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The Few and the Proud: Examining the Need for Belonging and the Need for Distinctiveness in Regards to Sport Choice

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BELONGING, DISTINCTIVENESS, AND SPORT CHOICE

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BACKGROUND

- Personal Experience
 - As a fan of the St. Louis Cardinals, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Oklahoma City Thunder, and the University of Notre Dame
- Sport Choice
 - Although sport is deeply rooted in society, there is a lot of variance within sport choice
 - The “Big Four” sports in the United States are basketball (NBA or NCAA), football (NFL or NCAA), baseball (MLB), and hockey (NHL)

DISTINCTIVENESS

- People have a need to feel unique, special, and different (Lynn & Snyder, 2002)
 - It is an innate biological need (Eastwick & Hunt, 2014)
- Consumers wear clothing that differentiates them from others (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001)

BELONGING

- Feeling like part of a group is an important aspect of mood (Sheldon & Bettencourt, 2002)
- Sport fans are more likely to consume sport if they feel like they belong (Theodorakis, Wann, Nassis, & Luellen, 2012)
- Team identification concerns an individual's psychological connection to a team (Wann, Fahl, Erdmann, & Littleton, 1999; Wann, Melnick Russell, & Pease, 2001)

WHAT MATTERS MORE?



HYPOTHESES

- H1:
 - Individuals who report their favorite sport as a major sport would have higher levels of the need to belong than those who report a different sport
- H2:
 - Individuals who report a mainstream sport as their favorite would have lower levels of the need for distinctiveness than those who report different a sport

METHOD

- Section 1:
 - Demographics assessing age and gender
- Section 2:
 - Sport Fandom Questionnaire (Wann, 2002)
 - 5 Item Scale assessing level of fandom for chosen sport
- Section 3: A measure of need to belong and a measure of need for distinctiveness
 - Need to Belong: 10-item Need to Belong Scale (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2013)
 - Need for Distinction: 4-item Need for Uniqueness Scale (Lynn & Harris, 1997)

DEMOGRAPHICS

- The final sample consisted of 247 participants, 159 of which were female
 - Their average age was 19.87 years old with a standard deviation of 4.20 years

RESULTS

Table 1
Group Statistics found from *t*-test

		<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
SFQ	1	22.72 (9.35)	0.29
	2	25.05 (8.66)	
NtB	1	31.78 (5.88)	0.63
	2	32.47 (7.01)	
NfD	1	11.58 (2.88)	0.96
	2	12.23 (2.86)	

RATIONALE

- Socialization Factors
- Geography
- Family

NEXT STEPS

- A study has been developed that attempts to eliminate the confounds from this study
- Individuals will be asked to read a scenario describing two different teams
 - ANCL (Australian National Cricket League)
 - Equal successes, equal talent, unequal fandom levels

QUESTIONS?
