

Examining the Impact of Nostalgic Feelings on Sport Consumer Preferences Towards Team

Apparel

By

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in Health, Sport, and Exercise Sciences and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date Approved: May 14, 2019

## Abstract

Retro marketing has become a heavily relied upon practice by sport marketers (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Many contributed the uptick in retro marketing overall to the fin de siècle effect, which is the concept of “endism.” Scholars suggested people may look more fondly towards their past as they were approaching the end of an era as we did when the 2000’s began (Brown, 2013; Stern, 1992). Despite this assumption, we are now nearly 20 years beyond the turn of the century and marketers continue to heavily implement retro marketing and sport teams are no exception. Although there appears to be a reliance on retro marketing in sport, we have minimal knowledge regarding what emotions these practices elicit or how they impact consumer behavior. The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, the author examined how nostalgic feelings influenced consumer’s feelings and intentions towards their favorite team’s merchandise as well as the author sought to compare how consumers responded to retro and modern merchandise differently.

The author created a model that examined how Cho et al.’s (2017) nostalgic feelings towards a sport team construct influenced perceived value, purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium. A theoretical model was created and tested among two participant pools, one exposed to merchandise with a modern logo and the other containing a retro logo. Data were collected from two fan bases, the Denver Broncos and Houston Rockets with participants (N = 419) completing a survey through Amazon Mechanical Turk where participants were randomly assigned a retro (n = 201) or modern (n = 218) prompt. To analyze these results, Kline’s (2016) two-step approach was utilized on each pool. First, a confirmatory factor analysis was run to test validity and reliability, this process determines if the items loaded correctly on each measure. Second structural equation modeling was conducted to examine the relationships between

variables, test hypotheses, and examine overall model fit. It is important to examine the psychometric properties first through a factor analysis to then refine the model for structural assessment (Kline, 2016).

The results of this study added credence to the importance of nostalgic feelings towards sport merchandise and shed light on many future avenues of research regarding retro marketing in sport. First, the author found that nostalgic feelings led to increased perceived value towards both pieces of merchandise. Additionally, the results demonstrated that as a participants' perceived value increased so did their behavioral intentions towards the shirt, regardless of which t-shirt they were presented. Most interestingly, the author found that nostalgic feelings only led to increased purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium when the participant was presented the retro t-shirt.

Considering how nostalgic feelings may impact consumer behavior is extremely important when examining retro marketing in sport. As nostalgia is often considered a positive emotion, (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Pascal et al., 2002) it should come as no surprised that it increased perceived value in each context. Yet, it appeared to only influence behavioral intentions when the participants were given the retro t-shirt; this was the most novel finding of the study and is extremely important as this may suggest increasing nostalgic feelings of fans may only prove beneficial towards a team's retro merchandise. Other scholars have similarly found that a retro marketing practice may elicit more positive feelings overall than a modern practice (Muehling et al., 2014), but it is important to take this further and examine consumers intentions and behaviors. If nostalgic feelings can prove to be impactful, future researchers should investigate how they influence the many different aspects of retro marketing in sport. This study and framework should be crucial to future research on retro marketing in sport.

## Acknowledgments

Completing a dissertation and earning a Ph.D. was not something I ever considered until my time as a student at KU began. As all accomplishments of this magnitude go, it took a great deal of people to guide, assist, and push me to this point. The first person I would like to thank is Dr. Brian Gordon. You not only opened this door for me, but you made the experience of earning this Ph.D. as smooth as one could imagine. Your belief in me as a master's and then a Ph.D. student instilled a sense a confidence academically that I certainly did not have before. I am incredibly grateful that you brought me on as your first graduate advisee. You have been the best academic role model, advisor, and friend that I could ask for through this process. I am excited to continue my journey in academia with you as a collaborator, likely continued part-time advisor, and friend. Just as much as I will miss the constant encouragement and advice from you, I will also miss the noon ball, Cubs chatter, frisbee golf and time spent outside of academia with you. Again, thank you for making this experience possible for me.

Dr. Jordan Bass, I took this position knowing I would always have two people that had my back and would be there to guide me through this process and I am very grateful that you were there for me during my time at KU. I look forward to our continued friendship, whether it involves popular television shows we watch, fantasy basketball, or of course academic work. Dr. Bernie Kish, I loved having classes with you as a graduate student and from there always enjoyed working with you. Your constant positivity and genuine interest and care for your students was infectious and something I strive to demonstrate as a professional. Dr. Brendan Dwyer, being paired with you for the NASSM student-faculty mentorship program was incredibly beneficial to my academic career. Having a collaboration partner outside of my program was extremely beneficial. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you in the

future. Dr. Bruce Frey, your quantitative insight was extremely important to this project and I cannot forget to mention the importance of you catching my incorrect pronunciation of “homage.” Thank you for your effort towards this project. Dr. Trent Herda, your outside perspective and genuine interest in this project was exceptionally helpful. During my comps and proposal, you asked many questions that helped shape this project and led me to a more successful dissertation, thank you for that.

The HSES department is incredibly fortunate to have great departmental staff that made my experience at KU exceptional. Thank you, Teresa, for your constant willingness to help, regardless of the task that was asked of you, you really are the department’s point person. Gary and Mike thank you for keeping this building upright and always being able to help us GTAs. Kristina and Robin thank you for assisting us as students and instructors, from coordinating our graduation paperwork to dealing with scheduling various gyms for a summer camp you two have made my last year at KU go very smoothly.

Farah, Peyton, and Ollie, it has been an honor working with you all and I am incredibly grateful to have completed this process start to finish with you three. You were all incredibly helpful, each set the bar for success high, and most importantly were a consistent support system for me throughout the program. I am proud to share this graduate class with you all and look forward to our continued friendships. Dominique, Chris, Sarah, Sari, and Ron I am extremely grateful that my time in this program overlapped yours, you each brought a unique perspective and constant encouragement throughout my time at KU, I wish you the best of luck in the future. Claire, Brent, and Jon, thank you for setting a great example for my completion of this program and dissertation, you set the foundation which helped guide and push me. My classmates played

a crucial role in the completion of this dissertation and degree and I am thankful for the great community we had in place at KU.

There were others before my time at KU that deserve my appreciation. First, Mo McAlpine, thank you for being a great boss and mentor while I worked at the UW-La Crosse recreation center. You challenged me and put me in positions of leadership, even when I did not think I was prepared, and you were a big part of my growth as an undergraduate student. Additionally, Will, Spencer, Jake, and Ted thank you for your interest in what I was doing and encouragement throughout my time here at KU. You each have been a large part of my life for a long time now and I am incredibly thankful that you all have stuck by me and helped me get through this process despite the distance. I am grateful to have friends like you in my life.

Additionally, my family also played a large role in this process for me. Mom, Dad, and Celeste, thank you all for encouraging and challenging me throughout my life. You kept me on track and supported me when I doubted myself. Without your love and support I would not have been successful in this endeavor. Last, I need to thank my best friend and partner, Morgan. You became the biggest part of my life at the beginning of this process, and despite that stuck by me throughout. Your continual love and encouragement were incredibly important as I completed this program. I am thankful that you challenged and supported me throughout this process. You helped me make the decision to pursue this degree and were my rock throughout, which has benefited me more than I can explain. I am incredibly grateful that you helped me through this and am so fortunate to have you continuing this journey with me as I take the next step in my career next fall.

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather, Tom Hanson. Although you were not here during my graduate work much of what you instilled in me helped me become who I am today. My memories of you were a constant inspiration and motivation throughout this process. Thank you for being the best role model I could imagine.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

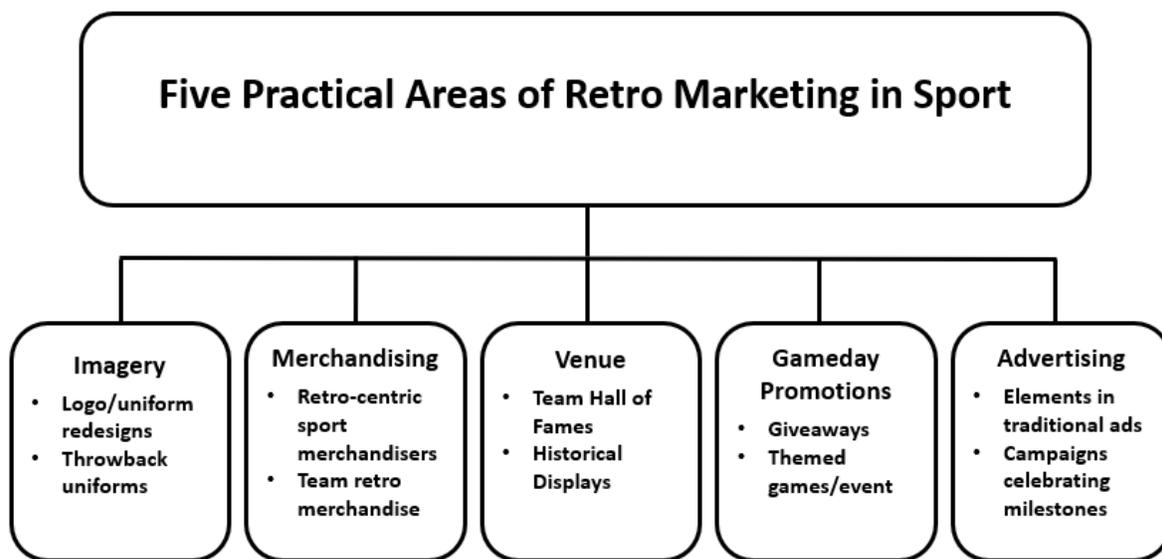
Retro marketing in sport is much more than a passing fad as it has become one of the most prolific marketing practices across all of sport. The Chicago White Sox can be credited as the forefathers of retro marketing, at least intentionally utilizing the practice, with the first ever turn back the clock night in 1990 (Radom, 2015). In North America, professional sport teams and leagues continued to heavily implement retro marketing. In fact, by 2000, all four major professional sport leagues had contracts in place with Mitchell and Ness giving them permission to produce and sell throwback uniforms (Century, 2003). Although scholars thought this retro craze would be a fad associated with the turn of the century (Brown, 2013), the practice continues to persist in sport. For example, for the 2017-2018 NBA season teams were encouraged to create another jersey to wear, and at least seven of the teams put throwback uniforms into their jersey rotation for that season (Burry, 2017). Retro marketing is not only limited to American sport, as there are examples of retro uniforms in the English Premier League (“Premier league kits,” 2017), a hall of fame associated with the Australian Football League (“About the Australian,” n.d.), and statues remembering past greats around many European Football fields (Stride, Wilson, & Thomas, 2013). Despite the prevalence of retro marketing practices in sport, little is understood regarding its execution and effectiveness.

Marketing scholars have examined retro marketing to some extent, primarily examining the practices being utilized and the consumer response to nostalgia. Frequently, nostalgia is the focus of retro marketing research as nostalgia is considered one of the primary emotions evoked from retro marketing practices (Brown, 2013). Brown (1999) defined retro marketing as marketing practices that pay homage to a past era of their brand, while updating the technology and current trends of their product. This is where retro, and nostalgia differ, if one were to

conduct nostalgic marketing, they would recycle a marketing practice from their past, rather than recreating the practices and keeping up with current trends (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Marketing scholars have begun to unearth the impact of retro marketing practices, but they still have a long way to go. In the realm of sport marketing, scholars have investigated retro marketing practices to an even lesser extent.

As sport management is viewed as its own academic discipline, scholars must research topics through this lens (Chalip, 2006). Rather than just applying or assuming the findings from the marketing literature would function with sport consumers, scholars need to investigate retro marketing in context of sport to date, retro marketing in sport has received scant academic attention. In sport marketing research, the primary examination of retro marketing has included retro concepts as a brand association through numerous scales created to measure consumer preferences and associations surrounding a sport team or event (Funk & James, 2006; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross, James, & Vargas, 2006). As with traditional marketing scholars, sport scholars have primarily examined the impact of nostalgia on sport consumers. Nostalgia has been found impactful considering sport heritage (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005), the purpose behind statues around stadiums in the United States and Europe (Seifried & Meyer, 2010; Stride et al., 2013), and even as a motivation for an extreme traveling fan group (Fairley, 2003). In an effort to create sport-centric theory, retro marketing in sport has been given a definition separate from traditional marketing. Scola and Gordon (2018) defined retro marketing in sport as a “strategic sport marketing practice that connects consumers with a former historical era, oftentimes connected to their team or league’s past” (p. 200). Despite focusing on nostalgia as traditional marketing scholars have done, sport provides unique opportunities practically and academically regarding retro marketing practices.

Scola and Gordon (2018) constructed the five areas of retro marketing in sport as an initial step towards understanding retro marketing in sport. The authors used an inductive process which designated five separate areas of marketing where sport marketers were utilizing retro. The five areas included: imagery, merchandising, venue, gameday promotion, and advertising. Imagery included a permanent utilization when teams changed their logo and uniforms paying homage to their past. Imagery also had a temporary usage, where teams wear throwback uniforms or change aspects of their imagery for just one game. Merchandising considered retro merchandisers like Mitchell & Ness, as well as the way in which teams and leagues sell their retro uniforms and memorabilia. Venue had two primary retro utilizations, the first being team hall of fames that allowed fans to learn about the past, and second was historical displays such as banners or statues that pay respect to past great teams and players. Gameday promotions included giveaways and events that were retro-centric, such as a bobble head of a past great player or turn back the clock nights. Advertising considered when sport teams used retro in their advertisements, by featuring past players or events, as well as creating an entire advertising campaign around celebrating the past (Scola & Gordon, 2018).



*Figure 1.* Five Practical Areas of Retro Marketing in Sport (Scola & Gordon, 2018)

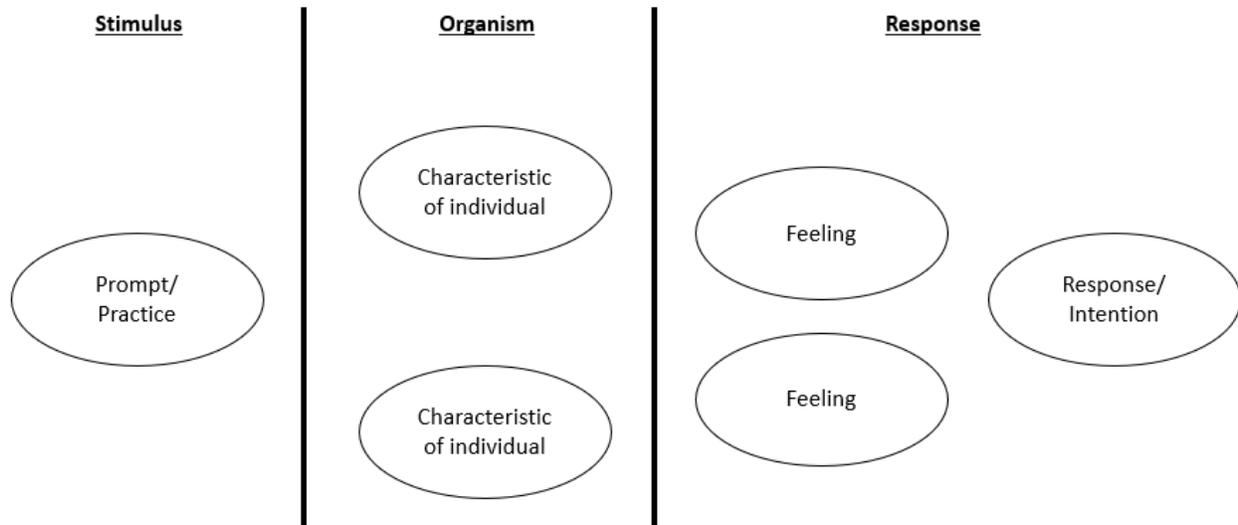
There are many ways in sport that retro has been utilized in recent years which fall within Scola and Gordon's (2018) framework. Examples with imagery include an NBA team the Charlotte Hornets who planned to use a "throwback court" for specific home games during the 2018-2019 season that used past colors and logos (Feldman, 2018) or the Toronto Maple Leafs of the NHL who went through a rebrand in 2016 with their past in mind (Creamer, 2016). As for merchandise, this is prevalent through all leagues offering retro merchandise online (Scola & Gordon, 2018) as well as through the growth and success of Mitchell & Ness which was purchased for 2-million Euro in 2007 by ADIDAS and was sold just nine years later for an undisclosed amount that was in the "low to mid double-digit million-euro range" (Ryan, 2016, para. 12).

Retro marketing with the venue has been apparent through hall of fames and other displays through the stadium and arena. This has even made its way to lower level and minor league teams, as the Fort Wayne Komets of the ECHL (a mid-level professional hockey league in America) raised a banner honoring a long-time minor-league player in 2017 (Leahy, 2017). Utilizing retro for promotions and events has progressed beyond just turnback the clock nights and retro giveaways. An example of this is the Kansas City Royals retro 5k in 2018 which was tied into their celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> season ("Royals Charities 5K," n.d.). Last, regarding advertisements teams and leagues are constantly reflecting on their past in general advertisements and marketing campaigns. For example, the NFL began planning and rumors were leaked regarding their centennial, which kicked off with the 2019 NFL draft (April 2019), two years prior (Porter, 2017). Sport marketing has embraced retro marketing, and little is known about why these practices have become so prominent. To begin to understand the consumer's feelings towards retro marketing practices a theoretical framework must be in place.

## **Theoretical Framework**

To put parameters around this study and develop an understanding of how retro marketing may impact the consumer the author has deemed the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework most appropriate. S-O-R is a well-established framework that considers how an individual may respond to a prompt or stimulus. This framework was proposed by Mehrabian and Russel (1974) and was used to describe a process one may go through when presented some sort of stimulus. The S-O-R framework is discussed in detail in chapter two. A brief understanding of S-O-R refers to each section as, the stimulus or environment is what is presented to an individual, the organism or emotional response are the characteristics associated with the specific person, and the behavioral responses are the feelings elicited or actions in response to the stimuli (Vieira, 2013)

This framework has been utilized to understand consumers and their interaction with retail atmospheres (Sherman, Mathur, & Belk, 1997), as well as online retail atmospheres (Chang, Eckman, & Yan, 2011). This framework has also been utilized to create a framework in an attempt to understand the effects of the atmosphere at major sporting events (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). S-O-R has also been used to try to understand nostalgia in hospitality management (Hunt & Johns, 2013). Past scholars have relied upon this framework to understand consumers in similar contexts. From a marketing perspective, the marketing practice is the stimulus, the consumers characteristics and prior feelings are the organism, and the reaction or intention of the consumer is the response. For the purpose of this study it's important to see the S-O-R framework in marketing practices as this figure shows:



*Figure 2.* Conceptualization of pathway of a consumer's exposure to a marketing practice

This framework guided the process of this study. Past work on retro marketing in sport has looked specifically at one aspect. Scola and Gordon (2018) only examined the stimulus as they created the five practical areas of retro marketing in sport, other scholars have used nostalgia as a brand association but did not isolate it to retro marketing practices (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006). Marketing scholars have given nostalgia a great deal of attention in regard to retro marketing where they have focused on nostalgia proneness (organism) and examined how these individuals may respond to retro practices (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011). This study put together all aspects of the S-O-R framework but primarily examined how consumers may respond differently to retro merchandise than modern merchandise.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Retro marketing in sport has begun to receive academic attention indirectly and minimally, from sport management scholars. Most of which has included nostalgia in brand association scales (Bauer Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler 2008; Gladden & Funk 2002; Ross et al. 2006). Sport management scholars have also determined that nostalgia plays an important role in

various aspects of fandom (Cho, Ramshaw, & Norman, 2014; Fairley, 2003; Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005). There are gaps in the literature regarding what truly is a retro marketing practice in sport, which consumers are more apt to prefer retro marketing, and what behaviors do these consumer display when exposed to a retro practice they prefer.

The first concern has been given some attention with the five practical areas of retro marketing in sport (Scola & Gordon, 2018) with the scholar's categorization and definitions of the practices. Despite that, there is a benefit to comparing the retro practices to modern practices which should further scholars understanding of retro marketing in sport. As for who prefers retro marketing, scholars have noted that those who are more prone to nostalgia respond more effectively to retro marketing (Catteneo & Guerini, 2012; Pascal, Sprott, & Muehling, 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011). Additionally, it was found that age may not be a strong factor in preference of these practices (Merchant & Rose, 2013) and that when tied to memories attached to one's social identity nostalgia may be more impactful (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). Despite the understanding in traditional marketing literature, there is minimal understanding of which consumers prefer retro marketing. As for outcomes, little is understood beyond the idea that nostalgia may connect fans to their favorite teams in a unique way. As mentioned previously, nostalgia may impact tourism (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005) and was found as a motivation for an extreme traveling fan group (Fairley, 2003). The literature should move beyond this and empirically examine specific intentions and behaviors for consumers who are exposed to and prefer retro marketing practices.

To address these gaps in the literature and questions about retro marketing in sport, this study used the S-O-R framework discussed prior to create and test a model that investigated the effectiveness of retro marketing in sport. Since the literature on retro marketing is scant in both

sport and marketing literature this study is vital and regardless of what has been discovered in the marketing literature, this study is vital as sport scholars should build and develop new sport-specific theory (Chalip, 2006; Doherty, 2013). The importance of understanding retro marketing in sport is two-fold, first the heavy usage of retro marketing in sport would suggest marketers are having success with these practices and academic attention should develop an explanation. Second, marketing in sport is unique, as there is a lived history that other consumer-brand relationships cannot capitalize on. This lived history becomes even more important and prevalent when retro marketing is utilized. Therefore, addressing this gap in the literature is imperative. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of nostalgic feelings on sports consumers perceptions of value and likelihood to purchase retro and modern merchandise.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

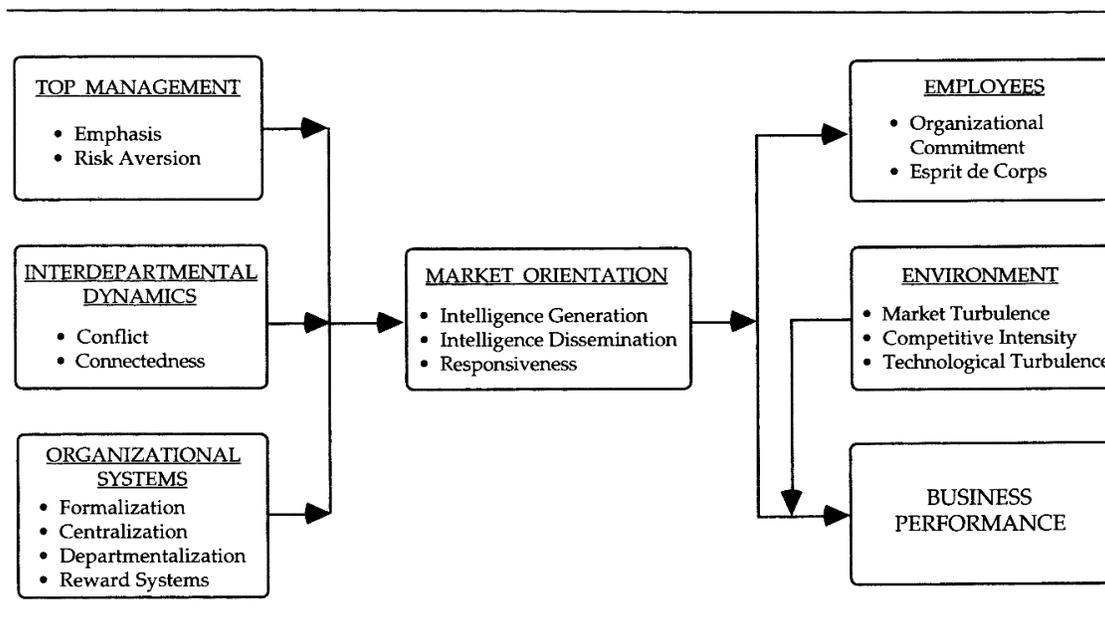
This extended literature review covered topics important to understand in regard to the project at hand. The first two topics created the theoretical framework for this retro marketing in sport project. Market orientation and stimulus-organism-response theories broadly explained, and pin pointed the ways in which marketers can implement retro. Next, the author detailed important concepts regarding the consumer and consumer-brand relationship. Branding, consumer response and emotions, and identity are concepts that help us understand the relationship between the consumer and the position that the brand holds in an individual's life. Last, the author covered the three most relevant areas to these projects. Nostalgia, retro marketing, and the five practical areas of retro marketing in sport by Scola and Gordon (2018). These topics are important to understand as they relate to and help frame these projects.

### Market Orientation

According to Kohli and Jaworski (1990), marketing orientation is a term which can be defined simply as “the implementation of the marketing concept” (p. 1). The scholars described an organization who demonstrates consistency with their marketing concept to be market-oriented. More specifically, market orientation can be defined through three sets of activities:

- (1) organization-wide generation of marketing intelligence pertaining to current and future customer needs, (2) dissemination of the intelligence across departments, and (3) organization-wide responsiveness to it. – response design (i.e., using marketing intelligence to develop plans) and response implementation (i.e., executing such plans) (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993, p. 54).

Scholars have discussed in great detail the impact market orientation may have for an organization as well as what antecedents impact the market orientation. Below is a model created to demonstrate the potential antecedents and outcomes regarding market orientation.



*Figure 3.* Antecedents and Consequences of Market Orientation (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993)

Kohli and Jaworski (1990) broke down the antecedents of market orientation into the three categories, top management, interdepartmental dynamics, and organizational systems. Top management is influential as they shape a great deal of the overall organizations values and orientation (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). Interdepartmental dynamics primarily considers the amount of interdepartmental conflict and connectedness. As there is more interdepartmental conflict there is likely to be less market orientation. With interdepartmental connectedness, it is expected that as these increases, market orientation will improve. Both of these factors were considered to specifically impact intelligence dissemination and responsiveness of the organization (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993).

The last set of antecedents suggested considered structural variables. Specifically, Jaworski and Kohli (1993) considered formalization, centralization, and departmentalization as

three organizational structure variables. Formalization is the extent to how much rules define aspects of the job, centralization considers how few individuals have decisions making power, and departmentalization explains how segmented the staff is through numerous departments (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). These three structural components should lower all three aspects of market orientation. The final antecedent the scholars measured was the reliance on reward systems within the organization. The more employees rely upon market-based factors for evaluations and rewards, the more market orientation should increase on all three aspects (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). The scholars suggested that increasing market orientation should lead to improved employees and business performance.

Furthering the concept, Kohli, Jaworski, and Kumar (1993) created a measurement for market orientation. Through a rigorous scale development process, the scholars developed a measure of market orientation (MARKOR). They segmented their items into question regarding the three areas of market orientation, intelligence generation, intelligence dissemination, and responsiveness (Kohli et al., 1993). This measurement is intended to give to upper management to evaluate the efforts put forth that may impact their organizations market orientation.

Another model was created by Narver and Slater (1990) and broke market orientation into customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination. Customer orientation is the overall landscape of an organization's consumers, or an overall understanding of their purchasers (Narver & Slater, 1990). Competitor orientation is the understanding of their competing organizations and being able to measure themselves against the competition. Inter-functional coordination is "the coordinated utilization of company resources in creating superior value for target customers (Narver & Slater, 1990). Their initial testing of this model was reliable

and valid and suggested market orientation should have a positive effect on an organization's profitability.

Scholars have examined what types of environments may foster market orientation as well. One such study examined if a competitive environment may moderate the market orientation-performance relationship (Slater & Narver, 1994). This study found that a competitive environment was not a moderating factor in the market orientation-performance relationship. Slater and Narver (1994) suggested that market orientation's benefits are long term, therefore they last beyond any short-term moderating environmental impacts. A competitive environment is a short-term environmental aspect that market orientation should be able to outlast and therefore serve additional importance to an organization.

Another environment that marketing scholars have examined regarding market orientation is the impact that an innovative business may have. Hurley and Hult (1998) measured innovativeness with organizations along with their market orientation and found that increased innovativeness lead to greater innovations and cultures that embodied more of a developmental learning atmosphere. Another study examined how technical and administrative innovation, where technical innovations are those regarding products or services and administrative innovation involve changes with the structure and administration process (Han, Kim, & Srivastava, 1998). The scholars found innovation to potentially be a key mediator in the relationship between market orientation and performance (Han et al., 1998).

Ozkaya, Droge, Hult, Calatone, and Ozkaya (2015) examined how orientation, knowledge, competence, and innovation may impact firm performance. In this study, the scholars' broke orientation down into customer and competitor orientation. Uniquely to this study, the scholars considered how customer knowledge and competitor knowledge may impact

the orientation relationship and market-based innovation. Specifically, the scholars found that the market-based innovation mediated customer and competitor knowledge competencies and firm performance (Ozkaya et al., 2015). The scholars suggested based on their findings:

In summary, there are five routes to enhanced market-based innovation: (1) through customer orientation and customer knowledge competence; (2) through customer orientation and competitor knowledge competence; (3) through competitor orientation and competitor knowledge competence; (4) through competitor orientation and customer knowledge competence; and (5) directly from competitor orientation to market-based innovation (p. 315).

Market orientation has many various antecedents and potential outcomes, in many ways though market orientation has been found to impact overall firm performance.

Boukis, Gounaris, and Lings (2017) examined how market orientation may impact brand enactment. Specifically, the scholars examined internal market orientation and its impact. Internal market orientation considers how an organization passes value on to their employees or other internal stakeholders. The results of this study found that organizations which increased employee fit and improved their employees overall brand knowledge positively impacted their internal branding (Boukis et al., 2017). This study suggested that getting employees to “buy in” and align with the promises the organization makes to the customers relies upon the aspects of internal market orientation factors. Beyond the obvious improvements to the work environment that increased internal market orientation may provide, it is also likely that having employees demonstrate the organizations values in a service industry may improve the overall brand image of said organization (Boukis et al., 2017).

Market orientation has been a long-examined factor in the marketing literature, simply examining how well an organization aligns with their own marketing concept (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). Numerous studies have examined the effect market orientation may have on business profitability (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Narver & Slater, 1990), impact on innovative practices (Han et al., 1998; Hurley & Hult, 1998; Ozkaya et al., 2015), and the impact it may have internally on the brand (Boukis et al., 2017). Market orientation relates to retro market practices in sport from the standpoint of how well a team or league is staying true to their brand's appearance (or apparent appearance from consumers). If a team or league has a storied history, based on market orientation it would make sense for this organization to promote more retro marketing practices. Or if a team has a retro marketing practice they hang their hat on, once they set that in place as one of their marketing expectancies, it would be wise to continue to use that retro marketing plan to align with their market orientation. The second piece of the theoretical framework for this project regards the stimulus-organism-response framework and the ways in which it frames the connection between the marketing practices and the consumer.

### **Stimulus-Organism-Response**

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) is a long-standing framework that explains an individual's response to a stimulus (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The seminal work by Mehrabian and Russel (1974) proposed that the type of stimulus and overall state of the individual go through a process that impacts and creates their response. The model of S-O-R is ideal for consumer behavior research when examining how a marketing practice (the stimulus) may be changed.

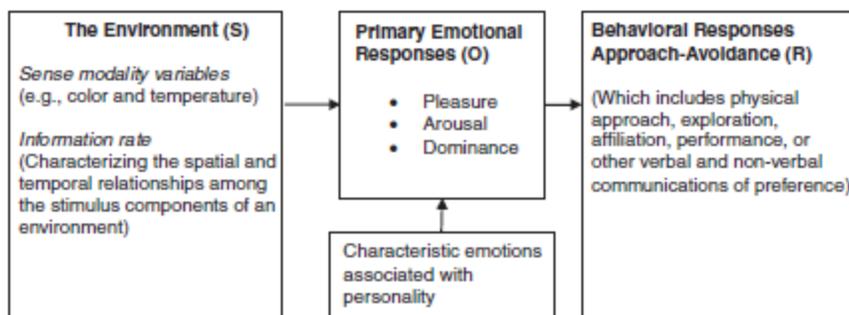


Fig. 1. S-O-R framework Mehrabian and Russell (1974).  
Source: Mehrabian and Russell (1974, p.8).

Figure 4. Mehrabian and Russel's S-O-R Framework (Vieira, 2013)

The environment is considered the stimuli, and this is the variable(s) presented to the individual, which includes the information presented, the room or building one is in, and any other descriptors explaining the stimuli (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The stimuli are the aspects marketers can adjust as they please in an effort to get a different response from the consumer (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001). The organism is the process that intervenes with the stimuli and the individual who then responds (Bagozzi, 1986). The organism was described as the primary emotional responses and Mehrabian & Russell (1974) suggested three main emotional responses, pleasure, arousal, and dominance. Pleasure is correlated with preference, but a slightly different emotion and can be easily self-reported and measured or observed by facial expressions (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Pleasure is simply the feeling initially felt from the stimuli and is then expressed immediately, often through a facial expression like a frown or smile (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Arousal is most frequently evaluated by a verbal report; therefore, it is harder to address or measure than pleasure as it requires the individual to state a response (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Dominance can be measured with body posture and the way in which someone holds themselves and it is independent of pleasure and arousal, the scholars suggested this is reported verbally but using a semantic differential method (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The

emotional response of dominance is impacted by how comfortable or relaxed one feels in their current setting, if their setting is restrictive or formal they may display less dominance, than they would in a more comfortable or open situation (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Last, the behaviors are the response to the stimuli based upon the organism, and these can be approach or avoidance behaviors. This can include a physical response, such as deciding to approach or explore the setting, performance, where an individual's performance improves or suffers, and then communication as an individual can express verbally (or non-verbally) their response to the stimuli (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In consumer based marketing research these are primarily the feelings (positive or negative) toward the stimulus presented to the consumer (Chang et al., 2011).

The S-O-R model from Mehrabian and Russell (1974) has been utilized to examine consumer behavior response in various contexts (Vieira, 2013). Sherman et al. (1997) examined how store environment may impact consumer emotions and the impact this may have on their behaviors. The scholars used the S-O-R model and grouped their variables into each of the three categories. Social factors, overall image, design factors, and ambience factors were all considered stimuli. Second, they examined the organism variables and categorized them as pleasure or arousal, as the seminal work did (Sherman et al., 1997). Last, as they were intercepting customers at time of purchase they were able to measure actual behaviors, and categorized them as response, which included money spent, liking, number of items and time spent (Sherman et al., 1997). The scholars found that the environment in the store along with the emotional state of the consumer may play a role in determinants of purchase behaviors.

Another way that the S-O-R framework has been utilized was to understand the way online retail atmospheres may impact the consumer (Chang et al., 2011; Eroglu et al., 2001). In

this setting a model was developed using online environmental cues as the stimulus, specifically high task relevant and low task relevant cues. High task cues were defined as those which aided and enabled the consumers shopping, whereas low task cues were stimuli that did not aid in the process of online shopping and may prove to be a detractor (Eroglu et al., 2001). Another exploratory study used the S-O-R framework to attempt to understand how the aesthetic experiences, emotional experiences, relational experiences, flow experiences, and interactivity may impact the responses of online shoppers (Chang et al., 2011). The S-O-R frameworks has been an effective tool to measure consumer response in retail, even with virtual consumers shopping.

In the sport context, scholars have used the S-O-R framework to create a conceptual framework to examine the effects of the atmosphere at major sporting events (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). The scholar's framework considered the stimuli to be the volume of the sports stadium and the spectators segments with different characteristics. They used pleasure arousal and dominance as the emotional reactions and the behavioral reactions were grouped to be short-term and long-term (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). What makes these events so unique is that stimuli can be caused by the organizer (lighting, music, event activities), the spectators (chants, crowd activity, etc.) or the game action (scoring, noise on the field, etc.). All of these potential stimuli are impacted by the type of spectator one is, active or passive, frequent or infrequent, VIP or normal (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). Major sporting events have an incredible amount of potential stimuli that can create an immense number of outcomes. The short-term outcomes included participating in behaviors at that event and long-term outcomes included revisiting, becoming more identified, and increased positive word of mouth (Uhrich &

Koenigstorfer, 2009). S-O-R had been considered in consumer behavior research regarding sport as well as in the general retail space.

One last related area that the S-O-R framework has been considered is with nostalgia in hospitality (Hunt & Johns, 2013). They used this framework to describe how nostalgia is frequently attached to positive emotions and positive responses and therefore organizations should work to demonstrate nostalgic materials. In the present study, the author will also manipulate the stimulus to a nostalgic material and see how that impacts the consumer response. Hunt and Johns (2013) suggested that nostalgia may be a powerful element of brand image formation because it elicits many positive emotions which should, based upon the S-O-R model, encourage consumers to demonstrate approach behaviors.

The S-O-R model is an appropriate fit for a project which tested the effectiveness of retro marketing in sport. Changing a marketing practice to be retro changes the stimuli, then there are numerous potential organism characteristics that may impact the consumer, which may lead to many approach or avoidance behaviors.

## **Branding**

While examining retro marketing in sport, the brand plays a vital role. Numerous aspects make up a brand in the traditional marketing and management fields and this becomes even more extensive when considering sport. Aaker (1991) was an academic pioneer behind branding and defined a brand as a:

distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark, or package design)

intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to

differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors (p. 7).

The term brand has come under great examination from marketing scholars. A brand is important to an organization because it creates distinction from any other like products. In sport this is increasingly complex because of the multitude of associations which make up a sport team. The term brand has been extended into numerous important marketing phrases, specifically, brand equity and brand knowledge – which includes brand awareness and brand image (Keller, 1993). There are many aspects of branding to consider in regard to sport teams and leagues, but before diving into sport brands it's important to explain the aspects of branding, beginning with brand equity.

**Brand equity.** Keller (1993) explained that the term brand equity was created to attempt to define the customer and brand relationship. Aaker (1991) stated that brand equity was considered the set of assets and liabilities that were connected to the brand or an aspect of the brand, like its name or symbol. The definition of brand equity has been debated or rather, utilized to mean different things. Feldwick (1996) suggested there were three meanings of brand equity including:

- the total value of a brand as a separable asset – when it is sold, or included on a balance sheet.
- a measure of the strength of consumers' attachment to a brand
- a description of the associations and beliefs the consumer has about the brand (p. 88).

Feldwick (1996) suggested more accurate meanings for each of the three meanings, the first was brand value, second brand strength, third brand description. Brand equity may need to be vague or rather vast in its definition, because no one measure will be able to measure such a crucial concept (Feldwick, 1996). Further Wood (2000) explained one can measure brand equity by the

total value (financial), the measure of the consumers' attachment to a brand, and the association or beliefs the consumer has about the brand.

Scholars have attempted to conceptualize and find ways to measure the concept of brand equity. Aaker (1996) suggested the brand equity ten (price premium, satisfaction/loyalty, perceived quality, leadership, perceived value, brand personality, organizational associations, brand awareness, market share, and price and distribution indices) which he grouped into five types of measures, loyalty, perceived quality/leadership, associations/differentiation, awareness and market behavior measures. Keller (1993) stated:

In a general sense, brand equity is defined in terms of marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand—for example, when certain outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand name that would not occur if the same product or service did not have that name (p. 1).

Further, the scholar suggested that customer-based brand equity has to do with the “differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (Keller, 1993, p. 2). Based upon this definition, Keller (1993) created the customer-based brand equity model, which relies upon the ways in which a consumers' brand knowledge can be impacted.

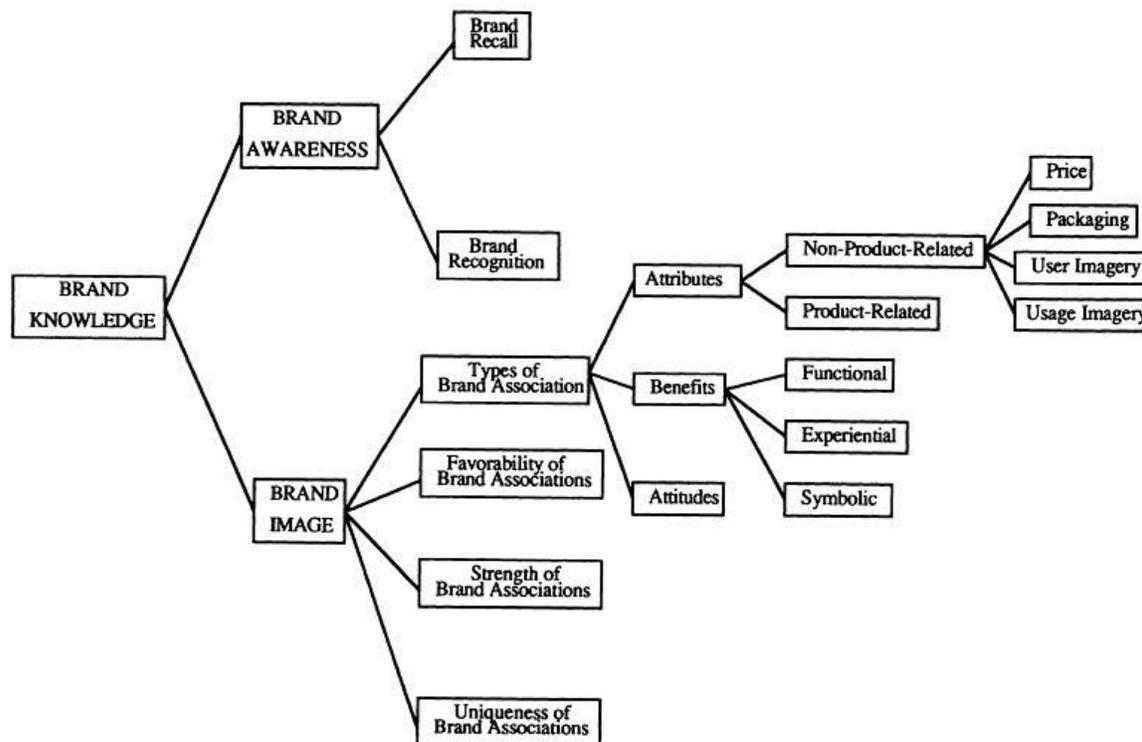


Figure 5. Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993)

**Brand knowledge.** Keller (1993) utilized the “associative network memory model” (Anderson, 1983) to explain the concept of brand knowledge. Anderson (1983), explains semantic memory or knowledge for an individual’s brain to include nodes and links. Nodes contain information and are connected by the links which vary in strength. A “spreading activation” between nodes and links determines the ability and extent of retrieving in memory (Keller, 1993). It is believed that nodes are linked together by associations, and if an idea is highly related to another, they are easier to access, whereas new or abstract ideas are much more difficult to grasp because of the lack of association from other nodes or known information. In Keller’s (1993) Dimensions of Brand Knowledge model, there are two ways in which a consumer can have or garner knowledge about a product and those are brand awareness and brand image.

**Brand awareness.** Keller (1993) broke brand awareness into two areas, brand recognition and brand exposure. Simply put brand recognition is when a consumer can see the brand and then remember prior exposure to the brand via a cue. This type of awareness involves the consumer being able to recognize a brand when an aspect of the brand is cued to them (Keller, 1993). Whereas, brand recall requires the consumer to consider or think about the brand when given a product category. This is a stronger type of brand awareness as the consumer can retrieve the brand without being exposed to a specific brand cue, but rather when prompted with the product category (Keller, 1993). An increased brand awareness can connect a consumer to the product and potentially make them more likely to purchase the product.

**Brand image.** Brand image has been recognized as a concept in marketing for a great deal of time but there have been disagreements on the definition (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) defined brand image as “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory” (p. 4). The brand associations are aspects a consumer remembers about the brand and creates the meaning between the consumer and the specific brand. The extent to which these brand associations impact the consumer, specifically the favorability, strength, and uniqueness they hold in the eyes of the consumer can impact their decision-making processes (Keller, 1993). There are three main areas of brand association according to Keller (1993) including, attributes, benefits, and attitudes.

**Attributes.** The attributes of a brand are the descriptive aspects that help describe and characterize the product or service (Keller, 1993). Keller categorized attributes into product-related and non-product related attributes. Product related attributes are the aspects needed for the product or service to perform, whereas non-product related attributes are the ancillary aspects of the product that impact the purchase or consumption (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) suggested

four areas of non-product related attributes to be price information, packaging or product appearance information, user imagery, and usage imagery. These attributes are the most measurable aspects of a product's brand imagery.

*Benefits.* The benefits, involve what the consumer thinks about the product or service. Specifically, benefits are what a consumer expects to get from a product or service and can be broken into functional benefits, experiential benefits, and symbolic benefits (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) broke down how each of these benefits work and are influenced by different motivations:

Functional benefits are the more intrinsic advantages of product or service consumption and usually correspond to the product-related attributes. These benefits often are linked to fairly basic motivations, such as physiological and safety needs (Maslow 1970), and involve a desire for problem removal or avoidance (Fennell 1978; Rossiter and Percy 1987). Experiential benefits relate to what it feels like to use the product or service and also usually correspond to the product-related attributes. These benefits satisfy experiential needs such as sensory pleasure, variety, and cognitive stimulation. Symbolic benefits are the more extrinsic advantages of product or service consumption. They usually correspond to nonproduct-related attributes and relate to underlying needs for social approval or personal expression and outward-directed self-esteem. Hence, consumers may value the prestige, exclusivity, or fashionability of a brand because of how it relates to their self-concept (Solomon 1983). Symbolic benefits should be especially relevant for socially visible, "badge" products (p. 4).

These benefits are extremely influential in how a consumer views a brand and impact the last type of brand associations.

*Brand attitudes.* This is simply how the consumer evaluates the brand and are vital because they have a lot to do with how the consumer behaves towards the brand (Keller, 1993). These brand attitudes may be related to their beliefs regarding the product-related attributes as well as beliefs about non-product-related attributes (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) discussed how the expectancy-value model views attitudes could explain the attitudes of a consumer:

(1) the salient beliefs a consumer has about the product or service (i.e., the extent to which consumers think the brand has certain attributes or benefits) and (2) the evaluative judgment of those beliefs (i.e., how good or bad it is that the brand has those attributes or benefits) (p. 4-5).

These brand attitudes can be related to the attributes (product and non-product) and benefits (functional, experiential, and symbolic) of the product or services (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) suggested that attitudes are important and often included in similar models because the attributes and benefits are not always easy to specify precisely. Furthering the importance of brand equity, knowledge, and image Underwood, Bond, and Baer (2001) created the social identity—brand equity model. This model brought forth the impact of social identification and service market places, specifically group experiences, history/traditions, physical facility, and rituals on brand knowledge (Underwood et al., 2001). The scholars considered sport as a marketplace to examine with their model because of how fans connect to their teams (Underwood et al., 2001). Branding may be increasingly important in sport as sport fans often have extreme passions about their favorite team's that go beyond a typical product or service (Hoye, Smith, Nicholson, & Stewart, 2015).

**Branding in sport.** The sport management literature has examined brand associations for sport teams and how their branding may impact consumers in great detail. Gladden and Funk (2002) created and tested the Team Association Model, which was made to measure how impactful 16 associations impact team sport consumers. The scholars used Keller's (1993) framework and grouped their associations into the three dimensions, attribute, benefits, and attitudes. Through focus groups and an in-depth literature review the scholars came up with their items (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Under attribute they included: success, head coach, star player, management, stadium, logo design, product delivery, and tradition. For benefits they included: identification, nostalgia, pride in place, escape, and peer group acceptance. Last for attitudes, the scholars selected: importance, knowledge, and affect. Their scale building found support that their 16 associations were distinct and valid (Gladden & Funk, 2002). In their initial investigation the scholars found star player, product delivery, nostalgia, and tradition, to be the four most important brand associations in their sample. Those four associations had mean scores of 5.88 or higher (on a 7-point scale), whereas the bottom four: management (5.05), fan identification (4.85), escape (4.63) and peer acceptance (1.93) were scored a fair amount lower (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Besides peer acceptance all associations scored well above a "moderate" score which would have been 3.5 and what's very interesting is that the top four and bottom four associations included both attributes and benefits, but all three of the attitudes fell somewhere in the middle of their scale (Gladden & Funk, 2002).

Ross et al. (2006) developed a scale to examine brand associations specifically for professional sports. The Team Brand Association Scale (TBAS) contained 11 items: brand mark, rivalry, concessions, social interaction, team history, commitment, organizational attributes, nonplayer personnel, stadium community, team success, and team play. This scale was produced

through free thought lists from participants considering their favorite team and this was one of the strengths the scholars felt made their scale a more appropriate measurement (Ross et al., 2006). Their review found that 8 dimensions had appropriate reliabilities, content validity, discriminant validity, concurrent validity, and construct validity, but felt comfortable keeping all 11 dimensions in their scale (Ross et al., 2006). Further, the TBAS was tested and found to be valid in the collegiate sport setting, by using the scale with season ticket holders of a college hockey team (Ross, Bang, & Lee, 2007).

Another model and assessment considered the ways in which brand image can impact fan loyalty in professional team sport (Bauer et al., 2008). This scale sought to further the prior discussed scales as it differentiated between product-related and non-product-related attributes, brand benefits, and brand attitudes. Additionally, the scale measured if the association was positive or negative with the participants, whereas the past scales just factored in how prominent the association is in their mind (Bauer et al., 2008). The scholars broke their 20 items down by each of the four aspects mentioned: product-related attributes (team, head coach, success, star player, and team performance), non-product-related attributes (logo and club colors, club history and tradition, stadium, fans), brand benefits (identification, peer-group acceptance, escape, socializing, emotions, nostalgia, entertainment), brand attitude (unique, trustworthy, positive, likeable). Specifically, they found that non-product-related attributes scored to be almost three times as important as product related aspects (Bauer et al., 2008). This finding should be extremely beneficial for marketers, as product related attributes are much less in their control than the non-product-related attributes.

Watkins (2014) applied the social identity—brand equity model from Underwood et al. (2001) to the sport context. In this study of NBA fans, it was found that salient group experience,

community group experience, and venue were all positively and significantly correlated with fan identification, which also positively and significantly correlated with brand equity (Watkins, 2014). Understanding ways in which a sport marketer can impact consumers brand equity is of great importance to the field. The service aspects of a sporting event are the ones marketers can control the most and finding that these aspects are influential on brand equity is extremely valuable.

Another way sport scholars have examined brand associations is through their impact of brand loyalty. Kaynak, Salman, and Tatoglu (2008) created a framework linking brand associations and brand loyalty through professional sports. Their conceptual model extended brand associations to consider how they may impact brand loyalty. Another study extended this thought and examined how the development and change of brand associations may impact team loyalty (Kunkel, Doyle, Funk, Du, & McDonald, 2016). The scholars utilized a longitudinal study and tested the fans loyalty at three separate times, each time brand associations explained between 33% and 44% of the consumers brand loyalty (Kunkel et al., 2016). Brand associations being influential on brand loyalty with sport consumers gives credence to the vital importance that brand associations may have to sport marketers.

Branding is extremely valuable in the field of retro marketing, as the distinguishing aspects of an organization, which help define the brand, are frequently utilized in retro marketing practices. Understanding what a brand is and understanding all the aspects that make up an organizations brand is important for this project. Beyond that it is important to understand how sport academics have considered the influence of branding particularly in measuring brand associations consumers have towards their favorite teams, as many past sport marketing scholars

have done. Often sport management scholars have used branding to examine how their consumers feel and act towards various sport products and offerings.

### **Consumer Outcome Variables**

Scholars have relied upon many consumer emotions and intentions to better understand their customers. Although actual behavior would be the most accurate consumer outcome, many intentions and emotions have been found to be effective for understanding the consumers. This project relied heavily on frequently utilized and well understood emotions and intentions as outcomes. Specifically, the model in this study included: perceived value, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay a price premium.

**Perceived value.** Zeithaml (1988) was one of the first scholars to investigate perceived value closely. His research explored the concept of consumer perceived value and found four consumer definitions: “(1) value is low price, (2) value is whatever I want in a product, (3) value is the quality I get for the price I pay, and (4) value is what I get for what I give” (p. 13). These findings demonstrate that perceived value is a complex dimension of consumers. From these definitions, it is apparent that price and the consumers judgements on a specific product compared to other products important in measuring perceived value. Simplifying this concept, Zeithaml (1988) described perceived value as: “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (p. 14). A consumer evaluates a products value most often by their functional aspects, but there are additional values such as the value added to a consumers emotional or social life (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Scholars have argued that perceived value needs to be examined beyond the functional values suggested by Zeithaml (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar,

2001). Five constructs around perceived value have been suggested: functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value (Sheth et al. 1991).

Sheth et al. (1991) defined value primarily as how one views a product or service against the competition, or as they put it an alternative. They defined each area of value succinctly. First, function value which they described as the ability to perform the task necessary for the product or service, essentially the attributes of the product or service (Sheth et al., 1991). Social value was defined as the value a product or service may add to one's social status, potentially the way in which using this product would allow you to be grouped with a certain group of people. The scholars suggested that jewelry or clothing that appeared to be expensive would be a good example of an item had high social value. Emotional value was the way in which a product or service evoked feelings (Sheth et al., 1991). In sport, emotion is often strongly associated with attendance and commitment to one's favorite team. Epistemic value is defined as the way an item or service elicits curiosity, is novel, or satisfies one's need to acquire knowledge. When something is new or unique it can elicit this sort of value (Sheth et. al, 1991). Lastly conditional value which is essentially the value generated based upon the situation and timing of the good or service. Examples in sport would include mega events that change locations often, such as the Super Bowl or NCAA Final Four. When one of these events is in a city it has a great deal of conditional value because it may be considered a "once in a lifetime" event.

Perceived value has been deemed an important emotion and often used as an antecedent to various intentions and behaviors in sport management literature. It has been found to influence behavior in retail (Swait & Sweeney, 2000), willingness to pay a price premium towards popular brands (Netemeyer et al., 2004), and as an influencer on purchase intentions in various settings (Netemeyer et al., 2004; Petrick & Backman, 2002). In the sporting realm, perceived value has

been linked to sport fan attendance at events (Byon, Zhang, & Baker, 2013; Drayer, Shapiro, & Dwyer, 2018) and most directly linked to this study it was found to be influential on purchase intentions of team-licensed apparel (Kwon, Trail, & James, 2007). Additionally, perceived value has been used as a moderator between identification and purchase intentions to examine consumers of pay-per-view combat sports (Shapiro, Reams, & Fung So, 2019). Perceived value was also found influential on sport tourists revisit intentions (Allameh, Pool, Jaberi, Salehzadeh, & Asadi, 2015). Lastly, perceived value has been used as a moderator between service quality and behavioral intentions in the professional basketball setting (Moreno, Prado-Gasco, Hervás, Nunez-Pomar, & Ano Sanz, 2015) and at the FIFA World Cup in Brazil (Biscaia, Correia, Santos, Ross, & Yoshida, 2017). Perceived value has been utilized in many sport management studies and frequently is examined as a moderator between feelings and intentions.

**Purchase intentions.** In place of actual purchasing behavior, one's intention to purchase something is often measured in research. Purchase intention has been utilized to predict actual purchase behavior and frequently has been a reliable indicator (Grewal, Krishnan, Baker, & Robin, 1998). Purchase intentions have been used as an outcome variable in research on sport merchandise (Kwon et al., 2007), nostalgia in advertising (Phau & Marchegiani, 2011), with online apparel purchasing (Park & Stoel, 2005) and frequently as an outcome connected to perceived value (Grewal et al., 1998; Kwon et al., 2007).

Not only is the construct purchase intention heavily relied upon, but also it has been found effective in a plethora of scenarios similar to the study at hand. Prior research has shown that a simple three-item Likert scale is effective to measure purchase intentions (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991; Grewal et al., 1998). Although consumer behavior is the preferred outcome variable, purchase intentions are often relied upon and reported as an acceptable replacement for

behaviors. Despite the reliance on purchase intentions scholars have found that intentions do not always lead to actual behavior (Yoshida, Heere, & Gordon, 2015; Zaharia, Biscaia, Gray, & Stotler, 2016). Therefore, when purchase intentions are utilized they need to be presented as an intention and not a true behavior which creates a research limitation. Purchase intentions have been used as the outcome construct in many sport marketing studies, including: a study which examined willingness to purchase counterfeit sporting goods (Chiu & Leng, 2016), when a model was created examining how emotions of sport fans interacted with behaviors towards sponsor brands (Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, & Maroco, 2013), and when scholars measured how the price of a sporting event impacts consumer's attendance (Drayer et al., 2018). Purchase intention is an outcome variable that has successfully been used in a great deal of sport marketing literature.

**Willingness to pay a price premium.** Another intention variable that is effective in consumer research is willingness to pay a price premium. Netemeyer and colleagues (2004) defined it as: "the amount a customer is willing to pay for his/her preferred brand over comparable/lesser brands of the same package size/quantity" (p. 211). This concept was considered to be one of the most powerful indicators of brand loyalty (Aaker, 1996). Scholars have suggested that a consumer's willingness to pay a price premium was one of the more important characteristics when identifying committed customers (Keller, 1993; Starr & Rubinson, 1978). Despite the importance of this concept, it took scholars substantially longer to address a measurement.

Netemeyer et al. (2004) conceptualized a construct to measure willingness to pay a price premium. Many scholars have utilized specific questions to address willingness to pay a price premium, but few have constructed a sound measure. These scholars created a four-item

measurement that asked questions regarding one's willingness to pay more for a specific brand, what it would take to switch off a brand, and how much more they would be willing to pay for their favorite brand over other brands in the same category (Netemeyer et al., 2004). Sport marketing scholars have not utilized a willingness to pay a price premium construct as a consumer outcome. Although most research involving willingness to pay a price premium has been in non-sport contexts such as food brands (Anselmsson & Bondesson, 2014) and environmentally conscious brands (Bang, Ellinger, Hadjimarcou, & Traichal, 2000; Kang, Stein, Heo, & Lee, 2012), if this construct is important regarding consumer behavior and loyalty (Keller, 1993; Netemeyer et al., 2004) it deserves attention in the sport consumer behavior context.

### **Nostalgia**

Nostalgia is frequently considered regarding retro marketing or branding. Nostalgia plays a pivotal role in retro marketing, but it is important to realize the words are not synonymous (Brown, 2013). As nostalgia is an influential factor regarding retro marketing in sport, the author will examine the topic in great depth, first examining the transformation that the definition of nostalgia has gone through

**Defining nostalgia.** Nostalgia as a term has gone through a number of changes, beginning as a medical term in the 1600s to its current definition of "longing for the past" (Batcho, 2013). Jhoannes Hofer used the term nostalgia to define an aversive medical condition. Nostalgia breaks into two sounds, nostos, "return to the native land" and algos, which signifies suffering or grief (Batcho, 2013). The symptoms associated with this "illness" included sadness, insomnia, fever, weakness, loss of appetite, and cardiac palpitation (Havlena & Holak, 1991). It was claimed that consistent thoughts of an individual's home caused a part of the brain to surge

constantly and created a path where they could move on their own (Batcho, 2013). The cause of nostalgia was considered to be recurring thoughts of home.

Much of the early attention given to nostalgia revolved around soldiers who were away from home. Specifically, nostalgia was associated with Swiss soldiers during the early 1700's, and they accredited it to the increase in atmospheric pressure when they descended from the mountains (Jackson, 1986). In the United States, union doctors during the Civil War reported over 2,500 soldiers with numerous symptoms of nostalgia (Matt, 2007). During the 1800's nostalgia had progressed to a mental disease that presented physical symptoms, but the understanding of mental disorders was minimal (Anderson, 2010; Clarke, 2007). Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century nostalgia was viewed as a psychological disorder, frequently linked to homesickness, but has since progressed to what we know nostalgia to be today.

Today, nostalgia is viewed as a psychological feeling, rather than disorder, of longing for the past (Batcho, 1995; 2013). Nostalgia is considered a common emotion which many people experience, across various demographics (Boym, 2001; Zhou, Sedikides, Wildschut, & Gao, 2008). According to Holbrook (1993), "nostalgia refers to a longing for the past, a yearning for yesterday, or a fondness for possessions and activities associated with days of yore" (p. 245). Batcho (1995) interpreted the dictionary definitions and discusses how the dictionary uses homesickness as a primary meaning of nostalgia:

The American Heritage Dictionary (1972) defines nostalgia as "A longing for things, persons, or situations that are not present" and offers "homesickness" (p. 485) as a second meaning. However, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1974) gives homesickness as the first meaning and "a wistful yearning for something past or irrecoverable" (p. 479) as the

second meaning. Strictly speaking, therefore, nostalgia might occur at any age and does not necessarily imply a rejection of those things, etc. which are present. (p. 132)

Homesickness was a large part of nostalgia when it was considered a medical condition, but Batcho (2013) argued that homesickness and longing for one's past are separate, but related concepts. Wilson (1999) suggested that nostalgia was more complex than homesickness, stating:

Nostalgia is more than "homesickness." Nostalgia refers to the desire for a time and place that may be subjective (e.g., "remember when I felt secure, confident?") or physical ("remember the house we grew up in?" or, "remember the college campus where we were students?").

Further, the scholar discussed how "home" may be hard to define, but that homesickness was in response to missing a concrete aspect of one's past, whether it's their neighborhood, community, or just close friends, but nostalgia may refer to a past that did not even exist (Wilson, 1999). The two words have diverged more in definitions as the new Oxford Dictionary (Stevenson & Lindberg, 2010) defines nostalgia as "a sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past" and homesickness as "a feeling of longing for one's home during a period of absence from it." The dictionary definitions make homesickness appear to be a simpler concept than nostalgia. As nostalgia has transitioned from an illness to a psychological feeling it has distanced itself from the term "homesickness." Current scholars frequently study this phenomenon nostalgia with the simple definition of: longing for the past (Batcho, 2013). Nostalgia has been heavily researched in numerous fields, as well as conceptualized differently by various scholars.

**Research on nostalgia.** Before delving into the fields that have examined nostalgia closely, it is important to understand the ways in which nostalgia has been examined and

considered. There have been two main ways nostalgia has been examined. The first being a complex emotion with multiple components (i.e. Batcho, 1995; Havlena & Holak, 1991, Stern, 1992). Second, is nostalgia as a preference (i.e. Holbrook, 1993; Loveland, Smeesters, & Mandel, 2010; Schindler & Holbrook, 2003). Both of these viewpoints have been studied at great lengths in various fields.

*Nostalgia as an emotion.* Nostalgia has been defined as and examined as an emotion in numerous studies. Typically, nostalgia is described as a positive emotion overall that may be triggered by or slightly accompanied with some negative feelings (i.e. Holak & Havelena, 1991; Stern, 1992; Wildschut, Sedikides, Arndt, & Routledge, 2006). Some scholars have gone as far as to say that nostalgia improves individuals' overall well-being in various ways including: social support (Zhou et al, 2008), self-continuity (Davis, 1979; Wildschut et al., 2006), and increased perceptions of meaning in life (Routledge, Wildschut, Sedikides, Juhl, & Arndt, 2012; Sedikides, Wildschut, Arndt, & Routledge, 2008; Wildschut et al., 2006). Scholars who adhere to the understanding of nostalgia as an emotion align with the definition that nostalgia is a general longing for the past that cannot be reconstrued.

*Nostalgia as a preference.* Another way many scholars have examined nostalgia is as a preference for things from the past (Holbrook, 1993; Holbrook & Schindler, 1989; 1994; Loveland et al., 2010). Specifically, Holbrook (1993) tweaked the definition of nostalgia in his heavily utilized work on nostalgia:

a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favorable affect) towards objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth). (p. 104)

Much of this research has been utilized in the marketing field as scholars attempt to discover the antecedents of nostalgic preference. Examining nostalgia in both senses has garnered a great deal of attention. Scholars have created measurements focused on nostalgia that have become commonly used in a multitude of fields.

*Measurements of nostalgia.* One often utilized measurement is Holbrook's nostalgia index or nostalgia scale (1993; Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). The index originally consisted of 20-items, which asks participants to indicate how much they agree with statements such as: "They don't make 'em like they used to," "We are experiencing a decline in the quality of life," and "Technological change will ensure a brighter future" (reverse coded). These 20-items were cut down to an 8-item scale through vigorous testing (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). Both the 20-item index and 8-item scale are frequently utilized in research regarding nostalgia. Scholars utilizing this scale have found that men are slightly more prone to nostalgia than women (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994), and that nostalgia proneness impacts emotion towards a brand (Merchant & Rose, 2013).

Batcho (1995) created the Nostalgia Inventory, which was an 18-item scale examining individuals' preference for the past. Participants are asked to rate how much they missed 20 different items. Some items were obvious and concrete like family, friends, television shows and others were abstract such as the way society and the way people used to be (Batcho, 1995). Batcho (1995) makes the claim that Holbrook's (1993) nostalgia scale measured historical nostalgia whereas her scale measured personal nostalgia based upon her findings that her subjects did not score differently on Holbrook's scale despite difference on level of personal nostalgia, discovered via her scale.

A third measurement utilized in the nostalgia literature is the Southampton nostalgia scaled (Routledge, Arndt, Sedikies, & Wildschut, 2008). This 5-item scale asks individuals to reflect on how often they experience nostalgia, how prone they are to feel nostalgic, and how important it is to them to be nostalgic. This scale has been used in numerous studies examining how nostalgia may play a role in people's lives. These three scales have been frequently used and somewhat interchangeably to answer questions about how nostalgia impacts individuals.

**Nostalgia in marketing.** Nostalgia has been found to incite both positive and negative emotions from individuals, although Sedikides and colleagues (2008) believed it was more frequently positive than negative. Scholars in the marketing domain have examined nostalgia's impact through advertising (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011), and connection to social identity theory and purchasing behaviors (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). Additionally, nostalgia has been considered with the effectiveness it may have in a brand strategy (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012), and how consumer behavior may vary based on whether or not they demonstrate individualistic or collectivistic nostalgia (Zhao, Li, Teng, & Lu, 2014).

Zhao et al. (2014) described two separate types of nostalgia, individualistic nostalgia which "is self-centered and revolves around one's own personal past" and collectivistic nostalgia which "is relationship-centered and revolves around a shared past time, by-gone era or generation (p. 5). The scholars suggested that collectivistic nostalgia adheres to past scholars' formation of communal, historical, and cultural nostalgia. The findings suggested that individuals with an independent self-concept were more likely to demonstrate individualistic nostalgia, whereas those who have a more interdependent self-concept more often felt collectivistic nostalgia (Zhao et al., 2014). Despite the various types of nostalgic feelings, much of the research has focused on personal nostalgia and how it may impact consumers' behaviors.

Phau and Marchegiani (2011) found that moderate and high levels of exposure to historical nostalgia can evoke positive reactions such as attitude towards the brand and purchase intentions. Pascal and colleagues (2002) found that advertisements that utilized nostalgia produced positive feelings and emotions at the time an individual was exposed to it. The scholars found that advertisements that elicit nostalgic reactions may create more favorable feelings about the brand and could lead to increased likelihood of purchasing the product. When examining the impact of nostalgia on branding strategies there was no significant difference found among any demographics, including age which is often considered, and it was found that nostalgia can only play a role in the branding of a product (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012). It is likely that if a product was just simply revived (fully nostalgic) it would not be up to consumers standards regarding material and technology (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012).

The idea that age may not be a main antecedent to nostalgic proneness was considered early on by Holbrook (1993) and his construction of the nostalgia proneness scale. Merchant & Rose (2013) took this a step further as they tested the ability of “vicarious nostalgia.” Which are feelings of nostalgia about a time before one was born. Specifically, they found that individuals can be exposed to vicarious nostalgia and that it had a positive effect on brand heritage and potentially had a positive impact on brand attitudes (Merchant & Rose, 2013). The concept of vicarious nostalgia is vitally important to marketers because if individuals can feel nostalgic about a time before they were alive, utilizing nostalgia in a marketing plan would not ostracize the younger demographic of their consumer base.

**Nostalgia in sport.** Nostalgia has been considered in sport as an association or construct that plays a role in the consumer brand relationship of sport teams. First, Gladden and Funk (2002) created the Team Association Model, to identify dimension that attributed to creating a

team's brand equity. Using Keller's (1993) framework of consumer-based brand equity the scholars categorized their 16 dimensions into three types of brand associations, including attributes, benefits, and attitudes (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Nostalgia was considered a benefit, that people may receive based upon their connection to their favorite teams and past experiences with the organization. Using an adapted measure from this scale Funk and James (2006) found that nostalgia was an association that was positively related to team allegiance, which is the highest level of psychological connect a fan can achieve with a sport team. Nostalgia may play an important role in connecting fans to their favorite teams and other sport management scholars have continued to consider nostalgia in their branding literature.

In Ross et al.'s (2006) Team Brand Association Scale to measure professional sports and one of their eleven brand associations was "team history." The scholars described team history as: "historical thoughts regarding the team, the history of success, and the history of the team's personnel" (p. 11) and by using the phrase "historical thoughts" the scholars essentially considered nostalgic feelings as a brand association. In a way, the authors combined success and nostalgic feelings about the team together as the team history association had items such as "the most recent championship the team won," "game winning plays in the team's history," and "a specific era in the team's history" (Ross et al., 2006, p. 13). Success and nostalgia are not always tied together, but regarding the Team Brand Association Scale they appear to be combined as a factor.

Bauer et al. (2008) created a model to assess brand image and fan loyalty. The scholars broke their scale up into: product-related brand attributes, non-product-related brand attributes, brand benefits, and brand attitudes. Nostalgia was considered a brand benefit and more specifically an experiential benefit (Bauer et al., 2008), which they defined as benefits which

were “obtained from products that provide sensory and emotional pleasure, variety, or cognitive stimulation” (Bauer et al., 2008, p. 212). Sport management scholars have considered nostalgia, and aspects like nostalgic feelings in numerous scales regarding brand associations. In all of these studies the aspect of nostalgia was examined as a positive benefit that an individual can reap based upon their associations and fandom with the team. Gordon (2013) suggested that nostalgia in sport tourism deserved more academic attention and was the domain of sport tourism that has received the least research. Beyond that, nostalgia has also been found to be a motivating factor to participate in sport consumption.

Ramshaw and Gammon (2005) examined the heritage aspect of sport tourism and they broke sport heritage into four categories, tangible immovable, tangible movable, intangibles and goods and services. The scholars viewed heritage as a broad and encompassing term that oversees and impacts sport tourism (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005). Nostalgia was categorized as an intangible aspect of sport heritage and played a role in why individuals participated in sport tourism. Furthering this idea, Cho et al. (2014) created a conceptual model for nostalgia regarding sport tourism. The scholars claimed sport fan’s nostalgia is distinct from other types of nostalgic feelings towards brands and suggest four classifications for nostalgia in sport tourism, including: experience, socialization, personal identity, and group identity (Cho et al., 2014). Nostalgia as an experience included the symbolization (players, teams, or coaches) and the past memories regarding aspects of the sporting event. As a socialization the scholars considered nostalgia to be profit, sharing information, connecting with friends and other fans. Last, the scholars saw nostalgia as a personal or group identity, where an individual may conform or improve their own identity or improve their group identity through group ritual and norms and

social bonding (Cho et al., 2014). Sport management scholars have considered nostalgia to be influential in the sport consumers behavior literature.

In an in-depth qualitative exploration to understand the motives and behaviors of an extreme fan group that followed their favorite Australian Football League team across the state, with an average travel time of 36 hours each way, nostalgia was found to be the key element of the experience (Fairley, 2003). In fact, Fairley (2003) found five themes having to do with nostalgia, she goes as far to suggest that the travelling group did not care about the poor performance on the field but rather the experience with the group overall, and the most prominent aspect of this group experience was nostalgia. In this group, nostalgia worked as a motivator, outcome, and overall basis for the groups decisions to travel. The scholar discovered that group based nostalgia may play an extremely important role in fan travel behavior (Fairley, 2003). Another way nostalgia has been considered is in regard to the construction of the stadiums and structures around them.

In a study conducted on NFL and MLB stadiums scholars were investigating how nostalgia was utilized through the facilities and determined there were numerous tactics these facilities used to evoke nostalgia in their fans (Seifried & Meyer, 2010). The scholars found that MLB teams used “structural nostalgia” as aspects of the stadiums appeared to be modeled after past eras. Specifically, they spoke about how the Baltimore Orioles Camden Yards focused on features from their past stadium (Seifried & Meyer, 2010). According to Stride et al. (2013) statues of player, managers, and front office personal have been being constructed at a staggering rate over the 20-years leading up to 2012 around English soccer (football) stadiums. They discovered numerous motivations behind the construction of these statues, one of which being to evoke nostalgia from their fans. The scholars believed nostalgia was used as marketing strategy,

allowing fans to reconnect with the teams past and their memories with the organization (Stride et al., 2013). The scholars credit the selection of players from the 50s, 60s, and 70s as a way that teams are trying to tap into their consumers nostalgic feelings, because these players are within living memory, but far enough away that it can evoke nostalgic memories.

Nostalgia has been heavily examined in the sport management literature, whether it be considered an association in scales as Ross et al. (2006) and Gladden and Funk (2002) did or as a factor that impacts fan behavior. Nostalgia plays a prominent role in sport marketing practices and one of the ways it does this is through retro marketing. Retro marketing has been examined extensively in the traditional marketing literature and is a concept which is imperative to understand as it pertains to this project.

### **Retro Marketing**

**Defining retro marketing.** The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines retro as: “relating to, reviving, or being the styles and especially the fashions of the past: fashionably nostalgic or old-fashioned” (retro, n.d.). Stephen Brown (1999) is a marketing scholar who was at the forefront of retro marketing research and early on in his research stated:

The principal difficulty facing students of retro-marketing is its sheer amorphousness. No definitions of retro are extant – “yesterday's tomorrows, today!” is as good as any and marketing's past record on the definitions front suggests that scholarly consensus is unlikely in any event (p. 365).

Despite the lack of clarity behind the definition of retro marketing, Brown (1999) ascertains that there are many different forms of retro marketing in practice. In particular, he described three key categories: repro, retro, and repro-retro. The first, repro was the easiest and most frequently used according to Brown (1999) as it was simply reproducing an old marketing practice, such as

a brand re-airing an old black and white advertisement. Another example would be Pepsi who in 2009 released “throwback” Pepsi and Mountain Dew, made with real sugar. Pepsi made these sodas with cane sugar instead of artificial sugar and repackaged them in cans and bottles with the old imagery on it.

Brown (1999) discusses repro-retro: “involves second helpings of the past, insofar as it revives or reproduces something that traded on nostalgia to start with. Neo-nostalgia, in other words” (p. 365). Repro-retro is the most complex and is according to Brown “nostalgia for nostalgia sake” and gave the example of Grease the musical being on tour during the 1990’s, because it is a new production of a movie that came out in the 1970’s and was set in the 1950’s. So, in other words a “revived revival.” Essentially, any brand or organization who reproduces something that was retro originally. Repro-retro is not as common and is most frequently seen with movie series based in another era and with cars who are reproducing past models (Brown, 1999).

Retro marketing is the one most often considered in sport and the most appropriate for consumers. Brown (1999) defined retro as a combination of old and new, essentially producing a product that connects the consumer to the past, but also uses up to date materials and technology. This is more appropriate because consumers have a certain level of expectation with their products and not meeting their material and technological expectations would have severe negative implications. When Nike released the Air Jordan 1 retro high, in 2017, the shoes have a similar design and pay homage to the Air Jordan 1’s that came out in 1984, but are made with material that is up to date. Rather than re-creating the exact same shoe, the expectation is that Nike used the material which their current consumers expect and are comfortable with. Brown (1999) used the Volkswagen Beetle as an example of retro marketing as well, as the car may

have a similar appearance to its past models and connect the consumer with their past, but it must be up to technologically, which is extremely important for safety regarding vehicles. Retro is likely the most effective form, as it keeps up with consumer's standards, and the one which the author will continue to discuss throughout this project.

When examining retro branding, which has often been used interchangeably or in connection with retro marketing, Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry (2003) broke retro into the 4A's. The 4As of retro were: allegory (brand story), arcadia (idealized brand community), aura (brand essence), and antinomy (brand paradox). The scholars described these aspects of retro marketing as such: allegory consisting of the symbolic stories of the revived brand, arcadia being the utopian sense of past words, aura the presence of a powerful sense of authenticity that original works of art exude, and antimony meaning the scientific and technological progress that is nearly unstoppable and is a root cause for people's desire to return to simpler times. The authors continued to describe how these "brand new, old-fashioned offerings" (Brown et al., 2003, p. 201) are effective because of the distinct aspects they combine, including their ability to be unique and exclusive while combining aspects of the past and connecting to the individual's past.

**The retro "fad."** Brown (2013) was worried that when he began researching retro marketing he had missed the "nostalgia boom" and that by the time he started to publish papers on the phenomenon it would have all but passed him by. Despite his concerns, Brown was happy to see retro marketing was here to stay and had lasted longer than the anticipated nostalgia boom, many scholars associated with the fin de siècle effect (Stern, 1992). Stern (1992) suggested that the fin de siècle effect, or the idea of "endism" where individuals may feel strongly about the end of an era such as the 1900's ending, could explain the increase of nostalgia feelings for consumers and there for the increase in retro marketing focusing on nostalgia. Specifically, the

fin de siècle effect suggested that individuals may feel anxiety about the discontinuity associated with the end of an era (Stern, 1992).

Brown et al. (2003) suggested that retro marketing will continue to be advantageous because “a competitive edge is gained by tapping into the wellsprings of trust and loyalty that consumers hold toward old brands” (p. 29). As the century was ending people may have been looking to the past for security and support as the fin de siècle effect suggest (Stern, 1992) but the obvious success of these retro marketing practices have allowed the practices to withstand the “nostalgia boom” and continue to be a very useful practice in marketing currently (Brown, 2013). Brown (2013) even suggested that retro marketing has brought each element of the marketing mix through the revitalization of various marketing practices. Additionally, Brown (2015) discussed how many new inventions are made to look like things from the past, such as steam engines and mechanical feet, like a horse, or how the first light bulbs were made to look like the flame of a candle. Retro marketing has subtly been around for a very long time, and there was certainly an up-tick in retro marketing practices at the turn of the century, but as Brown (2013) asserted retro marketing is here to stay, in both sport and traditional marketing.

**Research on retro marketing.** When Brown and colleges (2003) examined consumers of both Volkswagen Beetles and Star Wars Episode I – The Phantom Menace, via a netnography, they discovered the four A’s of retro marketing discussed above as well as reasons for retro marketing may be here to stay. The two products the scholars examined are great examples of using of tagging a product with an older name, but bringing the technology up to date. Brown et al. (2003) discussed their findings and described retro brands:

The retro brand is a portal to temporal sanctuary, which admits the community periodically for purposes of renewal and rejuvenations. The retro brand is a creative

anachronism, imaginatively employed by the community as metasocial commentary on the contemporary cultural scene. The preservation and active reconfiguration of a collective (p. 29).

Retro brands, and therefore retro marketing practices, appeared to be influential and effective when examining these two strong brands. But, it has been found that retro can be impactful in other aspects of marketing.

Most frequently, marketing scholars have examined how retro aspects and nostalgic feelings may play a role in advertisements. As mentioned previously Phau and Marchegiani (2011) found that different nostalgic intensity levels in advertising may impact purchase intentions of consumers and this could be explained by the positive feelings consumers associate with nostalgic advertisements (Pascal et al., 2002). Retro advertisements can even have an impact on younger individuals who did not experience the past era being references through the idea of vicarious nostalgia (Merchant & Rose, 2013). Advertisements are one of the easier ways to evoke nostalgia as a product can reproduce a past advertisement or simply implement an aspect of their products past in a current advertisement.

Cattaneo and Guerini (2012) took Brown's (1999) assumption that retro products need to be up to date with aspects of the past to the next level and tested consumers feelings towards revival and retro brands. They found nostalgia was important, but affirmed Brown's idea that the product cannot simply be a revival:

This study has shown that as far as the role and the importance of nostalgic brand associations are concerned, consumers do not seem to consider purchase of a retro brand with respect to a newer alternative based on nostalgic feelings or concepts. Thus, nostalgia alone cannot be the core of a retro branding communication strategy. Rather,

more tangible product specifications and updated features appear to be associated by consumers with retro brands as purchase drivers when compared with newer alternatives (p. 685).

Consumers are responsive to nostalgic aspects of a product, but they need the material and technology to be up to date. A Microsoft Apple consumer may like to buy a desktop computer that has a bright neon screen as they did in the 90's, but would not be okay with a computer that processed at the same speed as they did in the 90's. Another example would be a consumer who likes the old style and logo of Adidas shoes, that consumer would likely not purchase the shoe if the material was the same as it was in the 80's, but rather have an updated shoe that uses the old logo.

Retro marketing has been found to positively impact consumers (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011; Zhao et al., 2014), and more specifically it has been found that individuals with higher levels of nostalgia proneness may be more impacted by retro marketing practices (Merchant & Rose, 2013). The marketing scholars have given retro marketing a great deal of attention, especially examining how nostalgic feelings may impact consumers. Despite the immense attention retro marketing has garnered in the marketing field, it has received scant academic attention in the sport management literature.

**Retro marketing in sport.** Nearly all of the sport research regarding retro marketing has revolved around nostalgia. Sport management scholars have considered nostalgia and team history in various scales (Bauer et al, 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006) and have found it to be an important association with sport fans. Additionally, many sport management scholars have considered nostalgia as a motivating factor in sport consumption and it's been found to be impactful in sport tourism (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005), an extreme traveling fan

club (Fairley, 2003), and a part of the reason behind stadium construction as well as putting up statues (Seifried & Meyer, 2010; Stride et al., 2013). Nostalgia has been found to be an important aspect of numerous marketing practices in sport, but there is little classification of these practices. Scola and Gordon (2018), created the five practical areas of retro marketing in sport through an inductive exploration of retro marketing practices at the highest level of sport. The five areas that formulated through this process included: imagery, merchandising, venue, gameday promotions, and advertising. Next, the author has detailed examples of these five areas of retro marketing in sport.

*Imagery.* The first practical area considered by Scola and Gordon (2018) was imagery, and the authors provided numerous ways in which sport teams had utilized retro marketing in their imagery. Brand imagery is often the first and most important aspect of a brand in the consumers overall perception of the product (Park, Eisingerich, Pol, & Park, 2013), making it a viable avenue for sport marketers to implement retro into their marketing plan. The two ways the authors discussed sport marketers using retro marketing in their imagery was through wearing throwback uniforms and implementing aspects of their past into a jersey and logo redesign. Wearing throwback uniforms is one of the most prevalent ways in which teams displayed retro marketing as the Charlotte Hornets did during the 2017-2018 season as one of the eight teams to unveil a classic edition uniform (Burry, 2017; “Hornets Unveil Classic,” 2018) or as the Indians and White Sox did in 2017 to honor their successful 1917 seasons (Doughty, 2017).

Throwback uniforms go beyond American professional sports, they are utilized internationally and by college sport teams. In 2018 the Kansas State basketball team wore throwback uniforms that flashed back to the uniforms they wore from 1973-1982 (Robinett, 2018) and the Penn State football debuted throwback uniforms which paid homage to their

1980's national championship teams ("College football: Penn State," 2017). In the English Premier league for the 2017-2018 season, the Tottenham Hotspurs altered their logo to resemble the logo they used from 1950 until the early 1980's and Liverpool is featuring an alternate logo that is a throwback to their 2000-2001 season ("Premier league kits," 2017). Implementing throwback uniforms is an easy and heavily utilized practice across sport, whereas the second usage of retro marketing in imagery is a more in-depth process.

The second way teams can use retro marketing through their imagery is when they go through a jersey and logo redesign. Both the Warriors (in 2010) and Timberwolves (in 2017) of the NBA implemented aspects of their past team's imagery when they went through a jersey and logo redesign. The Warriors new logo and jersey went back to the colors from the 1970's team ("Golden State Warriors Unveil New Logo," 2010) and the Timberwolves incorporated aspects of past logos and claimed their new logo "reminisces to the past, while looking ahead to what's to come" (Ratke, 2017, para. 9). The Maple Leafs of the NHL changed their logo in 2017 and not only did they model it after their logo from the 1960's but they were paying respect to their past in the details as the new logo has 17-veins to mark their inaugural season (1917-1918), 31 points to represent the 1931 season when they won the Stanley cup and opened the Old Maple Leaf Gardens, and the top half of the leaf has 13 veins to represent the teams 13 Stanley Cup victory, all of which pays homage to their history and past success (Creamer, 2016). Using retro in a full logo redesign is much more in-depth than having your team wear throwback uniforms, but both are widely used retro marketing tactics in sport. The next practical area involves imagery and jerseys, but from a different point of view

***Merchandising.*** Sport merchandising is an incredibly large business which makes up a great deal of overall merchandising as well as sport revenues (Chi & Kilduff, 2011). The

importance of merchandising in sport makes it reasonable that it is one of the main ways Scola and Gordon (2018) found sport teams and leagues to implement retro marketing practices. Merchandising as a retro practice specifically considers the sale of “throwback” material to consumers (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Teams and leagues sell throwback uniforms online and many have sections of their online retailer sites called throwback, retro, or vintage which allow consumers to buy old styled uniforms of past and current players (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Beyond just teams and leagues promoting the sales of throwback uniforms, companies have been created and strived focusing on selling retro merchandise.

There are many examples of merchandisers who have relied heavily or completely on selling retro material. Two of the most prominent retro merchandisers who rely on sport material are Mitchell & Ness and Ebbets Field Flannels (About us, n.d.; Our story, n.d.). This is a relatively recent trend with these companies, as Mitchell & Ness suggest they made their pivot to be a retro merchandiser around 1985. Despite this, all of the big four professional leagues had a licensing deal with Mitchell & Ness by 2000 (Our story, n.d.). Whereas, Ebbets Field Flannels was created 1988 with the intention to create apparel that is identical to past apparel, striving to make authentic throwbacks (About us, n.d.). As companies have been successful for many years now simply relying on retro merchandise, it should be no surprise that sport teams and leagues implement retro into their merchandising plans.

**Venue.** Scola and Gordon’s (2018) third practical area of retro marketing in sport involved the ways in which a team used aspects of their stadium. They divided this practice into two areas, team hall of fames and historical displays. The first was mentioned because of the high degree to which professional teams had their own team hall of fames. In the NFL it has become a much more common practice for a team to have their own hall of fame to honor past

greats. The Green Bay Packers, who had the first team NFL hall of fame, had their one millionth visitor in 2012 (Belson, 2014). Beyond just having a team hall of fame there are many historical displays that teams utilize to promote their past.

Other historical displays where teams utilize retro marketing include, rings of honor, retired number displayed, and statues of past greats. In 2018, the Indianapolis Colts announced they were going to induct Reggie Wayne as the fifteenth member of their ring of honor (colts.com, 2018) and in 2017 the LA Lakers retired both of the numbers Kobe Bryant wore during his time on the team (Nowell, 2017). Retired numbers and rings of honor are ways in which teams can proudly remember the important players of their past and they are displayed throughout the stadium. Other historical displays include banners commemorating championships or great seasons and statues which allow fans to reflect and remember on prominent players or staff members of their past (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Sport marketers utilize retro marketing through their venue in many ways.

***Gameday promotion.*** The fourth way in which teams utilize retro marketing is through gameday promotions. This dimension broke into two types, gameday giveaways and promotional nights (Scola & Gordon, 2018). The first is very simple, and it involves when a team gives away an item at the game that pays respects to a past team, player, or event. In 2017, the Phillies gave away a Mike Schmidt, past great player, bobble head (Snyder, 2017) and also in 2017 the Milwaukee Bucks gave away a retro shooting shirt at their home opener (Maas, 2017). Beyond creating giveaways that are retro in nature, teams also have retro promotional nights.

Teams implementing retro into their marketing plan by having various types of retro events. In 2017 Sporting Kansas City had a retro night where they wore and sold training tops that resembled their 1998 kits, played 90's music, and tried to make the game feel as if it was

happening in the 1990s (Kovzan, 2017). The retro nights do not have to even relate to the team, in 2016 the Atlanta Hawks had a 90's themed, Nickelodeon night (Pandian, 2015). The Hawks brought featured a bunch of the Nickelodeon themed events and music to the game and despite the night not paying respect to any aspect of their team, they still celebrated the past with this event. Gameday promotions are a versatile way in which sport teams implement retro, this practice is quite unique as at times teams use retro marketing in their promotional plans without it having anything to do with their team.

**Advertising.** Scola and Gordon (2018) identified advertising as the final way in which sport teams implement retro into their marketing plan. The first way is by simply including aspects of a team's past into their normal advertising. The NBA put out an advertisement called "NBA Forever" on TNT which showed highlights of current and former players appearing as if they were playing together to open up their 2011-2012 team (Klopman, 2011). The Phoenix Suns had a twitter campaign called WeArePHX, and one of the many aspects of this plan was promoting their past great players and the teams' connection to the valley (Fincher, 2015). Teams can implement retro into their traditional advertising, but beyond this they can celebrate milestones which in and of itself is retro marketing.

Teams and leagues often celebrate milestones and put together full marketing campaigns around a night or entire season. The Kansas City Royals celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> season in 2018 and they put together numerous campaigns to celebrate, including a fan vote for the all-time team and celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> season on multiple weekends at their ballpark (Royals 50<sup>th</sup> season, n.d.). In 2015 the Pac-12 conference celebrated 100-years as a college conference with a website dedicated to celebrating and remembering past Pac-12 greats (100 years of champions, n.d.). In 2017 the NHL celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> year of existence (NHL Public Relations, 2016) with

various campaigns and celebration throughout the season. Celebrating milestones throughout a year or season is a regularly utilized way that sport teams implement retro marketing.

Retro marketing is heavily relied upon in sport and despite the consideration nostalgia has received in the sport management literature, there has been minimal attention given to the specific retro practices in sport. Scola and Gordon (2018) categorized many of these practices, but the impact that these practices have on consumers have been yet to be empirically tested. To further understand retro marketing in sport the last section of this literature review will discuss each of the five practical areas.

### **The Five Practical Areas of Retro Marketing in Sport**

Scola and Gordon (2018) presented a categorization of retro marketing practices in sport and examples of these five areas (imagery, merchandise, venue, promotion, and advertising) were discussed above. What is also important for this project is to understand, in greater detail each of the five areas and how they have been examined in sport. This section will give a bit of background behind the framework of each of the five practical areas and delve into the ways in which sport has examined each topic.

**Imagery.** The concept of brand image dates to the 1950s (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990) and has become commonplace in consumer behavior research. According to Dobni and Zinkham (1990), the phrase brand image has been overused and in a sense lost some of its meaning. Keller (1993) defined brand image as “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory” (p. 4). Dobni and Zinkham (1990) found five various aspects of brand image that were being examined differently by scholars, including the brand name usage, the formal definitions of brand image, the components that make up brand image, the instruments used to measure it, and the origin or creation of brand image. Despite the lack of

clarity on what brand imagery may be, scholars are aware that brand marks are increasingly important as the brain remembers shapes first and most easily as with words the brain must decode the meaning (Wheeler, 2009).

Marketing scholars have discovered brand imagery to be extremely important to the consumer's overall perception and opinion of brands and it is at a much deeper level than just having an easily recognizable or unique brand logo (Park et al., 2013). The scholars found that having a brand that was quickly recalled did not always correlate with the consumers' willingness to build their relationship with the brand. Additionally, they found it was important for a brand logo to convey the brand's benefits and be visually appealing (Park et al., 2013), specifically scholars have found that the visual shape of a logo can impact the consumers judgment of the brand (Zhu & Argo, 2013; Jiang, Gorn, Galli, Chattopadhyay, 2015). This may be increasingly important in sport, where the imagery will be utilized on the team's jerseys, venue, and advertisements.

Sport marketing scholars have considered imagery frequently in their research, specifically when developing scales and models to examine brand associations. Gladden and Funk (2001) examined how numerous brand associations impacted consumer's brand loyalty, one of which was logo design – “use of corporate logo and marks to establish and reinforce an image” (p. 73). Furthering their brand association scale, the scholars tested logo design and their items asked about how much the consumer liked their favorite team's logo, colors and uniforms (Gladden & Funk, 2002). They considered logo design an attribute and was found to be a significant and positive construct (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Another study took Gladden and Funks (2002) brand association scale and found that logo design was one of the eleven associations that were also vital to fan's association of leagues (Kunkel, Funk, & King, 2014).

Ross et al. (2006) also considered the imagery to be an important association to measure when examining sport teams and fans. They called this construct brand mark – “Thoughts regarding the identifying marks such as the logo, symbol, and the colors” (p. 11). This construct was found to be a significant association in development of the TBAS (Ross et al., 2006). Imagery is an important construct in the sport management literature and will be influential in future retro marketing in sport research.

**Merchandising.** O’Reilly, Foster, Murray, & Shimizu (2015) described sport merchandise as “any tangible product that can be purchased by consumers...this includes jerseys, hats, bobble heads, bumper stickers, t-shirts, flags, towels, and much more” (p. 310). Merchandising in sport dates to the early 1900’s when it was primarily focused on equipment (Masteralexis, Barr, Hums, 2015). According to Chi and Kilduff (2011), sportswear sales were estimated to be 61 billion in the U.S. in 2005 and they made up about 28% of total apparel consumption in the U.S. Teams and league make a great deal of their money off merchandise (Liu, 2011), and this may be due in part to the multitude of options teams have to merchandise. Sport teams can sell numerous products, including team jerseys, hats, t-shirts, sport specific equipment, and even smaller branded merchandise like lanyards, license plates, or coffee mugs.

Considering merchandise and the sport consumer Derbaix, Decrop, and Cabossart (2002) qualitatively explored why soccer (football) fans in Europe purchased their team’s merchandise. They found that fans could express their identification by wearing team branded scarves, shirts, hats, and other merchandise (Derbaix et al., 2002). Furthering this exploration, Kwak and Kang (2009) found that self and team image congruence and perceived quality played important roles in a sport fans purchase intentions. Which the scholars suggested means that sport consumers are making these purchases for the symbolic meaning, echoing the findings that sport merchandise

can be a way for sport fans to demonstrate their identification (Derbaix et al., 2002; Kwak & Kang, 2009). Further, attempting to understand what motivates fans to purchase team merchandise scholars found that attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, role behavior, and past behavior explained a significant portion of purchase intention of a teams licensed merchandise. The strongest predictor of purchase intentions was found to be past behavior (Kim & James, 2016). The avenues for merchandising in sport are vast and sport management scholars have been giving it ample attention.

**Venue.** The physical space that an organization offers in the service industry can be very influential on the consumers (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994) and for sport teams the physical space falls within their venue. An early example of the business literature's consideration of the impact of venue is from Bitner (1992) and her examination of how "servicescapes" impact consumer and employee's feelings towards the organization. Servicescapes are viewed as the way in which the physical setting is constructed and the physical setting is often not considered as important as other organizational variables that impact consumers or employees (Bitner, 1992). Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) suggested that leisure services (sporting event, resorts, amusement parks, etc.) had a greater reliance on servicescapes than functional services (dry-cleaners, clinics, schools, etc.). Additionally, they explained that the more time consumers spend at the service, the more important the servicescapes qualities would be (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994).

When examined in retail and restaurant settings it has been found that servicescapes have a major impact on the perceived quality. Specifically, scholars found that servicescapes may have a direct and indirect impact on perceived quality, meaning it cued expected perceived quality as well as, impacted multiple factors that influenced the consumers opinion of the

perceived quality (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005). Reflecting on their past research Wakefield and Blodgett (2016) suggested that servicescapes in leisure setting have become even more important for marketers as consumers now spend more money on these leisure activities. With the rising cost of attending sporting events (Brown, 2014), and the increase in leisure activities by consumers (Wakefield & Blodgett, 2016), the venue is an important marketable construct for sport teams and events.

The venue can play an integral role in shaping attendees perceptions of the team's brand (Boyle & Magnusson, 2007). For some teams their facility is one of the main attractions for fans to attend a game (i.e. Wrigley Field, Madison Square Garden) (Watkins, 2014). When constructing the TBAS Ross et al. (2006) included stadium community which considered the way a consumer thought about their team's home stadium and surrounding community. Boyle and Magnusson (2007) suggested that a fan's identity with the team may be impacted by the stadium stating:

Leveraging a team's physical facility into greater social identification for the fan is contingent on how strongly the facility is integrated into the organization's brand identity and the degree to which attributes of the facility allow for group identity formation. (p. 502)

This comment was supported by Watkins (2014) who found venue to be one of the potential antecedents to fan identification, which was in-turn a significant antecedent of brand equity. A venue can play a large part in sport marketers plans and teams and leagues have utilized retro marketing practices in or through their venues in multiple ways.

**Gameday promotion.** Of the four P's of marketing, promotion may be the broadest, so much in fact that scholars have given promotion its own specific marketing mix (Mela, Gupta, &

Lahmann, 1997; van Waterschoot & van den Bulte, 1992). These authors have made a “promotion mix” which includes: product promotion, price promotion, distribution promotion, mass communication promotion, personal communication promotion, and publicity promotion. Non-price promotions have been found to reduce consumers price sensitivity over time (Mela et al., 1997). In a study examining grocery store consumers, it was found that shoppers who utilized price and non-price promotions had many overlapping motivations (Reid, Thompson, Mavondo, & Brunso, 2015). Additionally, these authors suggested consumers who are prone to both price and non-price promotion may feel financially constrained, but with their overlapping motivations, non-price promotions may be equally effective (Reid et al., 2015). Promotions can take many forms, and has been found to be effective by general marketing scholars.

In sport, scholars have found that gameday promotions have a positive impact on consumer behaviors. MacDonald and Rascher (2000) found that MLB promotions had a significant impact on attendance, but did have a watering down effect if there were too many promotions. Another study found that giveaways and fan appreciate nights had a positive effect on attendance in the American Hockey League, whereas price promotions had a negative impact (Paul, Weinbach & Robbins, 2013). Mondello and Gordon (2015) found that NBA fans may be motivated to attend games for specific giveaways, one of their participants went as far as saying he intentionally selected which games to attend based on their giveaways. Gameday promotions have been found to positively impact sport consumer’s attendance and for retro marketing in sport these practices include any of the aspects of the promotion mix utilizing retro marketing and pertaining to a game or event hosted by the team.

**Advertising.** According to Wheeler (2009), advertising is “influence, information, persuasion, communication and dramatization. It is also an art and a science, determining new

ways to create a relationship between the consumer and the product” (p. 162). Advertising messages can create awareness, but it also can go much deeper. In one examination of how the various aspects of the marketing mix impacted consumers view of brand equity, it was discovered that high advertising spending was positively related to high brand equity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). Specifically, the scholars found that advertising spending was positively related to perceived quality, brand loyalty, and brand association/awareness (Yoo et al., 2000). Franses and Vriens (2004) found that most advertising may be most effectively increasing consumer awareness, rather than creating repeat purchases or impacting decisions. Advertising can take many forms, and has been found to be an effective aspect of the marketing mix and influential on consumers. Numerous teams and leagues are incorporating retro marketing into their advertising campaigns and traditional advertisements.

Fullerton (2017) considers advertising to be important in sport marketing because it is the most readily available form of promotion for a team. The correct advertising message in sport can communicate information about the team, develop or change its image, create an association of emotions, and eventually precipitate behavior of consumers (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014). Bennett, Ferreira, Siders, Tsuji, and Cianfrone (2006) found that television advertisements were most effective to provide information to consumers and that advertisements placed on the playing surface irritated consumers, which impacted their attitude towards other virtual advertisements. Pyun and James (2009) developed a scale to measure beliefs about advertising through sport, and included the following constructs: product information, social role and image, hedonism/pleasure, annoyance/irritation, good for the economy, materialism, falsity/no sense. The scholars suggested how advertising through sport has been found to be more favorable than traditional advertising, and therefore may need a specific model to understand the consumers.

Advertising in sport is very impactful and retro has been implemented into many sport marketing advertising plans.

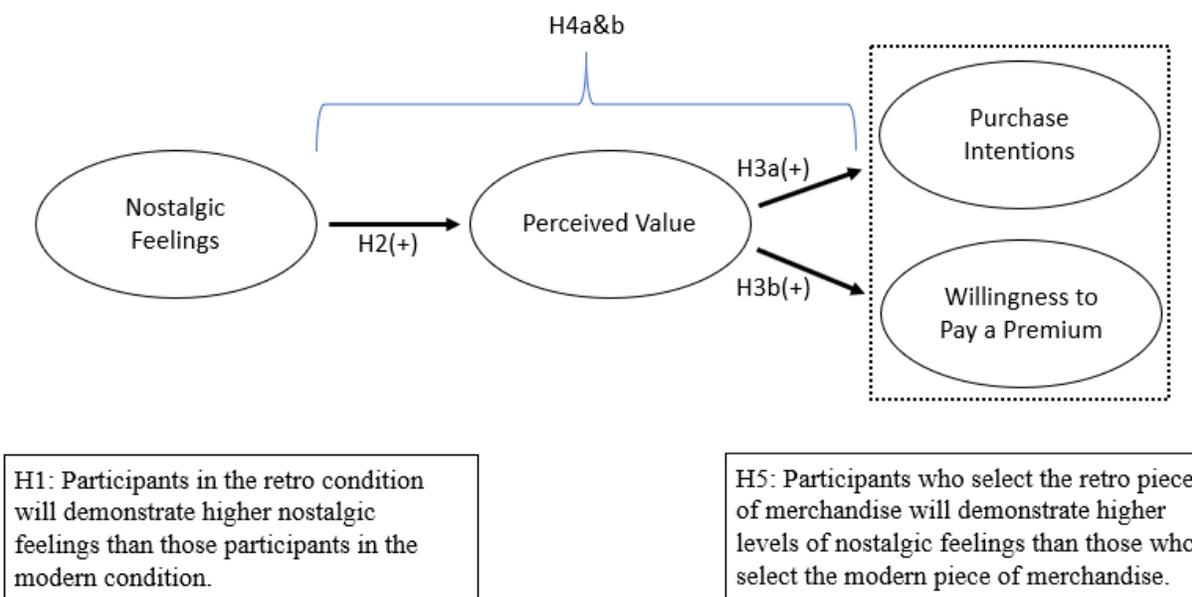


Figure 6. Model to Test Hypotheses

### Hypotheses Development

As the purpose of this study was to examine the connection between nostalgic feelings and consumer behaviors towards retro merchandise, the following hypotheses have been developed. It has been suggested that nostalgia may play a strong role in brand formation (Hunt & Johns, 2013) and has been considered an important brand association in relationship to sport teams (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Bauer et al., 2008). Phau and Marchegiani (2011) discovered that consumers exposed to nostalgia can evoke positive emotions towards the brand. Frequently, nostalgia proneness has been examined and it has been found that people can vary in their susceptibility to feeling nostalgic (Holbrook, 1993). Nostalgic proneness is measured as a characteristic rather than an emotion, which may limit its usefulness in consumer behavior research.

For this study, the author has deemed Cho, Lee, Moore, Norman, and Ramshaw (2017) construct which measures an individual's nostalgic feelings towards a sport team. As Scola and Gordon (in press) discovered from discussions with sport marketers, nostalgia may play a vital role in the success of retro marketing practices, in this instance retro merchandise. It has been well documented that retro marketing has a positive impact on consumer feelings and behaviors (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011; Zhao et al., 2014). One of the primary reasons relied up on involves the consumers nostalgic feelings towards the product (Pascal, et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011). In sport marketing literature, nostalgia and team history are constantly utilized as an important brand association (Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006). Given the previous research on nostalgic feelings the following hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Participants in the retro condition will demonstrate higher nostalgic feelings than those participants in the modern condition.

As previously mentioned, nostalgia has been found to positively impact consumers' feelings towards products through advertisements (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011), may impact purchasing behavior (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007), and even play the strongest role in motivating individuals who participate in an extreme traveling fan group (Fairley, 2003). Scholars have demonstrated that nostalgia can impact behaviors, but it is important to take an in-depth examination on why these behaviors change. When considering the relationship between perceived value and nostalgic feelings, one should consider the five domains of perceived value: functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value (Sheth et al., 1991).

Creating nostalgic feelings could potentially impact one's emotional value of a product and even their epistemic value. Scola and Gordon (in press) found that sport marketers thought their retro products could appear unique to those who did not experience the time, giving these products a sense of novelty. Based upon the dimensions of perceived value, theoretically there could be a strong relationship between perceived value and nostalgic feelings. Perceived value has been found to connect with other emotions, most frequently team identification (Kwon et al., 2007; Drayer et al., 2018). Based upon the findings in sport management research which demonstrate perceived value as an effective antecedent for behaviors and the potential cohesion between nostalgic feelings and perceived value the second hypothesis formed:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There will be a significant, positive relationship between nostalgic feelings and perceived value.

In the sport management literature perceived value has been utilized as an antecedent to consumers behaviors and intentions. Eggert and Ulaga (2002) suggested perceived value should be examined with consumers differently than satisfaction as they are separate constructs. Perceived value has been found to positively impact consumers purchase intentions of sport team merchandise (Kwak & Kang, 2009) and with casual sportswear (Chi & Kilduff, 2011). Perceived value was also found to be an antecedent to one's willingness to pay a price premium in a study that examined 16 different brands (Netemeyer et al., 2004). With merchandise, the value created by the product theoretically should impact the potential customer's feeling and intentions towards the merchandise.

Perceived value has been attached to outcome variables in consumer behavior research in numerous settings. Both purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium have been connected to perceived value and deemed appropriate constructs in predicting consumer

behavior (Grewal et al., 1998; Kwon et al., 2007; Netemeyer et al., 2004). Perceived value is simply described as “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14) and this definition alone would suggest that perceived value should impact consumer intentions such as purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium. Based on the fact that perceived value has been found to positively impact numerous brands, has been connected to the outcome variables in question, and most aligned with this study found to influence intentions towards team-branded sport merchandise (Kwon et al., 2007) the author has created the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There will be a significant, positive relationship between perceived value and the consumer outcome constructs:

H3a: Purchase intentions

H3b: Willingness to pay a price premium

More specifically, Kwon et al. (2007) found that perceived value mediated the positive relationship between team identification and purchase intentions. In Netemeyer et al.’s (2004) study, they used perceived value as an antecedent to willingness to pay a price premium but did not consider variables before perceived value to consider perceived value as a potential mediator between two factors. As perceived value is essentially the value of a product or service after considering alternatives (Sheth et al., 1991; Zeithaml, 1988) it should be examined with consumer feelings and emotions. Additionally, finding appropriate outcomes attached to perceived value can add to the sport management literature.

As for how these constructs fall with-in the S-O-R framework, both are a part of the response section. When examining retro marketing practices and consumer behavior, responses

are the dimension that are the most telling regarding how consumers interact with a stimulus (Scola & Gordon, 2018), in this instance the piece of merchandise. Despite both being a response, perceived value comes before behaviors and intentions based up on the definition (Zeithaml, 1988) as well as how it has operated in numerous marketing and sport management studies. Purchase intentions are heavily relied up by marketing and sport management scholars as a reliable replacement for actual behavior (Kwon et al., 2007). Willingness to pay a price premium has primarily been examined as an outcome with consumers of environmentally friendly or organic products. For the purpose of this study, these two constructs will be the primary outcomes in the model, and based on their relationship with perceived value and other emotions, the author developed this hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Perceived value will mediate the relationship between nostalgic feelings and

the consumer outcome constructs:

H4a: Purchase intentions

H4b: Willingness to pay a price premium

The last outcome the author is examining is an actual behavior where the participant had the option to enter a drawing for a piece of retro or modern merchandise. Theoretically, those who demonstrate more nostalgic feelings should be more drawn to the retro t-shirt and therefore be more likely to select it for the drawing. Nostalgia, in short, is defined as “longing for the past” (Batcho, 2013), if one feels nostalgic and longs for the past it would not be surprising to see them, in that moment, prefer the logo from their past.

Sierra and McQuitty (2007) found that one’s social identity may play a powerful role in the impact of nostalgic feelings. Sport fandom has been connected with one’s improved psychological well-being, based on the connection with like-minded fans (Wann Melnick,

Russell, & Pease, 2001; Wann, 2006). Additionally, scholars have suggested sport may be one of the best avenues for utilizing nostalgia (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). Considering that social interaction strongly impacts nostalgia (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007) and one's fandom (Wann et al., 2001; Wann, 2006) the author hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Participants who select the retro piece of merchandise will demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings than those who select the modern piece of merchandise.

### **Chapter III: Methods**

The previous chapter introduced many theoretical and empirical models and findings to explain the success of retro marketing. Most of these models work with traditional marketing or simply consider retro as a brand association. This study used quantitative measures to examine the effectiveness of retro merchandise on sport fans. Quantitative measures were deemed most appropriate as testing the proposed model will be the best way to answer the hypotheses above. Two fan bases who have a large market and prominent retro jersey were selected as the author sought to answer these hypotheses with a robust sample.

#### **Procedure**

The purpose of this study was to measure the relationships nostalgic feelings and behavioral intentions for fans of the Houston Rockets and Denver Broncos. More specifically, the author created two participant pools, one will be exposed to a piece of retro merchandise and the other to the same piece of merchandise but with a modern logo on it. This allowed the author to see if there is a preference for retro merchandise as well as examine if certain characteristics influenced behavioral intentions towards retro merchandise. Participants in the Houston and Denver area were recruited through Amazon MTurk and asked if they would be interested in participating in a branding survey on the Houston Rockets or Denver Broncos. Each MTurk user who attempted to participate was required to correctly identify the Rocket's or Bronco's current logo and the retro logo that was utilized in the survey among other team's logos. Those who correctly identify the logos and stated they were a fan of the Rockets or Broncos moved on to take the survey, those who did not were thanked for their time and not allowed to take the survey. At the end of the survey, participants were asked if they rather take part in a raffle for a retro Rockets/Broncos jersey or a modern Rockets/Broncos jersey and then asked for their email

to be entered into the raffle. Both the Denver and Houston survey had over 200 participants which allowed the author to have sufficient numbers in both the retro ( $n = 201$ ) and modern ( $n = 218$ ) pools.

### **Measurement**

All participants were exposed to the same 21-item survey, the only difference was the piece of merchandise to which they were exposed. Participants were randomly exposed to either the modern or retro merchandise of the Broncos or Rockets, which makes up the stimulus portion of the S-O-R framework. Next, the participants were asked the survey questions addressing the following variables (see Table 1 for details on each construct).

**Demographics.** For this study the author measured five demographic characteristics. Race/ethnicity, gender, and household income were all be measured using multiple choice options. Whereas, age and length of time as a fan were measured with an open-ended question. Demographic characteristics were examined individually to see how they may impact the behaviors and intentions of the consumers.

**Sport team nostalgic feelings.** Cho et al. (2017) created a sport tourist nostalgia scale that measured what dimensions created individual's pleasant feelings of the past. Specifically, they examined the sport team, environment, socialization, personal identity, and group identity as catalysts for nostalgic feelings. For the purpose of this study the author utilized four of five items which examined the feelings evoked by a sport team and edited the questions to examine if nostalgic feelings are elicited from exposure to their favorite team's merchandise. An item asking about how a fan's memories of a past coach was inadvertently withdrawn from the survey. Cho et al. (2017) utilized Menor and Roth's two-stage approach to develop scales to assure validity and reliability. Through this process they cut their initial 69 items to a 29-item

scale once it was purified and tested for construct and criterion validity. Their finalized created constructs had AVE scores ranging from .762 to .855.

**Customer perceived value.** Perceived value was utilized as a response variable and last portion of the S-O-R framework. The study used a three-item survey which asks the participant to evaluate the value of an item or service based upon a set price (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002). Each item was evaluated on a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). Eggert and Ulaga (2002) created this scale followed Churchill's (1979) and Nunnally's (1978) advice measuring all their constructs on multi-item scales. The purpose creating this scale was to distinguish customer perceived value from customer satisfaction. The scholars found this three-item scale to be valid and reliable. Specifically, using the Fornell-Larcker (1981) criterion the scholars found discriminant validity between perceived value and satisfaction (.68) and they found a good fit with their mediated impact model ( $\lambda^2/df = 1.68$ ; GFI = 0.96; AGFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.048).

**Purchase intention.** The purchase intention scale is frequently utilized in sport management work and this three-item scale evaluates how likely the consumer would be to purchase an item based on the price set in the survey (Kwon et al., 2007). This scale is in place of actual purchase behavior as that is often hard to come by. The items are evaluated on a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). This scale was utilized by Grewal et al. (1998) and exhibited good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .92$ ). This three-item scale was utilized as one of the primary outcome variables in this study.

**Willingness to pay a price premium.** Netemeyer et al. (2004) utilized a scale which evaluated how willing consumers would be to pay a price premium for specific brands. This four-item scale has three items which are measured on a 1-7 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree;

7 = strongly agree) which ask how willing they would be to pay more for a specific brand. The last item asks consumers to address how much more they would be willing to pay and was also converted into a Likert scaled item (I would be willing to pay \_\_\_ more, 0% - 31%+). Willingness to pay a price premium was one of the factors Netemeyer et al. (2004) considered vital to examining customer-based brand equity. The scholars used various rigorous scale development procedures across 16 different brands and found their measures to have internal consistency and validity. When examining internal consistency and discriminant validity, the authors found all reliability estimates to be above the suggested cut-off (.75) and all but one of their AVE estimates was above the suggested cut-off (.50) suggesting high internal validity. For the purpose of this study, the three questions were slightly altered to ask the consumer how willing they are to pay a price premium for the piece of merchandise they are exposed to. One question was removed because it asked how much of a price increase it would take to “switch brands” and this item was not appropriate for this context regarding consumers and their favorite team.

**Retro or modern choice.** The last question of the survey asked participants if they would like to enter our raffle for a t-shirt. They were asked to select if they rather have the modern or retro t-shirt (same logos as the two prompts) for the raffle. Therefore, the participants were put in a position where they had to make an actual decision and can be considered a behavior. This allowed the author to see if there's a preference for retro overall as well as which characteristics may lead to a retro preference.

Table 1

*Survey constructs, items and definitions*

Construct & Items	Scale, Authors & Definition
<p>Nostalgic feelings</p> <p>My pleasant feelings of the past are evoked by</p> <hr/> <p>1. Remembering my favorite athletes.</p> <p>2. my favorite team from the past.</p> <p>3. a particular player with a good reputation.</p> <p>4. a particular team with a good reputation.</p>	<p><u>Nostalgia Scale for Sport Tourism (NSST) (Cho et al., 2017) - Sport Team Nostalgia Measure</u></p> <p>The scale was developed to measure sport tourist's feelings of nostalgia.</p> <p>“nostalgia as sport team factor focuses on athletes and teams” (p. 8).</p>
<p>Customer perceived value</p> <p>5. Compared to the price we pay, we get reasonable quality.</p> <p>6. Compared to the quality we get, we pay a reasonable price.</p> <p>7. The purchasing relationship delivers us superior net-value.</p>	<p><u>Customer Perceived Value (Eggert et al., 2002)</u></p> <p>Perceived value was defined as “the multiple benefits and sacrifices of a supplier's offering, as perceived by key decision-makers in the customer's organization, and taking into consideration the available alternative suppliers' offerings in a specific situation” (p. 110).</p>
<p>Purchase intentions</p> <p>8. I would purchase the item.</p> <p>9. I would consider buying the item at the price listed.</p> <p>10. The probability that I would consider buying is high.</p>	<p><u>Purchase Intentions scale (Kwon et al., 2007)</u></p> <p>Purchase intentions are frequently used as an indication of actual behavior and is oftentimes effective in doing so (Grewal et al., 1998). Consumer's purchase intentions have effectively been used in sport management research utilized perceived value as an antecedent (Kwon et al., 2007).</p>
<p>Willingness to pay a price premium</p> <p>11. I am willing to pay a higher price for products of this brand than other brands.</p> <p>12. I am willing to pay a lot more for this brand than other brands in this category.</p> <p>13. I am willing to pay ____ % more for (Brand name) brand over other brands of (product category).</p>	<p><u>WTP Scale (Netemeyer et al, 2004)</u></p> <p>Willingness to pay a price premium is defined as the amount a customer is willing to pay for his/her preferred brand over comparable/lesser brands of the same package size/quantity. It is one of the strongest indicators of brand loyalty and may be the most reasonable summary measure of overall brand equity (p. 211).</p>

## **Sample Recruitment and Demographics**

For this study the author geographically, targeted individuals in Texas and Colorado through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). This system is described by Amazon as an on-demand work force and has been utilized as a successful way to recruit participants for academic studies. Scholars have found credibility with this method. Specifically, MTurk participants have been found to be more attentive than college student participants (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016), and MTurk was considered a better way to find a diverse pool in comparison to a college campus (Casler, Bicket, & Hackett, 2013). Additionally, when utilized correctly MTurk may be one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to discover a specific, yet representative participant pool (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). As these participants sign up and are paid for their time there were precautions in place to be sure the participants are knowledgeable fans and not just people trying to take the study to earn money.

Sport management scholars have successfully utilized MTurk for participant recruitment in various contexts. Kim, Overton, Hull, and Choi (2018) used MTurk to recruit MLB fans and examine their feeling of perceived fit between the team and their corporate social responsibility initiatives. Another study examined fan's perceptions of cause-related marketing of their hometown team across NFL teams (Nichols, Cobbs, & Raska, 2016). Dwyer, Greenhalgh, and LeCrom (2016) also used MTurk to recruit general sport fans as they compared niche and mainstream sport spectators. Amazon MTurk has been found reliable for participant recruitment and relied upon in many sport management contexts.

The only requirements for participation was being a fan of the Houston Rockets or Denver Broncos and having knowledge about the current and retro logo that were used in the survey. At the start of the Qualtrics survey if the Broncos/Rockets were their favorite NFL/NBA

team as well as identify the current logo and retro logo utilized in the surveys among numerous logos from other teams. Individuals who correctly answer these questions were moved on to the survey and those who did not were thanked for their time and not allowed to participate.

Each survey had a retro and modern prompt that Qualtrics randomly, but evenly, distributed to participants. In the Colorado sample (asking about the Broncos merchandise) 291 individuals began the survey and 213 completed the survey, meaning 78 participants did not finish because they either did not identify as fans of the Broncos, could not correctly select the Broncos logos, or did not answer the attention check questions correctly. As for the Texas sample, 463 individuals began the survey and 207 completed it, meaning 256 did not complete the study. This number is large but is not alarming as a vast majority of them were not allowed to take the survey as they did not identify as a Houston Rockets fans, likely due to the two additional NBA teams in the Texas market. Once all surveys were collected, they were separated into their appropriate pools, retro and modern prompt. In total, 202 participants completed the survey with a retro prompt and 218 completed the survey with a modern prompt. After cleaning the data, one survey was eliminated from the retro pool which left the author with retro (N = 201) and modern (N = 218).

The demographic data was collected and compiled for each pool separately. Of the 201 participants in the retro pool 102 (50.7%) were female and 99 (49.3%) were male. Participants were asked to identify their race, 156 (77.6%) chose White, 15 (7.5%) Black or African American, 1 (.5%) American Indian or Alaska Native, 14 (7%) Asian, and 15 (7.5%) choose other. 77.1% of participants fell within the ranges of 18 and 39 years old (n = 155), 20.4% of participants were between 40 and 59 (n = 41), and 5 individuals who completed the survey were 60 years or older (2.5%).

Within the modern pool (N = 218) there was also a balanced segmentation in regard to gender. Within this sample 52.8% identified as male (n = 115) and 47.2% identified as female (n = 103). Participants again primarily identified as White, as 170 (78%) selected white, 17 (7.8%) Black or African American, 3 (1.4%) American Indians or Alaska Native, 12 (5.5%) Asian, 16 (7.3%) other. Again, the sample was primarily between the ages of 18 and 39, as 74.8% of participants fell within these ages, 47 individuals (21.6%) were between 40 and 59, and 8 (3.7%) were 60 or older.

### **Analysis**

Upon completion of data collection and once missing data was addressed, structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized to test hypotheses two, three, and four. The author used Kline's (2016) two-step approach for a examining a hybrid model, which includes conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and SEM. A hybrid model is considered one which has both measurement and structural components (Kline, 2016). The CFA is the first step and the purpose of this was to further the validation process, this step examines the measurement model making sure that the items loaded correctly on each measure. The second step is SEM, which included examining the model fit for both the retro and modern participant groups as well as the regression paths within the model (Kline, 2016). It is important to examine the measurement model first to test psychometric properties of the model and search for poor validity or reliability, this process allows the author to redefine the measurement model before the structural component of the model is assessed (Kline, 2016).

The two participant pools were analyzed measured separately. That is, there was a group exposed to the retro merchandise as well as a group exposed to the modern merchandise. This allowed the author to analysis which type of merchandise elicits more nostalgic feelings and if

specific characteristics influence fans preference when exposed to retro or modern merchandise. Once each participant pool was analyzed and the model was tested for each condition, the author was able to address these hypotheses.

To address hypotheses one and five, the author ran one-way analysis of variances (ANOVAs). To test hypothesis one, all participants ( $N = 419$ ) were grouped by which pool they were put in, retro ( $n = 201$ ) or modern ( $n = 218$ ). Then mean nostalgic feeling scores were computed for each group and the variance between groups compared. To examine hypothesis five, an ANOVA was run with all participants that grouped them by which piece of merchandise they selected, retro ( $n = 233$ ) and modern ( $n = 186$ ). Each group's mean nostalgic feeling score was computed and the variance between the groups was compared.

## Chapter IV: Results

As the purpose of this study was to test a model and examine significant relationships within the model the author will analyze the data throughout this chapter. First, the author details the assessment of the model. The fit indices were calculated for both conditions, the retro prompt (N = 201) and modern prompt (N = 218) and used to address the fit, reliability, and validity in for the model. Second, the hypotheses were tested using statistical software packages. The first section addresses the overall assessment of the model.

### Assessment of the Model

The model was tested using both participant pools; therefore, the assessment of the fit and testing of each hypothesis was run twice. The author followed Kline's (2016) two step approach to assess model fit. First, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is run to assess the measurement model and second a structural equation model (SEM) is conducted to examine the model with the hypotheses linear paths included. Through a CFA using R Studio 3.52, the author assessed the psychometric properties of the model under each condition. The fit indices demonstrated that the model had an acceptable fit within the modern pool ( $\chi^2/df = 2.00$ , CFI = .963, NNFI = .951, RMSEA = .068, SRMR = .044). All indices besides RMSEA indicated a good model fit according to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). With an N < 250 and total items between twelve and thirty, the CFI and NNFI values should each be greater than .95 and the SRMR score should be less than .10 for a model to demonstrate good fit (Hair et al., 2006). The  $\chi^2/df$  score should be below 3.0 for good fit (Kline, 2016). The RMSEA score of .068 is considered "adequate" (.05 > x > .08) (Hair et al., 2006).

Additionally, to address construct validity, average variance extracted (AVE) scores were calculated for each construct in the model. All constructs AVE scores exceeded the .50 threshold

(Hair et al., 2006), except for the nostalgic feelings construct (.48 AVE). Kline (2016) suggested that the composite reliability (CR) may be the preferred factor measurement when using multiple samples, and all constructs in the modern pool had a composite reliability (.79 - .93) greater than the suggested .70 cut-off (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) (see Table 2 for all CR and AVE scores). Following the guidelines from Fornell and Larcker (1981) discriminant validity was tested by examining if the AVE score of each construct was greater than the squared correlation between the examined construct and all other constructs in the model (see Table 3 for the correlation matrix). The only constructs that did not show good discriminant validity in the modern pool were perceived value and purchase intentions as the correlation matrix demonstrates. Further, to address convergent validity the factor loadings of each item on the construct were examined, in the modern condition all items loaded above the threshold for a “fair” convergent validity of .45 (Comrey & Lee, 1992) and many loaded above the preferred cut-off of .70 (Hair et al., 2006) (.54-.94) (see Table 2 for factor loadings). This suggested all items addressed their construct appropriately. With the exception of the low AVE on nostalgic feelings the model indices fit was very good and demonstrated good enough fit to move forward with the hypotheses testing.

When testing the model with participants in the retro pool, acceptable fit was again discovered, ( $\chi^2/df = 3.76$ , CFI = .927, NNFI = .904, RMSEA = .095, SRMR = .051). The CFI and NNFI fell short of the “good” fit cut-off, but both were greater than .90 and are considered acceptable. The RMSEA score of .095 was also too high for an “adequate” fit but considered an acceptable fit with other factors in place (Hair et al., 2006). The  $\chi^2/df$  score of 3.76 was not low enough to meet good fit but was low enough to be an “acceptable” fit (Kline, 2016). The SRMR value was measured below .10 which would indicate a good fit. In the retro merchandise pool all

AVE scores for the four constructs were greater than the .50 cut-off (Hair et al., 2006).

Additionally, all composite reliability scores (.81 - .92) were again greater than the .70 suggested minimum (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) (see Table 2 for all CR and AVE scores).

To examine the construct validity, the squared correlation between each of the constructs was compared to the individual construct's AVE (see Table 3 for the correlation matrix). With the retro pool, all AVE scores were greater than the squared correlation, therefore demonstrating discriminant validity across all constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, to examine convergent validity the factor loadings of each item on the construct were examined, in the retro condition many items loaded above Hair et al.'s preferred .70 cut-off, but all loaded well above .45 which has been considered a fair indicator of the construct (Comrey & Lee, 1992) (.65-.92) (see Table 2 for factor loadings). The retro pool demonstrated good fit indices overall, leading to effective validity and reliability which allowed the author to move forward to test the model's hypotheses.

Table 2

*Survey Items, and Psychometric Properties*

Construct	Item	Retro Pool (n = 201)			Modern Pool (n = 218)			
		$\lambda$	CR	AVE	$\lambda$	CR	AVE	
<b>Nostalgic feelings</b>			.81	.52		.79	.48	
My pleasant feelings of the past are evoked by:								
1.	Remembering my favorite Rockets/Broncos players.	.79			.79			
2.	My favorite Rockets/Broncos team from the past.	.69			.74			
3.	A particular Rockets/Broncos player with a good reputation.	.65			.68			
4.	A particular Rockets/Broncos team with a good reputation.	.74			.54			
<b>Customer perceived value</b>			.84	.63		.80	.58	
5.	Compared to the price we pay, we get reasonable quality.	.83			.81			
6.	Compared to the quality we get, we pay a reasonable price.	.88			.82			
7.	The purchasing relationship delivers us superior net-value.	.66			.63			
<b>Purchase intentions</b>			.92	.79		.93	.81	
8.	I would purchase the item.	.92			.94			
9.	I would consider buying the item at the price listed.	.83			.90			
10.	The probability that I would consider buying is high.	.91			.86			
<b>Willingness to pay a price premium</b>			.84	.64		.80	.58	
11.	I am willing to pay a higher price for Rockets products than for other non-Rockets products.	.83			.86			
12.	I am willing to pay a lot more for Rockets gear than I would for other brands in this category.	.88			.82			
13.	I am willing to pay ____% more for Rockets merchandise over other types of merchandise.	.67			.57			
Fit indices								
	$\chi^2$ (df)		164.92(59)			118.10(59)		
	$\chi^2$ /df		3.76			2.00		
	CFI		.927			.963		
	NNFI		.904			.951		
	RMSEA		.095			.068		
	SRMR		.051			.044		

Note. SD = standard deviation; CR = construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics, Correlation Matrix, and AVE*

Construct	Mean	SD	Correlation matrix ( $\Phi$ ): Retro pool			
			1	2	3	4
1. Nostalgic Feelings	5.32	1.04	<b>.52</b>	xx	xx	Xx
2. Perceived Value	4.77	1.06	.15	<b>.63</b>	xx	Xx
3. Purchase Intentions	5.13	1.28	.17	.36	<b>.79</b>	Xx
4. Willingness to Pay	4.13	1.40	.19	.32	.31	<b>.64</b>

Construct	Mean	SD	Correlation matrix ( $\Phi$ ): Modern pool			
			1	2	3	4
1. Nostalgic Feelings	5.13	1.02	<b>.48</b>	xx	xx	xx
2. Perceived Value	4.80	.979	.31	<b>.58</b>	xx	xx
3. Purchase Intentions	4.99	1.47	.19	.62	<b>.81</b>	Xx
4. Willingness to Pay	4.28	1.41	.19	.53	.38	<b>.58</b>

*Note.* SD = standard deviation. Means and SDs were calculated using SPSS 25 software; The correlations were calculated using R 3.5.2 software. The AVE value for each construct is shown in boldface italic on the diagonal. All correlations were statistically significant at the .01 level

### Testing Hypotheses

Since the model fit was deemed appropriate for each condition, the author moved forward with testing the hypotheses. As mentioned previously, Kline's (2016) two stage process was utilized whereas a CFA should be first run to assess the model and constructs validity and reliability and second a SEM is run to examine the relationships between the constructs and test hypotheses. To assess the relationships of the hypotheses and examine the overall model, the author ran the full model running an SEM. Since model modifications were not necessary (i.e. no items were dropped) fit indices were the same as they were in the initial CFA.

Hypotheses one and five were examined with the whole sample together and hypotheses two, three, and four were examined separately considering the retro and modern conditions individually. In this section the methods used to test each hypothesis will be explained, the results will be reported, and the decision to accept or reject will be detailed (see Table 7 to examine all hypotheses acceptance/rejection discussions). The hypotheses tested were:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Participants in the retro condition will demonstrate higher nostalgic feelings than those participants in the modern condition.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There will be a significant, positive relationship between nostalgic feelings and perceived value.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There will be a significant, positive relationship between perceived value and the consumer outcome constructs:

H3a: Purchase intentions

H3b: Willingness to pay a price premium

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Perceived value will mediate the relationship between nostalgic feelings and the consumer outcome constructs:

H4a: Purchase intentions

H4b: Willingness to pay a price premium

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Participants who select the retro piece of merchandise will demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings than those who select the modern piece of merchandise.

The first hypothesis was tested by comparing the mean nostalgic feeling scores of participants in each condition separately. A one-way ANOVA was run in SPSS and it showed that although the mean nostalgic feeling score of retro participants was higher than those in the modern group (Retro  $M$ : 5.32, Modern  $M$ : 5.13) this difference was not significant. There was a non-significant effect of the logo participants were exposed to on their nostalgic feelings in either participant pool [ $F(1, 417) = 3.622, p = .058$ ]. As there were only two conditions no post-hoc analysis was necessary. Therefore, hypothesis one was rejected.

Utilizing hypothesis two the author examined the relationship between nostalgic feelings and perceived value in both conditions. This was tested using SEM, which examined all the relationships between the latent variables using the statistical software R 3.5.2. Under both conditions, nostalgic feelings had a significant positive relationship with perceived value (retro condition  $\beta = .386; p < .01$ ) (modern condition  $\beta = .563; p < .01$ ). Based on the positive and significant relationship between nostalgic feelings and perceived value hypothesis two was accepted for both conditions (see Tables 4 and 5 for direct effects between variables in each condition).

Table 4

*Hypothesis Testing: Direct Effects – Modern Pool*

	Path	Standardized path coefficient
H2M	Nostalgic feelings → Perceived value	.563**
H3Ma	Perceived value → Purchase intentions	.794**
H3Mb	Perceived value → Willingness to pay	.707**
H4Ma	Nostalgic feelings → Purchase intentions	.037
H4Mb	Nostalgic feelings → Willingness to pay	-.008
R <sup>2</sup>	Perceived value	.32
	Purchase intentions	.62
	Willingness to pay a price premium	.53

\* p&lt;.05,

\*\* p&lt;.01

The third hypothesis predicted that perceived value would have a positive correlation with purchase intentions and willingness to a pay a price premium. In the retro pool of participants, perceived value had a positive and significant impact on both purchase intentions ( $\beta = .517, p < .01$ ) and willingness to pay a price premium ( $\beta = .468, p < .01$ ) allowing the author to accept H3a. In the modern pool perceived value also demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with both purchase intentions ( $\beta = .794, p < .01$ ) and willingness to pay a price

premium (.707,  $p < .01$ ), therefore H3b was accepted (see Tables 4 and 5 for direct effects between variables in each condition).

Table 5

*Hypothesis Testing: Direct Effects – Retro Pool*

	Path	Standardized path coefficient
H2R	Nostalgic feelings → Perceived value	.386**
H3Ra	Perceived value → Purchase intentions	.517**
H3Rb	Perceived value → Willingness to pay	.468**
H4Ra	Nostalgic feelings → Purchase intentions	.212*
H4Rb	Nostalgic feelings → Willingness to pay	.262*
R <sup>2</sup>	Perceived value	.15
	Purchase intentions	.40
	Willingness to pay a price premium	.38

\*  $p < .05$ ,

\*\*  $p < .01$

The fourth hypothesis examined the mediating relationship of perceived value, between nostalgic feelings and the two outcome variables, purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium. The first step in testing mediation is to examine the linear relationships between all constructs (Hair et al., 2006). Since hypothesis two was accepted, we know nostalgic feelings has a significant relationship to the mediating factor, perceived value. Next, the relationship between nostalgic feelings was tested with purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium. In the modern condition, nostalgic feelings relationship with both purchase intentions ( $\beta = .037, p > .05$ ) and willingness to pay a price premium ( $\beta = -.008, p > .05$ ) was not significant. Therefore, no follow up analysis was needed. Based on this, H4 was rejected for the modern condition. For the retro condition however, there was a positive significant relationship between nostalgic feelings and the two outcome variables, purchase intentions ( $\beta = .212, p < .05$ ) and willingness to pay a price premium ( $\beta = .262, p < .05$ ). Since there was a significant relationship between nostalgic feelings, the mediating variable perceived value, and the two

outcome variables, further statistical analysis was required (see Tables 4 and 5 for direct effects between variables in each condition).

One effective way to evaluate mediation is the bootstrapping method. According to Hair et al. (2006), bootstrapping evaluates a multivariate model by examining large amounts of subsamples and estimating a model for each of the subsamples. Bootstrapping does not give any consideration to the sample, but rather assesses the expected variability only examining the sample data (Hair et al., 2006). As there was a significant relationship between nostalgic feelings to perceived value and both outcome variables, a bootstrapping statistical test was run using R studio 3.5.2 (see Table 6 for bootstrapping details). Standardized indirect effects were computed for each of the 5,000 bootstrapped samples, and a 95% confidence interval was computed using the indirect effects at the upper and lower 2.5<sup>th</sup> percentiles. When examining the mediating effect of perceived value on the relationship of nostalgic feelings and purchase intentions this process demonstrated a significant standardized effect (SE: .19,  $p < .05$ ) and a confidence interval that did not contain zero (lower limit: .099, upper limit: .513). When the statistical test was run examining if perceived value mediated the relationship between nostalgic feelings and willingness to pay a price premium there was a significant standardized effect (SE: .18,  $p < .01$ ) and a confidence interval that did not contain zero (lower limit: .097, upper limit: .398). Based on the significant results examining the mediating effect of perceived value in the retro condition, hypothesis four was accepted only when considering the participants in the retro pool (see Figure 7 for the path coefficients and significance levels of each participant pool within the hypothesized model).

Table 6

*Hypothesis Testing: Indirect Effects*

Hypothesis	Indirect effect	Bootstrap estimate		95% confidence interval	
		Standardized effect	Unstandardized effect	Lower	Upper
H4Ra	NF → PV → PI	.19*	.257*	.099	.513
H4Rb	NF → PV → WTP	.18**	.240**	.097	.398

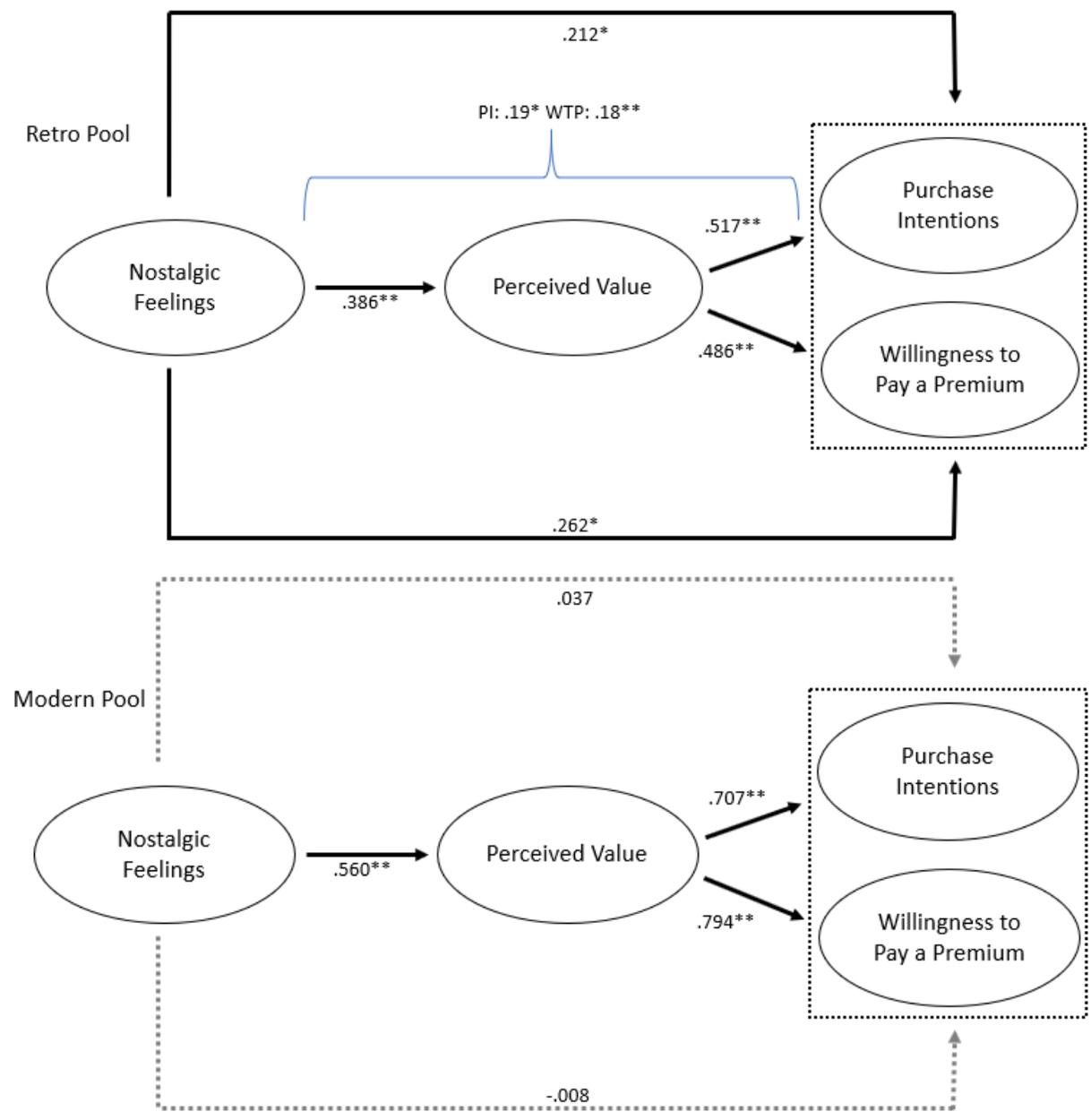
*Note.* NF = Nostalgic feelings; PV = Perceived value; PI = Purchase intentions; WTP = Willingness to pay a price premium. Because there was no direct effect of NF on PI & WTP in the Modern pool, that sample was not tested for mediation. The bootstrapping method with 5000 resamples was used in order to obtain the 95% confidence intervals for each effect; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

The final hypothesis was created to test if there would be higher levels of nostalgic feelings among participants who selected the retro piece of merchandise than those who selected the modern merchandise. To examine this, the author conducted a one-way ANOVA grouping individuals based on which t-shirt they selected (modern or retro) and compared the nostalgic feelings scores of all participants ( $N = 419$ ). Overall the retro t-shirt was selected by more participants ( $n = 233$ ) than the modern option ( $n = 186$ ). Conversely to the authors hypothesis, participants who selected the retro merchandise had lower mean nostalgic feeling scores than those who selected the modern merchandise (Modern  $M: 5.26$ , Retro  $M: 5.19$ ). This difference in nostalgic feeling scores between those who selected the retro merchandise to the modern merchandise was non-significant and in fact negative [ $F(1, 417) = -.372, p = .542$ ]. As there were only two conditions no post-hoc analysis was necessary. Based on these results, hypothesis five was rejected.

Table 7

*Hypotheses Testing: Decisions*

Hypothesis	Accept or Reject	
	Retro Pool	Modern Pool
H1: Participants in the retro condition will demonstrate higher nostalgic feelings than those participants in the modern condition.		Rejected
H2: There will be a significant, positive relationship between nostalgic feelings and perceived value.	Accepted	Accepted
H3: There will be a significant, positive relationship between perceived value and the consumer outcome constructs:		
H3a: Purchase intentions	Accepted	Accepted
H3b: Willingness to pay a price premium	Accepted	Accepted
H4: Perceived value will mediate the relationship between nostalgic feelings and the consumer outcome constructs:		
H4a: Purchase intentions	Accepted	Rejected
H4b: Willingness to pay a price premium	Accepted	Rejected
H5: Participants who select the retro piece of merchandise will demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings than those who select the modern piece of merchandise.		Rejected



\*  $p < .05$ ,  
\*\*  $p < .01$

Figure 7. Model for each participant pool with path coefficients

## Chapter V: Discussion

In the following chapter, the author discusses the theoretical and practical implications of this study. As the purpose of this study was to develop a model and examine constructs that may impact retro marketing and merchandise, the author quantitatively examined the impact of nostalgic feelings. The model tested how nostalgic feelings influenced fan's perceived value, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay a price premium of team merchandise. To enhance the findings and address the hypotheses, the author split participants into two pools, one group was exposed to retro merchandise and the other to modern merchandise. The model and two pools of subjects were the focus of the findings and guides this discussion. Therefore, the author addressed the primary findings based on each hypothesis first and then discusses the implications, and limitations, directions for future research.

### Eliciting Nostalgic Feelings

The findings from this study suggested that nostalgic feelings may be elicited by both the modern and retro merchandise. This was evident by the similar nostalgic feeling mean scores by participants in both groups: Modern ( $M = 5.14$ ); Retro ( $M = 5.32$ ). The author posited that participants in the retro group would demonstrate higher nostalgic feelings than those in the modern group and although the average scores by these participants were higher, the difference was not significant. It may prove important to unveil ways in which sport marketers can evoke nostalgic feelings in their consumers.

According to Batcho (2013) nostalgia can be simply defined as a "longing for the past." Nostalgia has been found to positively impact consumers purchasing behaviors (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007), but has primarily been examined as a preference towards the past (Holbrook, 1993; Loveland et al., 2010). Specifically, types of nostalgic proneness have been used as an

antecedent to emotions or behaviors, which suggests that nostalgic feelings are primarily based upon the individual's preconceived proneness to feeling nostalgic. Although this study cannot say that exposure to retro merchandise increased nostalgic feeling statistically it does add to the literature on eliciting nostalgic feelings with sport fans. This lack of difference may be explained by the overall essence of sport, meaning potentially, consumers immediately connect their favorite sport team to the past. Therefore, any logo of one's favorite team may connect them the team's past and therefore any logo would elicit nostalgic feelings. Aligning with this concept, the findings from this study would suggest that merchandise of a sport fans favorite team should elicit nostalgic feelings.

Additionally, nostalgic feelings towards the modern logo could be credited to the fact that many fans grew up with these logos. The Broncos adapted their current logo in 1997 and the Rockets in 2003 and as this sample overall was young, nearly 80% of the sample was under the age of 40 and 38% born after 1990, this "new" logo may be the one they grew up with or the one they associate with the past. Therefore, it may simply be explained by the fact that younger fans associate these modern logos with the past.

Cho et al. (2017) created a scale to measure sport tourist's nostalgic feelings. Their scale differs from Holbrook (1993) proneness scale in the sense that they looked at nostalgia as an emotional response rather than a personal characteristic. When nostalgia is viewed as an emotion it would then potentially change based on items presented to an individual. This would be demonstrated through the S-O-R framework (Mehrabian & Russel, 1974), whereas different stimuli should elicit different responses (emotions and actions). This concept is incredibly important in the sporting context because nostalgia has been found to lead to positive feelings and behaviors (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012; Pascal et al., 2002; Sedikides et al., 2008). This study

examined how nostalgic feelings may impact consumer response to merchandise. Theoretically, if both modern and retro logos of one's favorite team elicit high level of nostalgic feelings, then examining consumers nostalgic feelings towards both types of merchandise may not be effective.

The lack of difference in nostalgic feelings between the two participant pools could also be explained by past assumptions. First, nostalgic feelings may be more engrained in an individual, rather than elicited by the merchandise. Meaning variables like nostalgic proneness should continue to be relied upon and marketers should assume that retro merchandise is more effective on those who are prone to nostalgia. If in fact, individuals feel nostalgia when exposed to any logo associated with their favorite team, a measure that examines one's characteristics rather than elicited emotions may be more influential when trying to understand the impact of modern versus retro logos. A concept such as nostalgia proneness may prove more telling when examining how individuals differ when presented retro and modern pieces of apparel. Marketers have examined the impact of nostalgic proneness on perceptions of brand heritage (Merchant & Rose, 2013), its effect on evoking personal nostalgia through advertisements (Merchant, LaTour, Ford, & LaTour, 2013), and as an antecedent to likelihood of consuming nostalgic materials (Holbrook, 1993). Those who prove more prone to nostalgia, may feel more strongly towards a retro logo than a modern logo. However, this study would suggest that a sport fan may feel nostalgic regardless of the logo they are presented with.

But counter to this idea is the possibility that sport elicits nostalgic feelings regardless of the history of the logo. Nostalgia has found its way onto numerous sport brand association scales (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006) and marketing scholars have suggested that sport may be an outlet which retro could be most successful (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). There is a lived history of sport that other brands cannot grasp (Scola & Gordon, 2018). This lived history may

allow nostalgic feelings to come about whenever one thinks of their favorite sport teams, because rather than remembering the current team as is, he/she can reflect to the best memories they have of that team. Scholars have found that nostalgia-themed advertisements were more effective when presented to individuals who had past personal associations with that brand (Muehling, Sprott, & Sultan, 2014). As this study examined fans of these particular teams, they all should have a past connection with the team, therefore potentially creating high levels of nostalgic feelings. Nostalgic feelings may not have differed in the two conditions the way the author anticipated, but nostalgic feelings did play an influential role on perceived value.

### **Nostalgic Feelings impact on Perceived Value**

The impact of an individual feeling nostalgic has been pondered for a long time. One of the first to delve into this was Davis (1977), who suggested nostalgic feelings... “reassures us of past happiness and accomplishment” (p. 420). Davis (1977) goes on to describe that artists utilize nostalgia to add value and appreciation to their work. Scholars have gone as far as suggesting that nostalgia operating as an optimistic feeling had the ability to lead consumers to feel more promise towards their future (Cheung, et al., 2013). Further, in a measurement created to evaluate the ways individuals value items, one dimension was called “ties to the past” and considered how the way in which an item connects to one’s past may increase its value (Richins, 1994). Therefore, it should come as no surprise that nostalgic feelings impacted the participants perceived value of both retro and modern merchandise in this study. This finding aligns with marketing scholars, specifically the findings that nostalgia may have a positive impact on the effectiveness of advertisements (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011) and when implemented into a brand’s strategy positively influenced consumers (Cattaneo & Guerini,

2012). Beyond reaffirming findings in the marketing context, this study extends our understanding into the sporting realm.

Nostalgia was considered the primary factor for individuals to participate in a traveling fan group (Fairley, 2003) and it was considered important in many structural decisions around arenas and stadiums (Seifried & Meyer, 2010; Stride et al., 2013). As nostalgia and team history have been found to be important in sport and are frequently considered a brand association (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006; Bauer et al., 2008) nostalgic feelings should be examined as an antecedent towards consumer behavior and intentions. Examining sport tourism, Cho et al. (2014) suggested sport fan's nostalgia may be unique from other brands and gave four classifications: experience, socialization, personal identity, and group identity. This research led to the creation of the sport tourist nostalgia scale and the creation of the nostalgic feelings towards a sport team (Cho et al., 2017). This measurement was created to test consumer outcomes, and the sport team nostalgia construct was appropriate when examining emotions that may impact feelings and behaviors towards sport merchandise. Primarily, the studies that have found nostalgia to be influential with sport consumers have done so qualitatively and brand association studies have not gone as far as linking nostalgia with consumer outcomes, besides the Bauer et al. (2008) which did not find a significant link. Therefore, the study at hand is quite novel in methods used to examine this phenomenon.

Sport management scholars have found that perceived value can be positively impacted by an individual's level of team identification (Kwon et al., 2007; Drayer, Shapiro, & Dwyer, 2018), service quality at a sporting event (Moon, Ko, Connaughton, & Lee, 2013), and experiential quality (tourist's psychological feelings towards activities) (Wu & Li, 2017). Based on the understood importance of perceived value, which will be discussed in the following

section, antecedents that affect perceived value are immensely important. Therefore, the finding that that nostalgic feelings may increase a sport fans perceived value of merchandise is impactful. If nostalgic feelings can impact perceptions of value among consumers, sport marketers should continue to find unique ways to elicit nostalgic feelings through retro marketing.

### **Perceived Value and Consumer Outcomes**

The finding regarding perceived value's relationship with the consumer behavioral intentions: purchase intention and willingness to pay a price premium, supported much of the work that other marketing and sport management scholars have produced. Since it has been suggested that sport consumers make their merchandise purchases from a symbolic perspective (Kwon & Armstrong, 2006), it would make sense that perceived value plays a crucial role in purchasing behavior and intentions. Most directly linked to this study, Kwon et al. (2007) found that perceived value played a crucial role in consumer purchase intentions of sport merchandise. From a game attendance standpoint other studies have found that perceived value influenced behavioral intentions (Byon, et al., 2013; Drayer et al., 2018). Netemeyer et al. (2004) examined consumers perceived value of popular traditional brands and found that it had a positive relationship with willingness to pay a price premium. Further, their study found that willingness to pay a price premium was a potential antecedent to actual purchase behavior.

This finding did more than simply reaffirm the understanding that perceived value plays a role in consumers intentions towards a product, as it did so in a unique context. Scola and Gordon (2018) suggested comparing modern and retro products and distinguishing sport from the general marketing context. This study sought to examine and test a model which relied upon the role that perceived value played on sport fan's intentions towards merchandise. Scholars

examining retro marketing have only begun to delve into the different emotions and preferences connected to retro products. This study shines light on this concept by discovering that nostalgic feelings not only impacted a retro product but also when examining perceived value, influenced the modern pool of participants significantly as well. Therefore, nostalgic feelings played a role in participants perceived value towards the merchandise, regardless of the logo they were presented.

As previously mentioned, this finding was not expected. This may be due to the idea that one's favorite sport team elicits nostalgic feelings regardless of the imagery they are presented. If this is the case, this finding would suggest that nostalgic feelings impact perceived value and the findings prior suggested sport team merchandise overall elicit high levels of nostalgic feelings. Prior studies by sport management scholars have considered the team's history or nostalgia around the team to be an influential brand association and these studies did not consider the sport teams utilizing any retro marketing (Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006). These scholars may not have used imagery at all, and many simply asked the participant to think about their favorite team, yet still thought feelings related to one's past connection to their favorite team may prove valuable. Taken together, one could construe an individual's perceived value of their favorite team's merchandise is heavily influenced by how they connect that team to their past, regardless of which logo is displayed. The difference in these two groups is not realized until considering the impact nostalgic feelings had on the participant's intentions.

### **Nostalgic Feelings impact on Consumer Behavior**

The findings regarding the impact of nostalgic feelings on consumer behavior were not consistent between the two groups. It appeared nostalgic feelings influenced purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium towards the retro merchandise, but not towards the

modern merchandise. At first, this would appear to make logical sense, but the fact that nostalgic feelings impacted perceived value in each scenario made this finding puzzling.

Understanding how a consumer's nostalgic feelings influenced their intentions and behavior was at the crux of this study. In marketing, nostalgia has been found to impact purchasing behaviors when connected to a group identity (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007) and it has been found that evoking moderate or high levels of nostalgia may impact attitudes such as purchase intention (Phau & Marchegiani, 2011). Scholars specifically found with advertisements that eliciting nostalgic feelings could aid in the consumers' willingness to purchase the product (Pascal et al., 2002). Nostalgia in sport has been suggested to impact fan allegiance, which assumes these fans would have a stronger relationship with their favorite teams (Funk & James, 2006). Additionally, the emotion of nostalgia has been tied to sport heritage and sport tourism and has been created as a primary motivation to attend and travel to sporting events (Cho et al., 2014; Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005). Past marketing research has primarily examined nostalgia towards only a retro marketing practice and has not compared their findings with a modern example. The fact that participants demonstrated high levels of nostalgic feelings towards both pieces of merchandise was novel to this study, but the finding that these feelings only influenced their intentions in the retro pool was extremely telling. This finding may suggest that while nostalgic feelings may be evoked from a modern piece of merchandise, these feelings may not take the next step towards creating a desire for the product. Muehling et al. (2014) compared modern and retro advertisements and found that retro advertisements resulted in more positive responses than modern, regardless of the consumers past relationship. Therefore, despite the high nostalgic feeling scores in both groups, it may be the case that behaviors towards the retro merchandise are more positive than towards the modern merchandise.

Additionally, considering what was measured the purchase intentions construct being significantly influenced by nostalgic feelings for participants given the retro merchandise makes sense. The purchase intention construct was the aspect of the survey that related most directly to the piece of merchandise as it asked the consumer if they would be willing to purchase that item (Kwon et al., 2007; Grewal et al., 1998). Other constructs instructed the participant to answer the following questions with the piece of merchandise in mind, the fact that this question directly made the consumer decide if they wanted that merchandise may explain this finding. It makes sense that those who had higher levels of nostalgic feelings had higher purchase intentions towards the retro merchandise and non-significant purchase intentions towards the modern merchandise. This finding however may add credence to the importance of sport teams implementing a retro line of merchandise as it appeared those with high level of nostalgic feelings may not be inclined to purchase the modern piece of merchandise but would purchase the retro t-shirt. The fact that nostalgic feelings influenced purchase intentions and willingness to pay a premium in the retro condition was a valuable contribution, but it was important to consider the mediating role perceived value played.

Perceived value has been frequently utilized as a mediator in marketing and sport related literature. It has been found to have a great impact as a mediator between team identification and purchase intentions with sport merchandise (Kwon et al., 2007). It has found to act as an antecedent to willingness to pay a price premium towards popular traditional brands (Netemeyer et al., 2004). As perceived value is defined as the consumer's overall evaluation of the usefulness of the product (Zeithaml, 1988) it is a construct that contributes well as a mediator between emotions and intentions. This is due in part to the fact that nostalgia is viewed as something that may add value towards possessions (Richins, 1994) and shines a positive outlook on one's future

(Cheung et al., 2013). If nostalgia adds value to an object, in this case a piece of merchandise, theoretically it should increase the consumers level of perceived value and influence their intentions towards the merchandise, based upon the understanding of perceived value and its relationship to behavior.

Additionally, sport scholars have considered nostalgia an important brand association (Bauer et al., 2008; Ross et al., 2006) and have even suggested nostalgia may lead to allegiance in sport fandom (Funk & James, 2006). Although this specific emotion has not been tested with these behavioral outcomes, many scholars have found that emotions greatly influence consumer behavior (Bagozzi, 1992; Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999; Richins, 1997). Bagozzi (1992) theorized that positive and negative emotions towards an object played a vital role in consumer intentions and behaviors. As it has been suggested that nostalgia should elicit primarily positive emotions towards a brand (Holak & Havelena, 1991; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011; Wildschuts et al., 2006) and that these emotions should influence consumer intentions towards the merchandise (Bagozzi, 1992) it would make sense that increased nostalgic feelings would lead to positive intentions towards merchandise and be mediated by a construct like perceived value.

The most interesting aspect of this finding was that nostalgic feelings had no direct influence on the two consumer outcome constructs in the modern condition. Meaning, those individuals exposed to the modern condition did not have higher purchase intentions or willingness to pay a price premium score based upon their nostalgic feeling scores. This was somewhat surprising considering nostalgic feelings influence perceived value in both conditions but suggested that nostalgic feelings may more effectively influence consumers when presented a retro piece of merchandise. As much of the marketing research has only evaluated nostalgia with retro practices, such as nostalgic ads having an influence on behavior (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau

& Marchegiani, 2011) and brand strategy overall (Cattaneo & Guerini, 2012) this finding opens up new avenues for research. Theoretically, it is reasonable to assume nostalgic feelings should influence intentions towards retro merchandise more than modern merchandise, but the high levels of nostalgic feelings in both pools was surprising. This may suggest that while nostalgic feelings are strongly correlated with one's favorite sport team, regardless of logo, the nostalgic feelings emotion may not incite intentions towards the modern branded merchandise. If this is the case understanding the different emotions elicited by modern and retro merchandise and further, what behavioral outcomes these emotions are aligned with, would be of great importance to sport management scholars.

Eliciting nostalgic feelings may be a targeted plan, where it only effectively impacts the behavior of sport fans towards the retro merchandise. Therefore, if you are selling modern merchandise, eliciting these nostalgic feelings may have minimal effect. Whereas, when you want to sell retro merchandise or promote a retro event, eliciting nostalgic feelings may be extremely impactful. Despite nostalgic feelings influencing perceived value in both conditions, it appeared that nostalgic feelings only impacted the outcome constructs in the retro group, suggesting eliciting nostalgic feelings may be less effective when promoting modern merchandise than retro.

### **The Relationship between Nostalgic Feelings and Product Choice**

Despite the fact that the retro t-shirt was selected by participants more than the modern t-shirt in both settings, there was no significant difference between the two groups levels of nostalgic feelings. Past research has only considered nostalgia's impact on retro marketing, primarily advertisements, and not surprisingly nostalgia has led to increased preference towards the brand or item (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011; Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). It

was noteworthy that those who selected the retro merchandise did not demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings. This also did not align with the findings examining the model, as one would think if nostalgic feelings influence consumer intentions towards the retro merchandise then it would also make sense that individuals who selected the retro merchandise would demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings. This surprising finding may be explained by the fact that sport fans overall demonstrate high levels of nostalgic feelings towards their favorite team's merchandise regardless of the logo and therefore making it unlikely that the two groups would have significantly different levels of nostalgic feelings.

Further, this could be explained by the fact that nostalgic feelings were found to influence purchase intentions and one's intentions may differ from their actual behaviors. Scholars have suggested there may be a lack of accuracy using intention towards a brand (Yoshida, Heere, & Gordon, 2015; Zaharia, Biscaia, Gray, & Stotler, 2016). The inaccuracy involving intentions as well as the fact that participants may feel the need to report what is socially desirable (Greenwald, Nosek, Ganaji, 2003) may lead to a high connection between nostalgic feelings and intentions as the retro merchandise may mean more to the sport fan. This could suggest that while nostalgic feelings positively impacted a participant's purchase intention towards the retro t-shirt, those intentions did not align with their actual behaviors, that is those who selected the retro t-shirt did not have higher nostalgic feelings scores than those who selected the modern t-shirt.

One rationale for this finding may be that when a fan selects the piece of merchandise they would like to have most, their nostalgic feelings towards the team or merchandise may not play a role. Other factors may play a role in this decision making, or potentially the modern merchandise is preferred for one reason or another, potentially because it is most up-to-date.

Practical knowledge would combat this, as every professional league and a vast majority of teams implement retro logos regularly (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Rather, this finding may suggest that there is a limit to how much retro is effective. If a sport team were to go fully retro, could this have a negative impact on their sales? Examining cases like the Golden State Warriors who re-branded completely retro may be insightful regarding this concept of the characteristics and feelings demonstrated by those who purchase retro merchandise. What will make future research on this incredibly unique is the difference in the histories of each team and league and therefore leading to difference is what nostalgic feelings may bring to the table with their consumers. Nevertheless, it was surprising to see that those who selected the retro t-shirt did not demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feelings than those who selected the modern t-shirt based upon the other findings in this study and past research.

### **Implications**

From a theoretical standpoint, this research has expanded the understanding of retro marketing in sport from the merchandising perspective. Scola and Gordon (2018) discussed the many avenues of retro marketing practices using the S-O-R framework and this study demonstrated that changing the stimuli may impact consumers within that framework. As sport management scholars have given the impact of retro marketing scant attention, furthering this framework is beneficial. In the retro condition, more so this study demonstrated that Cho et al.'s (2017) nostalgic feelings towards sport construct operated well in a framework involving perceived value, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay a price premium. This study should allow scholars to utilize the nostalgic feelings towards sport construct as an antecedent in various retro marketing sport studies.

Practically, this study demonstrated many ways in which retro marketing in sport may operationalize or at least aided in our understanding. Sport marketers suggested that retro marketing was primarily utilized through changing of marks (Scola & Gordon, in press). Further, these marketers suggested that nostalgia and the appeal of their retro designs were two of the most influential aspects of their retro marketing success. Despite these suggestions, there is no empirical evidence to support the impact. This study demonstrated that nostalgic feelings may play a crucial role in sport fans behaviors towards retro merchandise. Beyond this, practitioners should be aware that different feelings may create different behaviors or intentions from their fans, as this study found modern merchandise to be less influenced by an individual's level of nostalgic feelings.

Specifically, this model demonstrated that nostalgic feelings may impact consumers intentions towards retro merchandise differently than modern merchandise. As nostalgic feelings increased, perceived value of the merchandise increased as well. Perceived value also led to an increase in behavioral intentions towards either t-shirt. Where the pools differed was regarding the mediating role perceived value played. When nostalgic feelings increased in the retro pool, so did one's behavioral intentions towards the piece of merchandise mediated through perceived value. This was not the case in the modern pool and this finding may have immense practical importance.

This finding suggests that nostalgic feelings may play a different role in consumer behavior towards different merchandise. Marketers may be weary of tapping into or attempting to increase their consumer's nostalgic feelings if their current initiatives revolve around modern merchandise or marketing practices. On the other hand, if a team or league is focusing their efforts on a retro marketing promotion (i.e. the NFL's centennial) it may be extremely valuable

to attempt to tap into their consumers feelings of nostalgia. This study would suggest that tapping into consumer nostalgia can be overall a successful marketing strategy but is likely more effective when focusing on a retro marketing practice particularly.

Additionally, the fact that those who selected the retro t-shirt did not demonstrate higher levels of nostalgic feeling in this study may implore marketers to regulate the amount of retro merchandise they utilize. It may be that retro merchandise should be used as a change from their traditional merchandise lines rather than as their staple. Last, when examining the ages of participants, it was found that age did not significantly impact nostalgic feeling scores, in fact younger groups demonstrated higher nostalgic feeling scores overall. This finding is important for sport marketers, as it may suggest that retro marketing practices will not isolate their fan base, at least based on age so they can move forward with retro marketing practices with fewer reservations.

### **Limitations**

Despite the findings, this study is not without limitations. First, sampling was conducted purposively in two geographic areas (Colorado and Texas) through Amazon MTurk. This sampling may lead to individuals who may use the service primarily for income and may not be invested in the survey itself. This may lead to non-attentive participants, which is why the author included intention check questions and preliminary questions to only allow actual fans to participate. Second, this study primarily examined intentions rather than behaviors. Documenting actual purchasing behavior of these consumers would be more beneficial. As scholars have found consumer purchase intentions are not always correlated with actual behaviors (Yoshida et al., 2015; Zaharia et al., 2016). Third, it is possible that participants feelings towards the merchandise was impacted by non-logo aspects such as the cut of the t-shirt or colors. Last, the

two teams chosen for this study are unique from one another. The teams do not have similar past or present success or even geographic location. Although this was done to aid in the generalizability of the study, it is still a limitation as each team has their own unique history, so the fan base as a whole will have varying experiences and memories. Both teams examined in this study have a rich history, each with two championships in the 1990s. Whereas the Broncos also won a championship in 2015, despite this they have not seen much success since that season. The Rockets on the other hand have been extremely successful in the last few seasons. These differences in success may lead to different feelings towards the current or past teams and even offer differing amounts of retro offerings for their marketers.

From a sampling standpoint, the author utilized Amazon MTurk to recruit participants. This was done to target fans geographically and to purposefully sample fans of the two specific teams. The gender breakdown this sample was nearly 50% female, which aligns well with the NFL's report from 2017 that 45% of their fanbase were women (Salkowitz, 2018). The sample may not be properly representative based on age, as the median age for the 2017-2018 season of an NBA fan was 42 and for the NFL 50. (Adgate, 2018). Approximately 75% of participants were under the age of 40. This likely has to do with who utilizes Amazon MTurk and should be considered a limitation of the study. Additionally, the nostalgic feelings construct had limitations in this study. First, although this scale was deemed appropriate for the study it may have measured nostalgic feelings towards one's favorite team more so than their feelings towards the specific piece of merchandise. Second there was a fifth item created in the scale that was inadvertently left off the survey, which may have impacted the construct validity and reliability in the model. Last, the construct had a poor AVE in the modern condition, suggesting that the construct may have had poor reliability.

Theoretically examining Cho et al.'s (2017) nostalgic feelings towards a sport team measure there were other limitations. The author was using it as an emotion elicited from seeing a piece of merchandise, but it is possible that the items really were addressing something different. Specifically, the construct could be measuring how nostalgic one felt in general or even just how connected one felt to their team, rather than examining nostalgia as an emotion. Additionally, the items were not time-specific, so when it says "my pleasant feelings of the past" the participant could reflect back to memories about their favorite team more recent than we would consider nostalgic feelings. The construct was not a perfect measure for what the author was examining but was the best fit in the current literature.

### **Directions for Future Research**

As this research is truly in its infancy, there are numerous routes for future scholars to extend this topic. First, addressing the primary limitation of this study there is a need in the sport marketing literature for appropriate sport nostalgia scales. Cho et al.'s (2017) scale was made to examine sport tourist nostalgia and the numerous nostalgia proneness scales (i.e. Batcho, 2013; Holbrook, 1993) would not appropriately evaluate sport fan's emotional nostalgia but rather how prone to nostalgia they are. Scholars should consider creating a scale to examine how the many areas of sport and one may feel nostalgic towards their favorite sport team's. This could potentially be done utilizing aspects of the Five Practical Areas of Retro Marketing in Sport (Scola & Gordon, 2018) as it would be effective to add dimensions of the scale that tested all retro marketing practices in sport. A sport nostalgia proneness scale could also be of use, as we know sport is unique and should be academically examined as such (Chalip, 2006) a scale developed for sport would allow scholars to compare and contrast retro in sport and general marketing in more depth.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to get qualitative responses from consumers who purchase retro merchandise. Documenting the detailed reasoning behind their purchasing behaviors may lead to new constructs that deserve quantitative attention. Additionally, it would be useful to document the use of retro marketing throughout sport. It may be telling to discover not only what types of retro marketing is being used but rather when retro marketing is most implemented. Retro marketing may be most prevalent at milestones, when a team is successful, or when a team is having less success, understanding why and when retro marketing is relied upon would lead researchers and marketers to a better understanding of retro marketing in sport.

Another way in which this research can be expanded is through examining the organism aspect of the S-O-R framework. This area would include personal traits such as demographics, team identification, and nostalgia proneness (Scola & Gordon, 2018). Understanding if certain segments of fans respond differently to retro marketing and merchandise would be incredibly beneficial for sport marketers. Additionally, as noted in the limitations every team has a different history. Therefore, it would be beneficial to try to segment fan bases this way and examine how retro marketing or merchandise works for fans with varying histories, including time as a franchise and past success. Last, scholars should examine the usage of faux retro where a team uses retro marketing from a time they were not in existence. Now that a framework is in place it would be incredibly interesting to see if the same emotions and connections can be elicited from faux retro promotions.

## **Conclusion**

This study extends our theoretical understanding of retro marketing in sport. First, a construct was utilized in a model which tested consumer intentions that should prove very important in understanding the impact of retro marketing in sport. Cho et al. (2017) created the

sport tourist nostalgia scale and one construct measured feelings evoked by a sport team. This construct may be quite effective for scholars who are looking to measure levels of nostalgic feelings around a sport marketing tactic, in this case a piece of merchandise. This study also was conducted with two conditions to compare how consumers reacted to retro merchandise differently than modern. Nostalgic feelings significantly influenced perceived value in both conditions. But nostalgic feelings only influenced, through mediation by perceived value, one's purchase intentions and willingness to pay a premium in the retro condition.

This finding is extremely telling, because it suggests that nostalgic feelings may not play a pivotal role consumer behavior towards modern merchandise. Nostalgic feelings have been found to lead to positive responses through advertisements (Pascal et al., 2002; Phau & Marchegiani, 2011) and through group membership (Zhao et al., 2014) it is not surprising that it would influence intentions towards the retro apparel. As nostalgic feelings have primarily been examined in the past with retro practices only, it was important to examine them with a comparable modern practice as well. Under the modern condition, only perceived value was positively influenced by nostalgic feelings, in fact willingness to pay a price premium had an insignificant negative relationship with nostalgic feelings. Although this study found that consumers are less influenced by nostalgic feelings when presented with a modern t-shirt than a retro t-shirt, the idea that sport has a lived history unique to other brands would suggest that an individual may feed off nostalgic feelings about their sport teams regardless of which logo they were presented (Scola & Gordon, 2018).

Lastly, in regard to retro marketing in general. This practice is one that is here to stay and marketing scholar Stephen Brown (2013) who was at the forefront of retro marketing research reflected on this idea:

15 years ago, when I first started writing about retromarketing, I reckoned the “nostalgia boom” was a passing fad. I distinctly remember thinking that it would be all over bar the shouting before I managed to publish a few papers on the phenomenon. By the time these emerged, in the early 2000s, I was convinced that I’d missed the retro boat completely. The millennium had come and gone and nostalgia was ancient history, as were my newly-hatched articles which were already behind the times (p. 522).

The idea that there was a nostalgia boom coming at the turn of the century was well documented (Brown, 1999; Stern, 1992) and many scholars did not believe it could last. Now nearly twenty years beyond the turn of the century retro is here to stay and sport is going to continue to be one of the domains that relies upon it the most and for sport marketing scholars there is still much to uncover.

## Appendices

### Appendix A – Measures

#### Demographics

1. How long have you been a fan of this team? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Gender
5. Household income

#### Customer perceived value (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002)

1. Compared to the price we pay, we get reasonable quality.
2. Compared to the quality we get, we pay a reasonable price.
3. The purchasing relationship delivers us superior net-value

#### Purchase intention, Kwon et al., 2007

1. I would purchase the item.
2. I would consider buying the item at the price listed.
3. The probability that I would consider buying is high.

#### Price premium (Netemeyer et al., 2004)

1. I am willing to pay a higher price for products of this brand than for other brands.
2. I am willing to pay a lot more for this brand than other brands in this category.
3. I am willing to pay \_\_\_% less or \_\_\_% more for (Brand name) brand over other brands of (product category).

#### Sport Tourist Nostalgia (Cho et al., 2017)

My pleasant feelings of the past are evoked by \_\_\_\_\_

As a sport team:

1. Remembering my favorite athletes
2. my favorite team from the past
3. a particular player with a good reputation
4. a particular team with a good reputation

#### Product Choice

1. If you would like to enter a raffle for a free jersey to thank you for your participation please select the jersey you would like to receive if you win.

(Shows a retro and modern jersey of the team)

## Appendix B – Survey Prompt Example



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Project Title: Consumer feelings towards sport merchandise

You are being asked to participate in a research study of Houston Rockets fans. The purpose of this confidential survey is to better understand the ways in which you view and potentially purchase Rocket's merchandise. Due to the immense usage of various logos by teams, understanding how consumers evaluate these logos could impact sport marketers' decisions. Therefore, your opinions are extremely valuable. As you are being paid to participate in this survey there will be attention check questions along with questions at the beginning that will address your fandom/knowledge of the Rockets. If you do not answer the qualifying questions correctly, you will not be able to finish the survey and you will not be compensated. Those who participate in the entire survey will be paid (\$0.40). The survey includes questions about your beliefs, attitudes, and opinions. There are also standard demographic questions. This survey should not take you more than 10 minutes to complete. While there are not direct benefits beyond the payment through MTurk and potentially winning the raffle (if you choose to enter), the information you provide will help sport marketers properly package and deliver spectator sports to meet the needs of fans such as yourself. The only risks of participating are minor, and they include the potential loss of confidentiality. It is possible, however, with internet communications, that through intent or accident someone other than the intended recipient may see your response. Internet Protocol (IP) addresses are collected automatically through this online survey and email addresses will be collected if you so choose (for participation in our raffle). Participation is voluntary. Please understand that some items may sound similar, but it is important that you answer each question as the subtle differences mean a lot to the researcher. The alternative is to not participate in this study. If you so choose, you do not have 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. You may print a copy of this form to retain for future reference. The data collected in this study may be published, but any identifying information will remain confidential. As mentioned above, IP and email addresses will be collected, and the combination of these addresses could potentially result in a loss of confidentiality. However, the research team will keep both addresses behind password-protected accounts and will not use your data for any other purpose than this study. Nor will we provide this information to anyone else. Thank you for

your time and assistance. If you have any questions about participation in this research contact please contact Zach Scola at scola.zach@ku.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Office at (785) 864-7429 or email irb@ku.edu.

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I consider myself to be a Houston Rockets basketball fan.

Yes

No

Which of these logos is a CURRENT logo for the Houston Rockets?



Which of these logos is a PAST logo for the Houston Rockets?



What age range do you fall within?

- 18-29
  - 30-39
  - 40-49
  - 50-59
  - 60+
- 

What is your Race/Ethnicity?

- White
  - Black or African American
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - Other
-

What is your gender?

- Male
  - Female
  - Other
  - Prefer not to answer
- 

What is your household income?

- Less than \$25,000
  - \$25,000-\$39,000
  - \$40,000-\$59,000
  - \$60,000-\$79,000
  - \$80,000-\$99,000
  - \$100,000-\$199,000
  - \$200,000 or more
  - Prefer not to answer
- 

Approximately how many years have you been a fan of the Rockets?

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Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would purchase this shirt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider buying this shirt at the listed price.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The probability that I would consider buying this shirt is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared to the price we pay, we get reasonable quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared to the quality we get, we pay a reasonable price.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The purchasing relationship delivers us superior net-value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to pay a lot more for Rockets gear than I would for other brands in this category.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to pay a higher price for Rockets products than for other non-Rockets products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please answer this question by selecting: Agree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please answer this question by selecting: Somewhat disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Please answer the following questions with this shirt in mind.  
This shirt is priced at 20 dollars on Amazon (Not including shipping and handling).



---

I am willing to pay \_\_\_\_% more for Rockets merchandise over other types of merchandise.

- 0%
- 5%
- 10%
- 15%
- 20%
- 25%
- 30%
- 31%+

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How often do you purchase Rockets merchandise?

- Frequently
  - Sometimes
  - Rarely
  - Never
- 

How often do you purchase shirts like the one pictured previously?

- Frequently
  - Sometimes
  - Rarely
  - Never
- 

Approximately how much do you spend on Rockets merchandise per year? (Please enter a whole dollar amount)

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## Appendix C – IRB acceptance



Date: November 6, 2018

TO: Zachary Scola, (scola.zach@ku.edu)

FROM: Jocelyn Isley, MS, CIP, IRB Administrator (785-864-7385, [irb@ku.edu](mailto:irb@ku.edu))

RE: **Approval of Initial Study**

The IRB reviewed the submission referenced below on 11/6/2018. The IRB approved the protocol, effective 11/6/2018.

<b>IRB Action: APPROVED</b>		<b>Effective date: 11/6/2018</b>	<b>Expiration Date : 11/5/2023</b>
<b>STUDY DETAILS</b>			
Investigator:	<a href="#">Zachary Scola</a>		
IRB ID:	STUDY00143217		
Title of Study:	Retro marketing in sport: The impact of nostalgic feelings on the sport fan		
Funding ID:	None		
<b>REVIEW INFORMATION</b>			
Review Type:	Initial Study		
Review Date:	11/6/2018		
Documents Reviewed:	• Consent form (information statement), • Protocol, • Survey items		
Exemption Determination:	• (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation		
Additional Information:			

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### **Biographical Sketch**

Zach Scola grew up in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and graduated from Memorial High School in 2010. He received a Bachelor of Science in Sport Management from the University of Wisconsin La-Crosse in 2015. In 2016 Zach was awarded a Masters of Science in Education from the University of Kansas, while serving as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Health, Sport, and Exercise Science Department. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Physical Education (Sport Management specialization) in the Spring of 2019. He is currently employed at the University of New Hampshire as an Assistant Professor of Sport Studies.