Media Usage Motivation**

The second research question asked whether unique consumer segments could be identified based upon a fan's social media usage motivations. To answer this question, hierarchical cluster analysis with complete linkage was used. As previously mentioned, hierarchical cluster analysis was chosen because I did not have to specify clusters *a priori* (Kodali, 2016).

According to the descriptive statistics for each of the composite scores from the nine social media motivation subscales, passing the time had the highest overall mean score, meaning respondents indicated this was the most frequent reason for consuming sport on social media.

Information gathering was second and fan expression was third. The least frequent reason respondents used social media to consume sport was escape. See Table 11 for the full descriptive statistical analysis.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics for Nine MSSOC subscales*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Pass Time	16.89	3.60	-1.16	1.25
Information	15.91	4.09	-.95	.60
Fan Expression	13.91	3.95	-.32	-.16
Entertainment	13.88	4.11	-.33	-.35
Fanship	12.93	5.13	-.28	-.97
Team Support	12.42	4.89	-.30	-.70
Interpersonal Communication	10.70	3.93	.48	-.24
Economic	9.87	4.78	.22	-.79
Escape	8.03	3.21	-.02	-.76

Based on the results from the cluster analysis, two distinct clusters emerged, thus supporting hypothesis 2, which posits that different segments would be distinguishable based on a fan's social media usage motivations (e.g., information, escape, fan expression, etc.). The next step was labeling each cluster based on their social media usage motivations. The first cluster, containing 72 respondents, was labeled Multifaceted Fans because it exhibited the highest mean scores across all nine usage motivations. Since each motivation subscale, with the exception of escape, contains three items, rated on a 1-7 scale, the highest composite score possible was 21 while the lowest was 3. Therefore, in order to determine low, moderate, and high levels of motivation, a mean score of 3-8 indicates low motivation, 9-14 indicates moderate motivation, and 15-21 indicates high motivation. For escape motivation, where the highest score is 14 and the lowest score is 2, the breakdown is as follows: 2-5 is low, 6-9 is moderate, and 10-14 is high.



As seen in Table 12, the Multifaceted Fans had double-digit mean scores for all nine usage motivations, suggesting that people in this group are either moderately or highly motivated to use social media for various reasons. The motivation with the highest mean was passing the time (18.22). The second cluster, containing 104 respondents, exhibited double-digit mean scores in only a few of the nine usage motivations, particularly with passing the time (15.97) and information (14.98), suggesting that fans in this group are using social media more out of boredom than for sport consumption. Thus, this group was labeled Casual Supporter. Furthermore, the Multifaceted Fans are highly motivated to use social media for fanship (15.65) and team support (15.24), whereas the Casual Supporters are only moderately motivated by fanship (11.05) and team support (10.49).

Table 12

*Descriptive Statistics by Cluster for the 9 Social Media Usage Motivations*

	Multifaceted Fans		Casual Supporters	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pass Time	18.22	2.88	15.97	3.76
Information	17.25	3.23	14.98	4.36
Entertainment	16.89	2.65	11.8	3.63
Fan Expression	16.31	2.89	12.25	3.72
Fanship	15.65	4.04	11.05	4.96
Team Support	15.24	3.91	10.49	4.56
Interpersonal Communication	13.78	3.41	8.57	2.65
Economic	13.75	3.44	7.18	3.58
Escape	10.09	2.56	6.61	2.82

To further distinguish Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters, a MANOVA was run to see if the two groups differed in terms of the nine subscales of social media usage motivation. Composite scores were created for all nine subscales, which were entered into the MANOVA as the dependent variables. An examination of the Box's M test of equality of covariance matrices

provided a statistically significant result (Box's  $M = 150.12$ ,  $F[45, 77,019.32] = 3.145$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), suggesting that the covariances among variables are not equal for the two groups. However, as with the social media preference groups, further examination of the log determinants for each group suggests that the F test is more conservative in the presence of this assumption violation because the second cluster, which is the larger of the two, has a larger log determinant (20.50) than the first cluster (15.78). Thus, a significant Box's M result is not as much of a concern in this situation as the omnibus test was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 (Wilks lambda = .39,  $F[9, 166] = 29.09$ ,  $p < .0001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .61$ ). The partial eta squared value suggests there is a large effect size, making it easier to determine that there are actual differences between the two clusters.

Since the omnibus MANOVA was significant, descriptive discriminant analysis was employed as a post hoc procedure to further understand how the two identified clusters differed with regard to individual social media usage motivations. The overall canonical discriminant function was statistically significant (Wilks' Lambda = .39,  $\chi^2 = 160.17$  [9,  $N = 176$ ],  $p < .0001$ ). The overall canonical correlation was .78, which, when squared, suggests that roughly 61% of the difference between the two clusters is explained by the nine social media usage motivations.

Further examination of the structure matrix from the nine composite scores of the MSSOC subscales reveals that economic motivation, communication, and entertainment are the biggest contributors to defining the underlying linear combination of social media usage motivations. (See Table 13 for the full breakdown of all nine social media usage motivations).

Table 13

*Structure Matrix between the Two Clusters for the Nine MSSOC Variables*

Variable	Coefficient
Economic	.74
Interpersonal Communication	.69
Entertainment	.61
Escape	.51
Fan Expression	.47
Team Support	.43
Pass Time	.26
Information	.23

In addition to examining the structure matrix, which treats all nine subscales as one factor, an examination of the standardized discriminant function coefficients revealed which individual variables among the nine are responsible for the difference in social media usage motivation between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters. In this case, economic motivation accounts for the largest difference in social media usage motivation, interpersonal communication is second, and entertainment is third. Table 14 contains the complete coefficient breakdown for the nine MSSOC subscales.

Table 14

*Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients for Nine MSSOC Variables*

Variable	Coefficient
Economics	.51
Interpersonal Communication	.36
Entertainment	.31
Escape	.20
Fanship	.18
Team Support	.10
Fan Expression	.03
Pass Time	.01
Information	-.20

Overall, these results indicate that two distinct groups emerged based on social media usage motivations. The Multifaceted Fans are overall more likely to use social media to satisfy all nine usage motivations. Unsurprisingly, the economic motivation accounts for the biggest difference between the Multifaceted Fans and the Casual Supporters. Professional sport organizations often post ticket or merchandise deals to their social media accounts (Raby, 2018), and since these Multifaceted Fans indicate that they are highly motivated to consume sport for economic purposes, it stands to reason that they would be interested in ticket or merchandise deals posted on social media. For example, nearly 70% of teams consistently promote their tickets on Twitter, and 10% offer Twitter exclusive deals (Laird, 2012a). Laird further explains that more than 15% of fans are influenced to purchase tickets based on social media posts, and those fans who purchase tickets through social media links often pay more money on average. Conversely, the Casual Supporters appear to have fairly low motivation when it comes to economic incentives. Casual Supporters also seem unlikely to use social media for escape from everyday life or for interpersonal communication.

### **Social Media Motivational Profiles**

Research question three was concerned with whether social media motivational profiles of professional sport fans differed based on the segments uncovered in the market segmentation analysis. This question connects research questions one and two, as it provides a more in-depth analysis of why the two usage motivation clusters, Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters, are different, and it takes into account social media preference.

With regard to social media usage motivation, binary logistic regression, chi-square analysis, and independent samples t-tests were utilized to investigate whether the Multifaceted Fans and the Casual Supporters had additional differences beyond the nine MSSOC variables.

Categorical demographics variables, including gender, race, income, and level of completed education, were entered into the binary logistic regression model first. Due to low response numbers (e.g., less than 5) in some categories, the level of completed education categories was collapsed. The trade/technical/vocational degree category was combined with the associate's degree category since many of these degrees can be completed in two years. The overall likelihood ratio chi-square test for the demographic variables was not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 [18, N = 143] = 23.3, p = .18$ ), suggesting that Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters do not differ based on these demographic variables.

The second block of variables entered into the binary logistic regression model were those inquiring about time spent with social media. They included how often respondents checked their own social media accounts, how often they posted to their own accounts, how often they liked/retweeted/reposted content from another social media account, and how long they had been using social media for sport-related consumption. The second block overall likelihood chi-square test was not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 143] = 3.67, p = .45$ ), nor was the overall model likelihood chi-square test ( $\chi^2 [22, N = 143] = 26.97, p = .21$ ). These results suggest that the amount of time spent on social media is not a contributing factor to the difference between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters.

To test whether age was statistically significantly different between the Multifaceted Fans and the Casual Supporters, an independent sample's t-test was conducted. In testing the assumptions of homogeneity of variance, the Levene's test for equality of variance between the two clusters was not significant, indicating equal variance for the independent samples t-test. Thus, this assumption was not violated. Unequal group sizes, which could affect normality, are not considered to be a major concern as long as the "ratio of the smallest to largest group size is

(not) greater than 1.5” (Laerd Statistics, 2018, para. 7). In the current study, this assumption was not violated, as the smallest group is 70 and the largest is 96 and Levene’s test was not statistically significant. According to Laerd Statistics (2018), a t-test is fairly robust with regard to non-normality and does not heavily influence Type I error. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two clusters in terms of age ( $t[164] = -3.64, p < .0001$ , mean difference = -6.93). The Multifaceted Fans are much younger (28.41 years) than the Casual Supporters (35.34 years).

A chi-square analysis was used to investigate potential differences between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters regarding social media preference (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat). Like any statistical test, there are assumptions associated with a chi-square test. According to McHugh (2013) and Michael (2001), the following are assumptions for a chi-square test:

- The data in the cells should be frequencies, or counts of cases rather than percentages or some other transformation of the data.
- The levels (or categories) of the variables are mutually exclusive (e.g., an individual fits into only one level of each variable; they do not overlap).
- The frequencies in the cells expected if the two variables are unrelated should be five or more in at least 80% of the cells, and no cell should have an expected frequency of less than one.
- Independent observations. In other words, one person’s response should not tell the researcher anything about another person’s response.

After determining that I did not violate the assumptions, I conducted the chi-square analysis, which revealed that the two clusters differed in Twitter ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 176] 12.04, p = .017$ ), Instagram ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 176] = 18.17, p = .001$ ), and Snapchat ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 176] = 14.7, p = .005$ ) frequency of use. Table 15 presents the frequencies and percentages for both groups.

Table 15

*Social Media Frequency of Use between Social Media Motivation Clusters*

	Multifaceted Fans		Casual Supporters	
	<i>f</i>	% of Group	<i>f</i>	% of Group
<b>Twitter Use</b>				
Never	16	22.2	46	44.2
Rarely	7	9.7	8	7.7
Sometimes	13	18.1	10	9.6
Often	11	15.3	19	18.3
Always	25	34.7	21	20.2
<b>Instagram Use</b>				
Never	20	27.8	58	55.8
Rarely	5	6.9	11	10.6
Sometimes	17	23.6	14	13.5
Often	12	16.7	11	10.6
Always	18	25	10	9.6
<b>Snapchat Use</b>				
Never	35	48.6	74	71.2
Rarely	10	13.9	16	15.4
Sometimes	8	11.1	5	4.8
Often	9	12.5	3	2.9
Always	10	13.9	6	5.8

The five frequency categories (never, rarely, sometimes, often, always) can be combined to create low, moderate, and high use for each of the four social media platforms. So never and rarely indicate light usage, sometimes indicates moderate usage, and often and always indicate heavy usage. In this respect, the difference between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters becomes even more noticeable. For example, roughly 87% of Casual Supporters are light users of Snapchat, compared to about 63% of Multifaceted Fans. While Snapchat in general was not a preferred social media platform for consuming sport, the fact that nearly 25% more Casual Supporters either never or rarely use Snapchat is a stark contrast between the two groups. Conversely, 50% of the Multifaceted Fans are heavy Twitter users, compared to just 38.5% of

Casual Supporters. Given that Multifaceted Fans have an average age of 28 compared to an average age of 35 for Casual Supporters, it is not surprising that the Multifaceted Fans prefer Twitter. According to Statista (2019), 38% of Twitter users are between the ages of 18 and 29, compared to 26% ages 30-49. Finally, nearly 42% of Multifaceted Fans are heavy Instagram users, while just 20% of Casual Supporters report using Instagram often or always. Given that Multifaceted Fans are decidedly motivated by all nine social media motivations, it is reasonable to expect this group to be heavy Instagram users since Instagram, as an image-based platform, offers a unique perspective that these fans may not get on other social media platforms, thus satisfying more of their motivations.

### **Narcissism and Social Media Usage Motivations**

Research question four asked whether narcissism related to the social media usage motivation subscales from the MSSOC. A Pearson correlation analysis (2-tailed) using composite scores for narcissism and composite scores for the nine subscales of the MSSOC was completed to illustrate any relationships among the variables. As seen in Table 16, narcissism did not statistically significantly correlate with any of the usage motivation subscales based on an adjusted alpha of .001. The alpha value was adjusted due to the high number of tests of significance that were run. To get the alpha of .001, I divided the number of correlations (45) by .05. In addition, the correlations between narcissism and the nine MSSOC subscales have low magnitude and a small effect size. For example, the correlation between escape motivation and narcissism is .21, which, when squared, suggests that the highest amount of shared variance between narcissism and any of the MSSOC subscales is only 4%. The only statistically significant correlations were among the nine MSSOC subscales themselves.



Table 16

*Correlation Matrix for Narcissism and MSSOC subscales*

	NARC	ECO	SUPP	INFO	COMM	ESC	PASS	FAN	EXP	ENT
NARC	1									
ECO	.11	1								
SUPP	.11	.53**	1							
INFO	-.08	.37**	.69**	1						
COMM	.08	.60**	.42**	.19*	1					
ESC	.21	.45**	.32**	.13	.50**	1				
PASS	.20	.26**	.19*	.26**	.24**	.57**	1			
FAN	.08	.47**	.87**	.69**	.37**	.26**	.18*	1		
EXP	.05	.49**	.46**	.30**	.62**	.34**	.25**	.46**	1	
ENT	.19	.53**	.45**	.39**	.57**	.61**	.47**	.43**	.52**	1

Note: \*\*Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

NARC = narcissism, ECO = economic, SUPP = team support, INFO = information, COMM = interpersonal communication, ESC = escape, PASS = pass time, FAN = fanship, EXP = fan expression, ENT = entertainment

### Gender Differences among Social Media Usage Motivations

Finally, research question five asked whether social media motivational differences existed between males and females. In order to minimize Type I error, an adjusted alpha of .001 was used. Thus, the overall MANOVA ( $N = 166$ ) was not significant (Wilks' lambda = .86,  $F[9, 156] = 2.04$ ,  $p = .04$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .11$ ). The partial eta squared value suggests a small effect size; thus there was no significant difference on the linear combination of usage motivations between males and females, which supports hypothesis 5.

### Chapter Summary

To summarize the results from the current study, hierarchical cluster analysis uncovered distinct groups with regard to social media preference and social media usage motivation, providing support for my hypotheses. For social media preference, respondents fell into one of three groups: Facebook Devotees, Infrequent Users, and Social Media Aficionados. As their name suggests, Facebook Devotees preferred Facebook for their sport consumption, often to the

detriment of Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Infrequent Users had no social media platform preference and did not appear to use social media to consume sport very often. The Social Media Aficionados used all four platforms for sport consumption, although their first preference was Twitter, followed closely by Facebook and Instagram. For the Aficionados, Snapchat was not a platform they used when consuming sport.

In terms of social media usage motivation, the results indicate two groups: Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters. Multifaceted Fans were either moderately or highly motivated by all nine usage motivations (economic, interpersonal communication, entertainment, escape, fan expression, team support, fanship, information, and passing the time). Individuals in this group clearly consumed sport on social media for a multitude of reasons, and were increasingly motivated to do so. On the other hand, the Casual Supporters were only highly motivated to consume sport on social media for passing the time and information, suggesting that they may be more “fair weather” fans who are looking to alleviate boredom or educate themselves about sport news. Casual Supporters were only moderately motivated by team support and fanship, which lends further credence to the idea that these individuals are not avid fans of professional sport. Furthermore, Casual Supporters were an average of approximately seven years older, which may suggest that these individuals have other means of sport consumption than social media or that the family life cycle is having a negative effect on their consumption patterns. The social media usage motivations that contributed to the biggest difference between Multifaceted Fans and Casual Supporters were passing the time, economic, and entertainment. Multifaceted Fans were more highly motivated by these three variables than Casual Supporters. Both groups exhibited high motivation for passing the time, but the addition of the economic and entertainment variables suggests that Multifaceted Fans had stronger monetary incentive (e.g., gambling on a

particular professional game) and entertainment incentive (e.g., watching a game with friends) than the Casual Supporters.

As for whether narcissism is related to social media usage motivation, the results indicate no statistically significant relationships between narcissism and any of the nine MSSOC variables. Similarly, based on MANOVA results, gender was not a statistically significant factor between Multifaceted Users and Casual Supporters in terms of social media usage motivation, thus supporting my hypothesis.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

This chapter is comprised of four sections: 1) summary, 2) discussion, 3) conclusions, and 4) recommendations for future research. The summary section provides an overview of the current study and the overarching purpose, while the discussion section provides an explanation of the findings derived from the analyses conducted in chapter four. The conclusion section indicates the current study's contribution to sport social media research and outlines marketing and communication implications for sport industry practitioners. The final section provides ideas for future research directions.

#### **Summary**

The primary purpose of this study was to segment professional sport fans based on social media preference and their social media usage motivations, as well as to determine whether narcissism relates to social media usage motivation among sport fans. Being able to segment the professional sport fan base according to its reasons for consuming sport on social media not only provides sport organizations with valuable marketing and communication information, but it also fills a gap in sport social media research whereby fan motivations are of primary interest, rather than athletes.

Social media has changed the way fans consume sport; it is now a group activity rather than an individual one (Swarm, 2018). Social media provides a virtual meeting place for fans of a specific team, regardless of where they live in the world. These fans bond with each other and with the team through their comments to the team's initial social media post. In addition, Swarm

also points out that social media platforms provide streamlined access to news and team updates, which in turn increases fan engagement and reinforces the relationship between the team and the fan base. The segments uncovered in the current study add another layer to the team-fan relationship by indicating what motivations draw fans to the team's social media platforms in the first place. For example, if teams know that fans are looking to express their fanship or team support, they can create call-to-action posts that ask fans to upload a picture celebrating their fanship or bragging about how much they love the team. Conversely, if a segment of fans is looking for entertainment or escape from their lives, teams can create funny or imaginative posts that perhaps provoke laughter or contentment in fans.

From a marketing perspective, social media is becoming progressively more important in relationship marketing, and as an activation tool for the team's brand partners (Nelson, 2018). Brands use social media to not only bring awareness to their partnerships with sport properties, but also to control the narrative about their partnerships (Nelson, 2018). For instance, in November 2018, the NFL signed a sponsorship deal with Fortnite, a popular video game. To announce the partnership, the NFL's official Twitter account posted a video of Fortnite game characters dressed in NFL jerseys doing popular Fortnite victory dances (Woodard, 2018). The NFL's Twitter post also included Fortnite's official Twitter handle in their initial post and even used the hashtag #FortniteNFL as a way to create awareness of this new partnership. The overall result from the NFL's perspective is that they have now created a deeper relationship with NFL fans who play Fortnite by using their social media as an easy, inexpensive way to directly connect with their fans and fans of Fortnite.

In an increasingly cluttered media landscape, it is important for sport organizations to directly interact with their fan bases in creative, targeted ways. The above example from the NFL

is just one of many creative posts meant to drive fan engagement and build a relationship. Couched in uses and gratifications theory (Katz et al., 1974), this research study provides empirical evidence that offers some insight into what social media platforms fans are actively using for their sport consumption needs. It also provides information about which social media usage motivations are most salient for each of the segments uncovered in the analysis.

Furthermore, in this study I attempted to understand how narcissism relates to social media usage motivations among sport fans. Given that social media are platforms for self-expression, it is logical to wonder if users begin to exhibit narcissistic tendencies the more they use social media. While there has been extensive research into the relationship between narcissism and social media usage in general, this is the first study to investigate this relationship among sport fans.

## **Discussion**

### **Social Media Preference**

When it comes to social media preference, Facebook appears to be the most popular platform, which supports previous research (see boyd & Ellison, 2007; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). The results of the current study indicate an entire group of sport fans who prefer Facebook over the other three platforms. Their overall mean usage was 4.71 out of 5, suggesting that this group uses Facebook almost daily for their sport consumption. There are several reasons for this finding. First, Facebook is the oldest social media platform. It was founded in 2004 (Facebook, 2019), so it has had 15 years to develop a platform that resonates with users; they feel most comfortable with Facebook because they have had plenty of time to acquaint themselves with the platform's nuances. Second, Facebook was the first to integrate itself into just about any website people visit. For instance, fans reading sport news on ESPN can easily share the stories to their Facebook profile by clicking the Facebook logo on the story. Once the

person logs into his or her Facebook profile, a few simple clicks allow the ESPN story to appear in the individual's newsfeed, thus reaching that individual's connected social network (e.g., friends, co-workers, and family members). This seamless website integration has skyrocketed Facebook to the top of the social media echelon. To further cement its dominance in the social media landscape, Facebook has been aggressive in updating the platform, refining the algorithm that prioritizes content for users, and integrating new features like stories (2017; Newton, 2017), reactions (2016; Cohen, 2016), and Facebook Live (2016; Castillo, 2017). Furthermore, Facebook's purchase of Instagram in 2012 gave it control over an image-based platform and expanded its reach in terms of users. In addition, Facebook's acquisition of Instagram provided the company with its first mobile-only platform and allowed Facebook to eliminate a direct competitor (Luckerson, 2016).

It is also possible members of the Facebook Devotees segment prefer the platform because they find it to be user friendly. Facebook offers users easy ways to post status updates, multiple photos, and even video. Furthermore, users can easily repost something that appears in their newsfeed. Finally, Facebook has no character limit, so users are free to be as succinct or as loquacious as they please. While Twitter is also user friendly, the real-time feel and the sheer volume of tweets makes it difficult for a user to keep up with their feed. Thus, they may not find it as easy to retweet a post, or they may feel that their own posts on Twitter get lost among the hundreds of other tweets they see.

The emergence of the Infrequent Users segment is somewhat of an anomaly. This segment did not have high usage rates for any platform, although the mean usage scores for Facebook and Twitter were higher than those of Instagram and Snapchat. Overall, this segment is interesting given the non-probability sampling techniques used to collect data. Given that

professional sport fans who use social media to consume sport were criteria for inclusion in the study, it is curious that this group appears to contradict the sport and social media research in general, since they seem to not use it for sport consumption at all. It is also possible that these fans are using other social media platforms rather than Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat for their sport consumption.

Perhaps one reason for this group's low usage rates is a preference for more established media channels like television or the Internet. Sports are not as popular for time-shifted viewing (e.g., recording the game and watching it at a later time), given the unpredictable nature of the final outcome (Catch it live, 2016). Thus, it is possible that members of this segment prefer to consume sport live, and social media does not interest them as a communication channel. Furthermore, members of this group could also be unfamiliar with the newer social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat. Rather than spend time learning the nuances of these platforms, they instead use communication channels that are more in line with their level of technological understanding. It is also possible that the screening criteria for the current study were not specific enough to remove infrequent social media users.

The Social Media Aficionados preferred to consume sport through Twitter, likely for the ability to follow a game in real time. Scores are updated constantly, and any player injuries or penalties/fouls are tweeted by the organization as they happen. According to a research study commissioned by Twitter, fans use Twitter as both a secondary and a primary screen for watching and consuming sport live (Murphy, Tereck, Elrhoul, & Lenehan, 2018). For instance, Murphy et al. (2018) explain that during Super Bowl 51, "Twitter saw a +19% lift in unique visitors (versus average Sunday traffic), while other social platforms, in aggregate, saw a decline in unique visitors" (para. 2). One of the reasons fans in this segment may prefer Twitter to the



other three social media platforms is because Twitter best complements their sport consumption experience. According to Murphy et al., Twitter makes sports more engaging and memorable than if fans just watch the event on television. Murphy et al. conclude that Twitter offers a more immersive experience for fans than television or even other social media platforms. The results from the current study certainly seem to support this idea, since Social Media Aficionados identify Twitter as their preferred social media platform for sport consumption.

Among other noteworthy findings is the low usage rate of Snapchat among the three segments. Snapchat is highly popular among adults in the U.S., particularly among the younger demographics (ages 18-34; Iqbal, 2019). In fact, Snapchat indicates users of the platform are more likely to be sport fans than non-sport fans (Hutchinson, 2017). However, the current study's results indicate that it was the least used platform for sport consumption. This finding is contradictory to not only Snapchat's own claims, but also to previous research by Billings et al. (2015), who found that respondents spent more time following sport on Snapchat than on Twitter or Instagram (there was no statistically significant difference between Snapchat and Facebook). Perhaps one reason for the low Snapchat usage frequency among respondents of the current study is the fact that stories posted on Snapchat are only available for viewing for 24 hours. Thus, if users are not viewing Snapchat stories every day, they will likely miss new content from their favorite teams because it does not have staying power like it might on Instagram, where pictures posted to a user's story remain indefinitely. Moreover, if a professional sport organization does not post new content to its Snapchat story regularly, fans have no incentive to interact with the team on Snapchat.

## **Social Media Usage Motivation**

In terms of social media usage motivation, two distinct groups emerged: Multifaceted Fans and Casual Users. These two groups make sense, as they highlight the versatility of social media and the various reasons for use.

The Multifaceted Fans are highly motivated to use social media for a variety of reasons, suggesting they are the die-hard fans who want to consume as much information about their favorite team or teams as possible. It is also likely that many of their friends are die-hard fans, so these Multifaceted Fans want to see what their friends are saying on social media as well. The appearance of this group supports previous research by Sanderson (2011), who suggest that social media purposely create connections among users. Furthermore, the results of the current study support the early social media research that says people join social media sites to connect with others and form relationships based on shared interests (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Donath & boyd, 2004).

Interestingly, Multifaceted Users had a high economic motivation for consuming sports on social media. This result supports previous research indicating economics as a motivation for using social media in general (Al-Menayes, 2015), but is contradictory to sport social media research that suggests economic motivation is not a primary reason for using social media (Hur, Ko, & Valacich, 2007). It is possible that the high economic motivation stems from the fact that teams often post ticket deals on their social media platforms (Smith, 2018), and fans who check their social media accounts several times throughout the day are exposed to these posts and social media ads multiple times. Additionally, nearly 40% of sport fans use social media for sport betting (The Huge Statistics, 2017), which could also explain the high economic motivation among Multifaceted Fans.

Casual Users were nearly 10 years older, on average, than Multifaceted Fans, and reported that they only used social media to consume sport for a few reasons: passing the time, entertainment, and information. Members of this segment likely fall into the casual fan category, meaning they may follow a given team due to proximity or because they like a specific player. Furthermore, since this group has an average age of 34, it is possible that social media is not their first choice for consuming sport. Many of the members of this group did not grow up with social media or mobile phones, thus their first instinct may be to watch ESPN or the local news for their sport consumption. While the results do indicate that this group is motivated to use social media for sport consumption, the fact that they only seem to use it for entertainment and informational purposes strengthens the idea that they prefer to consume sport through other media channels.

Overall the results from the Multifaceted Fans and Casual Users support the idea that media users actively seek out those channels that satisfy their needs, which is a staple of uses and gratifications theory (Katz et al., 1974). For the Casual Fans, social media is perfect for passing the time and gathering information about their favorite teams. These are specific needs that Casual Users wish to satisfy, and they believe that social media platforms provide the best satisfaction for those specific needs. On the other hand, Multifaceted Users actively use social media for just about everything: they want information; they interact and socialize with their friends or network connections; they look for good merchandise or ticket deals; and they express their fanship and team support. For them, social media is their primary media channel, and the various functionalities for each platform satisfy their needs better than any other media channel.

## **Narcissism**

This is the first study that has attempted to investigate the relationship between narcissism and social media usage motivation among sport fans. The results indicate no statistically significant relationship. In general, narcissistic tendencies are perceived negatively, which leads to a social desirability aspect with respect to narcissism. In other words, it is possible that respondents in the study did not want to be labeled as narcissistic, so they chose the non-narcissistic response as a way to preserve their reputation or sense of self-worth. Interestingly, Campbell et al. (2002) argue that there is a correlation between narcissists and individuals with high self-esteem, ultimately suggesting that narcissists want to be admired but those with high self-esteem want to be popular. Therefore, the biggest reason narcissists are perceived so negatively is because they aim for that admiration at the expense of others. If this is the case, then it makes sense that those with narcissistic tendencies would not draw attention to those tendencies because it would damage the relationships they build with others, which they use to be admired by others.

Another reason for the lack of correlation between narcissism and social media usage motives lies with the measure itself. As mentioned in Chapter 3, there are only a few narcissism scales that are not clinical in nature, so there are limited options when it comes to choosing an appropriate scale. Further, the NPI-16 claims to be a semantic differential, but it is not scored as such. It is set up more as a dichotomous response scale, and the narcissistic statement is easily distinguishable from the non-narcissistic statement. Thus, respondents can easily differentiate between the two, which could introduce some response bias.

Overall, the results from the current study seem to contradict previous research that links narcissism and social media usage (see Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Panek et al., 2013).

However, previous research from Kauten et al. (2015) argues that narcissism as a construct is difficult to study because it is so complex and tends to be influenced by other constructs like personality, self-esteem, and perception. This idea is further supported through previous research about millennials and social media usage (McKinney et al., 2012), which posits that the amount of time spent on social media is not connected to narcissistic tendencies.

### **Conclusions**

Social media has enjoyed immense growth over the past 10 years (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). Nearly 70% of adults in the U.S. use Facebook despite its continued issues with privacy, according to Perrin and Anderson (2019). In addition, they point out that the younger generation (18-29-year olds) is more likely to use Instagram and Snapchat over Facebook and Twitter. Perhaps most importantly, regardless of age, more than 75% of those who use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat visit the sites daily, and those 18-29 often visit Instagram and Snapchat multiple times a day (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). This high usage rate is important to keep in mind when it comes to social media communication from an organizational perspective, as it indicates that individuals are actively on the platforms, some multiple times a day. Ultimately, organizations have a chance to build their brand on social media and develop the highly coveted consumer-organization bond.

For sport practitioners, the results from the current study shed light on the fact that not all sport fans are using social media for the same reason. While this should be common sense, sport organizations, like many brands, repeatedly push the same content to all their social media platforms, which is known as cross-posting (Tamble, 2018). Cross posting discourages fans from either engaging with the organization on a given platform, or from following the organization on

multiple platforms. There is no incentive for the fans to follow the sport organization on several platforms if the content is exactly the same.

The current study offers insight into which platforms fans prefer and what they use those platforms for when consuming sport. For instance, the low Snapchat usage rate suggests that this is not a popular platform for sport fans. Therefore, sport organizations should consider scaling back their posts on this platform and instead concentrate more on creating unique content for the other three platforms. The fact that an entire group of fans preferring Facebook emerged offers evidence that this platform is still salient for many fans. Sport marketers and social media coordinators should continue to focus on Facebook and create posts that engage fans beyond just clicking the like button. For instance, the social media team for a sport organization could create a scavenger hunt for tickets or team-branded merchandise that also gets the community involved. All the clues would be posted to the team's Facebook page, and fans who locate the item or team personnel must take a picture with that item or person and upload it as a reply to the original post containing the clue. This is a fun way for fans to interact with the team, it forces them to engage more fully on social media, and provides the team with a way to not only strengthen the bond with its fans, but also with the community in which it plays.

In terms of motivation for sport consumption, practitioners should take note that economic motivation was high among the Multifaceted Users. This high motivation may be tied to the rise in fantasy sport participation and the popularity of daily fantasy sites like Draft Kings and Fan Duel. In fact, 61% of fantasy sport participants consume sport online and through social media (Lee, 2018). Many fantasy sport sites require money to participate, so participants for those sites become more invested in the performance of players on their fantasy teams because they are looking to make money. Lee (2018) also notes that Draft Kings has taken advantage of

the power of social media by holding contests for their followers and providing advice and in-depth analysis on players. Fan Duel generates engagement with followers through the use of polls and posts that generate nostalgia among fans (Lee, 2018). Social media practitioners for sport teams could also adopt some of these strategies. Practitioners can use the team's social media platforms to highlight players on the team who are performing well, and perhaps offer incentives of their own (like free merchandise or a chance to meet the highlighted player) for fans who comment on or repost the original post highlighting that specific player's on-field performance. They could also create short polls that ask fans which of the team's players (past or present) should make the all-time fantasy team, which may resonate with fans of all ages.

Social media offers sport organizations a much cheaper marketing and communication option; the platforms are free to use, paying to boost content to followers is relatively cheap, and even creating ads for social media platforms is less expensive than traditional advertising or sponsorship options (Gollin, 2019; Ma, 2018). In fact, according to a Lyfe Marketing blog post (2018), social media is the only media channel that can expose an organization to more than 1,000 people for less than \$3. Plus, fans willingly engage with the organization on these social media platforms. If the goal for sport organizations is to create loyal, life-long fans, then social media is a critical tool in which to do so.

From an academic perspective, the current study adds another avenue to the growing literature on social media usage among sport fans. There has been some headway in this niche area (see Frederick et al., 2012; Stavros et al., 2014), and the current study provides empirical evidence for different social media usage motivations among fans of professional sport. The current study also fills a gap in academic research that Clavio and Kian (2010) bring attention to by focusing on social media usage from the fan perspective. Research from the fan perspective

has been conducted in the past, but researchers need to keep investigating fan usage so we can continue to understand why social media remains popular among all age groups. A third contribution from the current study is the introduction of narcissism to sport social media research. Despite the results, the fact remains that the innately positive self-presentation aspect of social media platforms may enhance the self-aggrandizing nature of some users, and more work is necessary in this area. Finally, this study provides additional empirical support for Seo and Green's (2008) Motivation Scale for Sport Online Consumption, albeit in a social media context.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Like any study, there are several avenues that could be explored in the future. Future researchers should conduct qualitative studies using focus groups or individual interviews to investigate why fans consume sport on social media on a more in-depth level. Unlike surveys, interviews and focus groups give participants ample opportunity to discuss why they prefer specific social media platforms over others, or why they use social media for sport consumption. These qualitative studies can be used to develop new measures that are specific to social media platforms.

Second, future research should consider how the level of fan identification influences social media usage motivation. It is perhaps easy to suggest that the more highly identified fans use social media more often, but future researchers should also be concerned with those who are more casual fans. The focus should be on determining how those casual fans could be motivated to increase their sport consumption on social media, which would benefit not only the sport organization, but also the advertisers and sponsors for the sport organization.

A third area for future study includes studies that examine how usage motivation informs purchase intention with team-branded merchandise and tickets. The current study's results



indicate that economic motivation was high for Multifaceted Users, so it stands to reason that this group of sport consumers would be interested in purchasing team-branded merchandise from the sport organization itself, and perhaps from third-party vendors who partner with the sport organization.

Finally, future research should explore how social media usage motivation differs among other sport fan bases, such as the English Premier League (EPL) or even Olympic sports. It is plausible that EPL fans use social media for different reasons than fans of American professional sports. It is also plausible that sport fans around the world consume sport on social media for similar reasons. Social media provides users with the opportunity to form connections with like-minded individuals around the world, and sport provides the perfect platform to engage with fans from different cultures.

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APPENDIX A  
CONSENT FOR HUMAN PARTICIPATION



UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN  
COLORADO

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Project Title: Give the fans what they want: A market segmentation approach to sport fans' social media usage, team identification, and purchase intention

Researcher: Kerry D. Fischer, School of Sport and Exercise Science, (970) 219-0252

Adviser: Dianna Gray, Ph.D., School of Sport and Exercise Science, (970) 351-1725

Email: kerry.fischer@unco.edu, dianna.gray@unco.edu

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between social media consumption, narcissism, team identification, and purchase intention among fans of professional sport. You are asked to fill out the survey to the best of your ability. The survey instrument is designed to take no longer than 20 minutes to complete, and your responses will help determine if there are unique fan segments based on social media usage, and how level of team identification influences social media usage and purchase intention of team-branded merchandise.

Survey responses will not be linked to individuals, and every effort will be made to protect participant identity. Although it is impossible to guarantee complete anonymity, every attempt will be made to keep information gathered during the survey process as private as possible. Completed online surveys will be accessible only by myself and will be password protected on my personal laptop. Be assured that at no time will individuals other than my research adviser and myself have access to your responses. Data from completed surveys will be kept for a period of three years after which it will be destroyed. By filling out the survey, you are agreeing that the information supplied will appear in any professional report of this research.

Risks to you are minimal. You may initially feel anxious about giving responses dealing with your level of social media usage, perceived narcissism, purchase intention of team merchandise, or team identification, but be assured that at no time will any individual, myself or others, know the identity associated with completed surveys. The benefits to you for completing the survey are that you will be adding to an area of the sport literature that is substantially lacking. Further, you will be given the opportunity to discuss your reasons for identifying with your favorite sport team, and your reasons for using social media to follow sport, and you may learn more about your personal views toward your favorite sport team.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask questions, please complete the questionnaire if you would like to participate in this research. By completing the questionnaire, you will give us permission for your participation. You may keep this form for future reference. If you have any



concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. Once data have been analyzed and reported, feel free to contact the researcher for any findings or implications of the study.

Thank you for your assistance with this research.

APPENDIX B  
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Are you 18 years of age or older?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following social media applications have you used in the past 30 days? Please check all that apply.

- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Twitter
- Instagram
- I do not use social media

Approximately how long (rounded to the nearest year) have you had a social media account(s)? *NOTE: please consider all social media accounts that you currently use in your response.*

- 1 year or less
- 2-4 years
- 5-7 years
- 8-10 years
- 11 years or more

On average, how often do you access (i.e., log in or check) **your social media account(s)**?

- Less than once a week
- 1-3 times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- Daily
- 2 or more times per day

On average, how often do you post content (i.e., status updates, pictures, video) to your own social media account(s)?

- Less than once a week
- 1-3 times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- Daily
- 2 or more times per day

On average, how often do you like, comment, or repost content posted **to another user's social media account(s)**?

- Less than once a week
- 1-3 times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- Daily
- 2 or more times per day

Approximately how long have you been using social media for **sport-related purposes** (i.e., reading about/interacting/following leagues, teams, athletes, sport journalists/professionals, sport news organizations, etc.)?

- 1 year or less
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years or more

For this section, please indicate how often you use **each of the follow social media applications for sport consumption**. For the purpose of this study, sport consumption can be defined as following specific teams, leagues, coaches, and/or athletes; liking, commenting, or reposting content from athletes, teams, or other sport fans; clicking on embedded sport-related story links; and/or checking your news feed(s) for scores and game highlights.

	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	All the time
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which professional sports leagues, or teams from that league, do you follow on social media?  
Please check all that apply

- NFL
- MLS
- NBA
- PGA
- NASCAR
- Professional Tennis (i.e., USTA)
- Minor League Baseball
- International Soccer (i.e., EPL, Serie A, La Liga, etc.)
- NHL
- MLB
- WNBA
- LPGA
- IndyCar
- National Lacrosse League
- Minor League Hockey
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

For this section, please respond to the following items based on your use of social media generally and to follow your favorite professional sport team(s). For example, if you follow your favorite team on Twitter, you post status updates about your favorite team on Facebook, or you "like" your favorite team's posts on Instagram, that would be considered social media use.

*Please indicate your level of agreement for the following items by marking the appropriate response.*









I use social media because I am able to make purchases through links to other online locations (i.e., team's online store, online retailers, online ticketing sites, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

*For this section, please select the statement that best matches your own feelings and beliefs. For example, if the statement, "I like to be the center of attention" more closely resembles how you view yourself rather than "I prefer to blend in with the crowd," you would click on the button next to the "center-of-attention" statement.*

	1	2
I find it easy to manipulate people.: I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think I am a special person.: I am no better or no worse than most people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I always know what I am doing.: Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I expect a great deal from other people.: I like to do things for other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know that I am good because everyone keeps telling me so.: When people compliment me, sometimes I get embarrassed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Everybody likes to hear my stories.: Sometimes I tell good stories.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People always seem to recognize my authority.: Being an authority does not mean that much to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more capable than other people.: There is a lot I can learn from other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to be the center of attention.: I prefer to blend in with the crowd.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am an extraordinary person.: I am much like everyone else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really like to be the center of attention.: It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.: People sometimes believe what I tell them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like having authority over people.: I do not mind following orders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I insist upon getting the respect that is due to me.: I usually get the respect I deserve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am apt to show off if I get the chance.: I try not to be a show-off.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am going to be a great person.: I hope I am going to be successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please answer all items in this section based on the professional sport team you identify as your favorite team.

*Please indicate your level of agreement for the following items by marking the appropriate response.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I display my favorite team's logo on a regular basis (i.e., on clothing, on your vehicle, in your home/office).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see myself as a devoted fan of my favorite team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's important that my favorite team wins.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I regularly root against my favorite team's greatest rival(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During the season, I closely follow my favorite team via any of the following: in person, television, social media, Internet, radio, newspaper.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being a fan of my favorite team is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My friends see me as a devoted fan of my favorite team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Gender neutral
- Prefer not to answer

What is your race?

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- African American
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Multiracial
- Prefer not to answer

What is your highest level of **completed** education?

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some college
- Associate's degree
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral or professional degree (i.e., Ph.D., M.D., J.D., Ed.D., etc.)
- Prefer not to answer

What is your household income?

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



DATE: May 20, 2016

TO: Kerry Fischer

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [910257-1] Give the Fans What They Want: A Market Segmentation Approach to Sport Fans' Social Media Usage, Team Identification, and Purchase Intention

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVAL/VERIFICATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: May 19, 2016

EXPIRATION DATE: May 19, 2020

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB approves this project and verifies its status as EXEMPT according to federal IRB regulations.

**Hello Kerry,**

**I am the reviewer of your IRB application. I would like to congratulate you on submitting such a clear and concise application which made my work quite easy.**

**I am approving your application, but would like to remind you that any emails or announcements made in your recruitment efforts should contain a synopsis of the information contained in your Consent. I hope that your recruiting efforts are productive.**

**Good luck with your research.**

**Sincerely,**

**Nancy White, PhD, IRB Co-Chair**

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records for a duration of 4 years.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry May at 970-351-1910 or [Sherry.May@unco.edu](mailto:Sherry.May@unco.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.