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Mission Statement

The mission of the *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* is to promote excellence in leadership practice by providing a venue for academics, students, and practitioners to publish current and significant empirical and conceptual research in the arts; humanities; applied, natural, and social sciences; and other areas that tests, extends, or builds leadership theory.

Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

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Contents

Articles

Reviews

Editors' Choice

Index to Volume 7

Editorial

A warm welcome to the Volume 7, Number 3, edition of the *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research.*

Here at the journal, I believe quality is everyone's charge. As W. Edwards Deming once said "Improvement is a never-ending process." With this issue, we are adding an Index to each volume. This increases the journal's 'searchability' in academic search engines, makes the journal more visible, and just delivers a better product.

This issue of the *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* brings our readers a Boston University and University of Massachusetts study exploring coaches' perception regarding the value of participating in the Mindfulness Meditation Training for Sport (MMTS) in a women's Division I soccer. Another collaborative study, this one from Florida State University and the University of Southern Mississippi, addresses consumer characteristics associated with compulsive buying. We also feature an article from North-West University in South Africa, reporting on the application of the SWOT analysis in order to explore the impressions of researchers from different disciplines involved in an integrative multidisciplinary study. In another article, the author, a lawyer and legal expert in European Union (EU) economic law and a former Minister of Economic Affairs in the Israeli Mission to the European Union, re-visits the EU's formal and informal measures toward Israeli civil activities in the territories and analyzes the accumulative legal, political, and economic effect of EU formal measures. We also feature a collaborative article from Indiana University, Central Missouri University, Louisiana State, University and the University of Miami creating a better understanding of the role of athletes in the sport-brand architecture.

This issue, we include reviews of the books *Expressing theology: A guide to writing theology that readers want to read by* Roach & Dominguez, and *Press start to play* by Wilson & Adams. In addition, we feature our Editors' Choice Recent Books of Interest. This issue's "spotlight artist" is Helen M. Weinstein.

As we continue to transform and evolve as a research journal, we wish you a great year ahead.

Onward,

Hagai Gringarten, Ph.D.

Editor-in-Chief

"Wabi Sabi"
2015
Oil on canvas, 36 x 24 in.
by Helen M. Weinstein

Qualitative Study of MMTS: Coaches' Experience

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Abstract

The present study examines the perceptions of a women's Division I soccer coaching staff of their team participating in the Mindfulness Meditation Training for Sport (MMTS), a 6-week twice-weekly mindfulness and compassion training intervention. The purpose of the current study is to explore and report the coaches' perception regarding the value of the MMTS to themselves and to their athletes, and to offer suggestions of how to improve the design and delivery of the MMTS intervention. Three coaches participated in face-to-face interviews after the completion of the MMTS program in order for the researchers to ascertain participant experiences, perceived benefits to their team, and recommendations to improve the design and delivery of the MMTS program. The researchers utilized thematic analysis to code the interviews, and four themes emerged. In the main findings, coaches reported experiencing less emotional reactivity to their own negative thoughts and emotions while coaching on the field (games and practices) as well as observing a positive change in how players emotionally recovered from mistakes on the field. The findings suggest the inclusion of coaches in mindfulness meditation training programs may be beneficial for both coaches and athletes.

Introduction

In response to the lack of research on coaches' perceptions of offering mindfulness meditation programs to athletic teams, the present study examines the perceptions of a women's Division I soccer coaching staff with Mindfulness Meditation Training for Sport (MMTS), a 6-week twice-weekly mindfulness and compassion training intervention. The purpose of the current study is to explore and report the coaches' perception regarding the value of the MMTS to themselves, and to their athletes, and to offer suggestions of how to improve the design and delivery of the MMTS intervention. The purpose of mindfulness training is quite distinct from that of traditional mental skills training. "The primary focus of mindfulness and acceptance-based models is to promote a *modified relationship* with internal experiences (i.e., cognitions, emotions, and physiological sensations), rather than seeking to *change* their form or frequency" (Gardner & Moore, 2012, p. 309). The difference between mindfulness and traditional mental skills training lies in the *mechanism of change*; individuals accepting versus trying to control their internal experience, which results in enhanced mental efficiency (Gardner & Moore, 2012). Essentially, with such efficiency, the athlete gains the capacity for more attention on task-relevant cues versus on internal experience.

Within the sport realm, however, much attention has focused on mental skills training to improve performance (e.g., Frey, Laguna, & Ravizza, 2003). Mental skills training programs typically focus on imagery, goal setting, concentration, confidence, self-talk, and the establishment of routines (Weinberg & Williams, 2006). Practitioners often use these mental skills training techniques to help clients change or suppress emotions and thoughts (Craft, Magyar, Becker, & Feltz, 2003; Maynard, Smith, & Warwick-Evans, 1995). Some theorists question the assumption that athletes can improve psychological functioning and performance via controlling emotions and thoughts (Gardner & Moore, 2012; Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999).

Mindfulness meditation (John, Verma, & Khanna, 2011) and mindfulness-based interventions (Gardner & Moore, 2007) have begun to emerge as an alternative to traditional mental skills training in sport. Baer (2003) defines meditation as "the intentional self-regulation of attention from moment to moment" (p. 125). Kabat-Zinn (2005) defines mindfulness as "an open-hearted, moment-to-moment non-judgmental awareness" (p. 24). Kabat-Zinn, Beall, and Rippe (1985) first used mindfulness meditation (MM) training for collegiate and Olympic rowers. In their study, the rowers reported valuing the training and performance benefits. Subsequently, Kabat-Zinn introduced Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), a time intensive mindfulness meditation based intervention that has proven highly efficacious in reducing medical and psychological symptoms (Keng, Smoski & Robin, 2011).

Kabat-Zinn's mindfulness meditation approach or his MBSR program serve as the basis for most of the interventions in sport. For example, the Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE) approach mirrors MBSR, with MSPE consisting of two and half or three hour weekly sessions for four weeks and uses many of the same components of MBSR. Kaufman, Glass, and Arnkoff (2009) showed MPSE to increase the mindfulness and flow of archers and golfers, and DePetrillo, Kaufman, Glass, and Arnkoff (2009) showed this in runners. In terms of using a Kabat-Zinn mindfulness meditation approach, Aherne, Moran, and Lonsdale (2011) used

a Kabat-Zinn CD (Williams, Teasdale, Segal & Kabat-Zinn, 2007) for their intervention, which included a range of mindfulness practices and resulted in increased experience of flow for the athletes.

Research has begun to highlight the connection between mindfulness interventions and successful sport performance. John, Verma, and Khanna (2011) reported improved performance of elite male shooters who participated in a four-week mindfulness meditation intervention. A study of swimmers found that relatively higher levels of mindfulness and acceptance associated with swimmers' ability to optimize performance (Bernier, Codron, & Fournier, 2009). Gardner and Moore (2007, 2006, 2004) designed the Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment (MAC) approach specifically for athletes to learn to self-regulate attention skills and, ultimately, enhance performance. Researchers using the MAC protocol using a case study design resulted in many benefits including enhanced performance and mindfulness of an adolescent springboard diver (Schwanhausser, 2009), reduced worry and more engagement of a male swimmer, and best sport performance of a female power lifter (Gardner & Moore, 2004).

While existing literature on mindfulness training among athletes is increasing, no literature exists on coaches' perceptions of sport focused mindfulness programs. In general, coaches' perceptions of sport psychology-based interventions determines whether they will offer such programs to their athletes (Thelwell, Weston, Greenlees, & Hutchings, 2008). Voight and Callaghan (2001) found that the coaches are often the ones to bring in sport psychology professionals. Coaches have reported viewing sport psychology consultants and services favorably if they believed their athletes experienced long-term positive effects in competition due to such interventions (Partington & Orlick, 1987).

Method

Three coaches and 19 female soccer players from a Division I varsity women's soccer team from the northeast United States participated in the twelve 30-minute MMTS sessions over the course of six weeks. An experienced meditation facilitator led the sessions twice a week for six weeks. The head coach of the team required that all team members and coaching staff attend the MMTS sessions. The researchers attained Institutional Review Board approval prior to the start of the study. Participants signed an informed consent form, indicating they could terminate participation at any point. Boston University's Institutional Review Board approved the study.

The research team interviewed the coaches one week after the coaches completed the MMTS program. Each individual face-to-face interview lasted for approximately 45 minutes. The researchers' interview prompts included: (1) What did you like about the MMTS program?; (2) What did you not like about the MMTS program? (3) What did you enjoy about the actual practice of meditation? (4) What did you not enjoy about the actual practice of meditation? (5) How could practitioners improve the MMTS program?

Brief Description of Mindfulness Meditation Training in Sport (MMTS)

The mediation instructor designed MMTS to help teach athletes formal mindfulness meditation practices. Specifically, practitioners designed MMTS to help athletes learn to be more accepting of present moment experience, to increase concentration, and to help athletes have a changed relationship to negative emotions within their sport experience. Sedlmeier et al. (2012)

identify the typical tools mindfulness instructors use to teach new mindfulness meditators, which include observation of breath, counting breath, and labeling current thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. The MMTS program integrates all of these mindfulness meditation tools while emphasizing a non-judgmental acceptance of thoughts, feelings, and sensations. In addition, the instructor included specific practice of compassion for self and others in the design of MMTS.

There are four main components of the MMTS training:

1. **Open awareness capacity:** Participants practice being aware of moment-to-moment experiences (e.g., sounds, body sensations, and thoughts), including being aware of breathing in a passive and non-judgmental manner.
2. **Caring thoughts for self and teammates:** In some sessions, the meditation facilitator guided participants on creating and practicing "wishing caring and warm thoughts" toward themselves and their teammates. Though mindfulness based interventions are not typically included in sport, the inclusion of compassion-based practices with mindfulness practices is common within the Buddhist tradition (Marlatt & Kristeller, 1999; Salzberg, 2011). This portion of the MMTS program is based on Loving Kindness Meditation, which emphasizes increasing feelings of warmth and kindness toward self and others (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008) and Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) compassionate mind training (Gilbert, 2011). The MMTS compassion exercise is consistent with *compassion imagery,* a part of Gilbert's (2009) CFT. Gilbert designed compassionate mind training to help clients create a sense of inner safety and warmth toward self and, thus, be more emotionally tolerant.
3. **Concentration exercises:** The meditation facilitator introduced participants to a variety of concentration exercises throughout the training that prompted participants to focus attention on breathing (e.g., counting each inhale and each exhale). These specific mindfulness exercises served as additional points of focus, while the athletes practiced awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance.
4. **Practicing acceptance of negative mind-states:** The meditation facilitator instructed participants to recall negative emotional moments in sport performance and to practice noticing and accepting the associated feelings. This practice of accepting negative mind-states is similar to Siegel's (2010) Stepping into Fear, a mindfulness meditation exercise. Specifically, the meditation facilitator prompted the participants to visualize a scenario that included an aversive memory from sport performance (e.g., frustration or embarrassment), and then the meditation facilitator instructed them to re-experience the emotions and label that state of mind (Baer, 2003). The meditation facilitator designed this exercise to help participants practice recognizing, identifying, and accepting negative thoughts and feelings related to threatening sport specific events.

An expert mindfulness meditation facilitator led the sessions. He explained and discussed practices of mindfulness for about half of the session. The remaining 15 minutes of each session was devoted to mindfulness meditation practice and discussion. The facilitator encouraged participants to practice mindfulness meditation independently for five to ten minutes each day.

Data Analysis

The researcher team audiotaped and transcribed the interviews verbatim. For interviewer reliability, both the first and second authors read the transcripts and checked them against the audiotapes. The researcher team analyzed and coded the transcripts, and the team discussed the themes and sub-themes until the first three authors reached agreement about the themes, sub-themes and placement of raw data units within those sub-themes (Patton, 2002). The research team broke down the interview data based on the following: the coaches' pauses included in their responses (such as, "um"…), points at which the coaches obviously ended a sentence, and points at which the topic of the given coaches' answers shifted. The research team derived raw data from each segment, which ranged in length from short phrases to entire paragraphs. The research team gave all raw data a brief title (i.e., code) to convey the given participant's meaning. The research team grouped together similar codes to form sub-themes, which then formed themes.

Results

The interview data produced four main themes: (1) Coaches' benefits in coaching and life; (2) Coaches valuing specific aspects of the MMTS program; (3) Coaches offering constructive feedback and program recommendations; and (4) Coach identifying athlete benefits from the MMTS program. Table 1 outlines the four themes and the sub-themes within each theme, which are in order of highest to lowest frequency.

Table 1
Distribution of Themes and Sub-themes through Mindfulness Meditation Training

Theme (*n*)	Sub-theme (*n*)
1. Coaches' benefits in coaching and life *(3)*	1. Increased sensitivity to players' feelings *(3)* 2. More aware of [coaches'] emotions/ reactions outside work *(3)* 3. New ways of interacting with players *(2)* 4. Heightened awareness of coaches' own emotions and reactions while coaching *(1)*
2. Coaches valuing specific aspects of the MMTS program *(3)*	1. Valued role of the MMTS facilitator (3) 2. Enjoyed activities and structural aspects of MMTS *(3)*

3. Coaches offering constructive feedback and program recommendations *(3)*	1. Time of day and season *(3)* 2. Cautious about attributing all positive changes to MMTS *(3)* 3. Questioned how program could have been more engaging from the start *(2)* 4. Questioned how to maintain athlete progress post-program *(1)*
4. Coaches identifying athletes' benefits from the MMTS program *(3)*	1. Viewed MMTS as valuable mental training for athletes (3) 2. Enhanced coach-athlete connection (3) 3. More efficient emotional recovery from mistakes (2) 4. Statement of care and warmth toward self and teammates (2)

Note: The number in parenthesis, to the right of each theme and sub-theme, represents the total number of coaches represented in each theme or sub-theme.

Theme 1: Coaches' benefits in coaching and life

The first theme represents the coaches' reported benefits gained through participation in the MMTS program. Coaches noted increased awareness of their players' and their own feelings on and off the field. Coaches reported benefits of the MMTS program in both their professional and personal lives.

Sub-theme 1: Increased sensitivity to players' feelings. All three of the coaches reported becoming more focused on and better able to understand their players' emotional and mental states through participation in the MMTS program. Coach 1 indicated the MMTS program led her to consider the possibility that the athletes' mistakes on the field may not always relate to soccer. Coach 1 described developing "a real sensitivity to the players' mental state," and Coach 1 offered her insight that non-sport related issues might be the explanation for some of her players' apparent lack of focus on the field. Instead of repeatedly questioning the player about her mistakes on the field, Coach 3 reported that, based her participation in MMTS, she began to consider an alternative method to her coaching approach. Coach 1 recalls asking herself, "What else was going on, and what might be getting in the way [of optimal sport performance]?" Coach 1's responses conveyed a heightened appreciation, and evoked empathy, for the pressures their athletes experienced. Coach 2 also noted her new heightened awareness, from participating in MMTS, helped her recognize that athletes have a lot to deal with on and off the field, "You know we don't have a lot of time, the athletes don't have a lot of time. There's a lot of demands on them…."

Sub-theme 2: More aware of [coaches'] emotions-reactions outside work. All three coaches discussed the influence that the MMTS program had on their lives outside of coaching athletes. Coach 3 emphasized that participation in the MMTS program helped her to develop skills for coping with stressful moments, not just while coaching. She stated, "I am a little calmer.

When dealing with frustrations or anger or my emotions, I can separate myself a little more… and see the emotion and label the emotion and not get as fired up….” Coaches reported participation in the MMTS program was personally beneficial due to their learning to be less reactive to aversive emotions in life outside of their work.

Sub-theme 3: New ways of interacting with players. Two of the coaches described gaining new strategies for outreach to players. Coach 3 indicated the MMTS program heightened her awareness of the importance of players being mindful (i.e., staying focused on the present moment) during practice and competition. This coach discussed incorporating new drills in her typical coaching repertoire to help players achieve mindful practice of sport specific skills. Coach 3 purposefully introduced distractions during practice time, “… I would ask them to call out a color or a section. Things were numbered or colored. And they would have to see it, but look at me… and still stay relaxed with all the distractions.” Coach 3 observed players demonstrating improvement in tolerating distractions while remaining focused on task relevant cues. In this way, the coach was able to include skill-building exercises in practice related to mindfulness with her adding intentional distractions and concurrently expecting that the athletes remain task focused.

Sub-Theme 4: Heightened awareness of coaches' own emotions and reactions while coaching. Coach 2 discussed how the MMTS program helped increase her awareness of her own emotions and reactions while coaching, preventing a reactionary response to athlete errors. She stated, “Emotion that sort of boils up, when you're frustrated or angry or disappointed [while coaching]. Being able to manage that in the moment….” This statement reflects Coach 2 recognizing the benefit of being able to use her newly acquired mindfulness skills while coaching.

Theme 2: Coaches valuing specific aspects of the MMTS program

The second theme encompasses the coaches' appreciation for the MMTS facilitator and certain structural aspects of the program as well as the coaches' enjoyment of particular activities. Specifically, the coaches noted the facilitator's sincere engagement and willingness to connect with the team. Coaches also commented on specific activities and structural aspects of the MMTS program that were enjoyable and beneficial for coaches as well as athletes.

Sub-theme 1: Valued role of the MMTS facilitator. All three coaches spoke positively about the meditation facilitator's ability to build rapport. Each participant noted that the facilitator had attended one of the team's games during the six-week program and that this choice had a powerful effect on the facilitator's ability to build rapport with the team. Subsequently, the facilitator was able to relate future meditation activities to the team's on-field dynamics and to the team's overall sport experience. Coach 3 said the meditation facilitator attending the game was, “one of the best parts of the program.” Coach 1 clearly valued that the meditation facilitator attended a game, noting that he both developed a stronger rapport with the team, and he demonstrated a greater ability to make connections between the formal meditation practice and on the field performance in subsequent sessions. This same coach stated,

> . . . that was a critical moment . . . the connection he had with us was greater 'cause . . . he'd been to a game. And then . . . he was able to say this is exactly how it can impact you while you are on the field….

Olympic coaches who were more positive about mental skills training professionals working with athletes when the mental skills training professionals showed interest and eagerness to learn about athletes' respective sports, and preparation programs through firsthand observation also was observable in this study when the facilitator attended a soccer game (Partington & Orlick, 1987).

Sub-theme 2: Enjoyed activities and structural aspects of MMTS. All three coaches appreciated specific meditation practices and the logistical execution of the program. Coach 2 enjoyed the four-part focusing activity, which included the meditation facilitator asking coaches and players to shift from one mindfulness activity to another. Specifically, the activity included four mindfulness meditation practices, three minutes each. For this coach, the quick shifts between activities highlighted the importance and benefit of practicing staying focused on the present moment. Two coaches thought that both the length of meditation practice, within each session, and the length of the entire program were appropriate. Coach 2 described liking the length of the program and cautioned against shortening the program to less than six weeks, "You could sort of feel a breakthrough after four weeks because it took practice." The same coach noted how it took some time for all participants to understand both how to practice and to experience some of the benefits of MMTS.

The coaches also spoke favorably about other components that were included throughout the twelve sessions. For example, Coach 1 appreciated that the facilitator would use a lesson plan to lead activities and provided participants with written summaries of each session. These summaries helped guide one coach during her independent practice, ". . . it was good to have that piece of paper to refer to, especially early on, to stay on track."

Two coaches appreciated that the mediation facilitator did not simply lecture about how to meditate; rather the six-week training program allowed participants to engage in various meditation exercises. Coach 2 stated, "It wasn't just theory, it was real practice . . . you can talk all you want and stand up at the board and teach about a subject . . . but we all had a chance to try it. We were meditating." The coach's reflection emphasizes the importance of guided practice when meditation facilitators initially introduce participants to MM practices.

Theme 3: Coaches offering constructive feedback and program recommendations

Theme 3 represents coaches' feedback on how to improve the MMTS program. Some of the coaches' feedback reflected the coaches' recommendation for change regarding when during the day to hold the program sessions, facilitator's involvement, and in the program's structure. All three coaches were hesitant to attribute all team psycho-emotional improvements to the team's participation in the MMTS program.

Sub-theme 1: Time of day, season. The majority of critical comments that the coaches made about the MMTS program pertained to the timing of the program. Generally, the coaches reflected that the program sessions were too late in the day, which was the time the coaching staff chose. The sessions were after practice and weight lifting sessions, during the players' typical dinnertime. Coach 2 reflected, "I really can't think of anything negative except for the timing of when we did it…at the end of practice, at the end of lift and we didn't have a break for food . . . the players are hungry and tired . . . ." Coach 3 noted that she would have preferred more than two meditation sessions per week. The coaches also expressed that it would have been more beneficial for players to go through meditation training before practice, as opposed to after

practice, for example Coach 3 suggested ". . . maybe before [training] so the kids can apply it, before training they can [then] go out onto the field and see what he's talking about."

Sub-theme 2: Cautious about attributing all positive changes to MMTS. All three coaches were clear that participation in the program might not have caused directly any positive shifts that they recognized in themselves and their players. They noted that other factors, such as some older players having transitioned off the team by the spring season, might have contributed to the perceived benefits of the MMTS program. Coach 2 stated, "There's lots of factors for [the improvements] . . . it's hard to say what was the cause and effect."

Sub-theme 3: Questioned how program could have been more engaging from the start. Two coaches commented that the experience might have been more effective had some additional steps been taken early in the program. For instance, one coach indicated that too much time may have been spent building an understanding of meditation and that the team could have begun practicing actual meditation exercises earlier in the program. Coach 2 said,

> So it's possible we needed to lay the foundation first before we got to that [meditation practice], so that might have had to happen for it to move forward to the next stage, but if not, if maybe that could start earlier.

Coach 1 suggested that having the facilitator observe the team prior to beginning the program could have been helpful because it would have enabled the facilitator to become familiar with the way that the team functioned before interacting with the athletes. Coach 1 suggested that had this happened, the facilitator might have been able to make more connections earlier in the six-week period between the team and the meditation exercises he introduced.

Sub-theme 4: Questioned how to maintain athlete progress post-program. When discussing how the program might be improved, Coach 3 suggested that MMTS include follow-up activities and questions for athletes to practice what they had learned during the MMTS program. This coach recommended some sort of summer program or set of reminders during the off-season, "Just to keep them engaged." She coach stated that unless MMTS offered support for the players to continue practicing MM, the athletes likely would not continue to practice MM.

Theme 4: Coach identifying athlete benefits from the MMTS program

Theme 4 explores what the coaches perceived as the benefits for the team and themselves through their participation in the MMTS program. Coaches believed the MMTS program provided their athletes with a unique mental skill for handling emotions and helped athletes recover more effectively and efficiently from mistakes. Coaches noted that their athletes benefited from the meditation facilitator helping the players create a caring mantra to motivate and inspire the team during performance. Additionally, the coaches noticed the relationship between themselves and their players deepened.

Sub-theme 1: Viewed MMTS as valuable mental training for athletes. All three coaches indicated that the MMTS program provided an avenue for their players to mentally prepare for competition. Coach 2, while acknowledging that people likely have different views on the exact percentage, said "at least 25 percent" of sport performance is mental, hence the importance of mental training for players. All three coaches spoke directly about the necessity of such mental training for players. Coach 3 noted the value of the MMTS program even if athletes

13

did not continue formal meditation after the conclusion of the program because at the very least the players were exposed to techniques to control their emotions,

> I thought there was value in it for them because I think a lot of their success is directly related to their ability to manage their emotions . . . . It was a way for them to help manage their emotions as athletes.

The coaches also spoke about liking "the idea of it [the program]," noted by Coach 1, meaning that the coaches appreciated that the MMTS program was a unique type of mental training for their athletes. Coach 3 highlighted this sentiment, "I liked the idea of . . . of giving the players an opportunity to think about their training, and how they get to their peak performance in a different way." This coach also described the importance of adding mental training to the physical and tactical training of practice, "Giving that [mindfulness] skill . . . , opening that up for the players, is huge because some of them really will take that on board and that will really help their game."

Sub-theme 2: Enhanced coach-athlete connection. The coaching staff meditating *with* athletes deepened the level of closeness that coaches felt with their players. Coach 2 highlighted the unique dynamic, "It wasn't just a coaching staff experiencing it, but I was experiencing it with the players." Also, as the coaches described the program, they used the term "we." The repeated use of the word "we" conveyed the idea that the coaches participating in the program with their players created a sense of "we're all in this together". Coach 2 used the word "we" multiple times when referring to the mantra developed during the meditation program,

> When *we* were all meditating and *we* were able to visualize and focus on this idea of [the mantra], it was a significant moment for *us* all because . . . it's like they could apply that immediately . . . I think some of them did that, actually practiced in game moments where they could go back to that motto and . . . it just stuck.

Sub-theme 3: More efficient emotional recovery from mistakes. Two coaches reported that they observed players being able to better able to recover emotionally from mistakes on the field. Coach 1 speculated that MMTS broadened her players' awareness such that the players learned to more effectively respond emotionally to the given mistakes. Coach 1 stated, "They became more aware of that and they were trying to work on not . . . going to that place. Then chasing the ball to get it back, instead of being angry at themselves for that second or two seconds." Coach 1 reflected, "I saw the difference in [one player's] response. [She] became aware . . . she stopped judging it [her mistakes] as harshly [as usual], which is pretty huge."

Through the MMTS program, coach 3 also reported that some players learned to recognize their immediate negative reactions to mistakes, she stated "they were more aware of what happened to them in that moment. So . . . I think that is really positive . . . ." The coach's statement suggests that with players' enhanced awareness that the players had more of a choice in how to react on the field after making a mistake. Coach 1 described how a specific player "was more immediate" following a mistake. Prior to participating in the MMTS program, the coach reported that when the athlete would lose a ball, "her head drops and she doesn't go get it back as fast or at all. And now [post program] you could actually see [observation of athlete's thought process] 'Lost the ball—go get it back!'" This finding is consistent with the athletes' reported

experience (Baltzell, Caraballo, Chipman, & Hayden, 2014). Coach 1 felt that the program was particularly beneficial for players who were "super, super hard on themselves."

Sub-theme 4: Statement of care and warmth toward self and teammates. Two of the coaches emphasized that players experience a positive impact from the "mantra", a shared, agreed upon short saying, of athletes wishing themselves and their teammates well. Coaches noted that through the MMTS program, the athletes were able to create this saying, which helped them stay motivated and positive on the field. The coaches further noted that the players embraced this mantra and that using it proved meaningful to the players on numerous levels. Additionally, Coach 2 emphasized the value of having an empowering mantra to reference in sport performance and beyond, ". . . I think [the team's phrase of wishing self and others well] can be useful not only on the field, [it] is a life skill . . . it's an affirmation."

Discussion

MMTS is a mindfulness meditation intervention infused with a compassionate approach to help athletes tolerate emotionally difficult sport moments and to focus on task relevant cues when participating in practice and performance. The coaches reported that both coaches and players benefited from participation in MMTS. The three coaches reported gaining emotional awareness, learning to extend this awareness to players, a changed relationship to aversive emotions (both on and off the field), and provided practical recommendations about what to retain and improve regarding MMTS, in general.

The coaches noted that some of the athletes' experienced an improved relationship with difficult emotions, which Baltzell, Carballo, Chipman, and Hayden (2014) also found in the athlete reported experience. Based on quantitative analysis, the athletes did in fact increase mindfulness as a result of participating in MMTS (Baltzell & LoVerme-Ahktar, 2014). The coaches reported that the athletes were able to reduce reactionary responses with regard to emotions and thoughts that were typically problematic for performance, reflected in sub-theme 3 *more efficient emotional recovery from mistakes (of* theme 4, *perceived athletes' benefits from the MMTS program)*. The coaches' perceptions were consistent with the athletes' reports of their own experiences (Baltzell et al., 2014). Similarly, Frewen, Evans, Maraj, Dozois, and Partridge (2008) reported that MM study participants experienced a decrease in frequency and intensity of negative thoughts.

Coaches' participation in MMTS contributed to the coaches experiencing more emotional awareness, and more adaptive responses to such emotions when coaching in pressure situations, reflected by sub-theme 4: *heightened awareness of coaches' own emotions and reactions while coaching* (in Theme 1, *coaches' benefits in coaching and life)*. This finding is of particular interest given that common challenges among coaches include stress and associated aversive emotionally charged responses. Bowden and Yow (2007) reported the negative impacts of coaching stress can sometimes cause them to react emotionally, in an ineffective way, when interacting with their players.

The coaching staff taking part in the MMTS program also seemed to strengthen the coaches' awareness of the psycho-emotional state of their players, reflected in sub-theme *increased sensitivity to players*. Within the sub-theme, perhaps most importantly for performance, coaches also noticed athletes' ability to recover more quickly from mistakes on the field. Instead of giving up the players would visibly accept disappointment and redirect focus more quickly on the task

relevant cues.

The coaches discussed a new appreciation for the issues facing their athletes outside of the sport domain and began considering *new ways of interacting with players*. Also, coaches felt an enhanced connection to their athletes through their shared participation in the MMTS program. The coaches described the MMTS program as a collective experience, where both coaches and players were learning, facing challenges, and gaining insight together.

Additionally, each of the three coaches noted appreciation for the meditation facilitator. Participants stated feeling that the facilitator was an expert on mindfulness meditation, was relatable, and put a great deal of effort into both teaching the material and getting to know the coaches and athletes. This positive assessment of the facilitator likely influenced the coaches' assessments of the overall program, which is consistent with past research (Partington & Orlick, 1987). The coaches' constructive feedback and suggestions about how the MMTS program included suggestions about how to improve MMTS, with their suggestions primarily focused on future coaches who offer MMTS to their teams to opt to provide the MMTS training prior to practice, avoid offering MMTS during a mealtime, and provide a follow-up support for athletes to continue the mindfulness training beyond the 12 MMTS sessions.

Future Research

Future research is needed that focuses on exposing coaches to mindfulness meditation training, crafted specifically for the coaches only. Such research should examine the impact of mindfulness meditation interventions on coaches' abilities to be mindful on and off the field. It would be valuable to explore whether or not such exposure contributes to reducing the experience of stress for the coach or helps build awareness of internal emotional experience when coaching. We suggest that targeted research should consider how enhancing mindfulness in coaching could, in turn, impact the athletes. We contend that further research should consider the impact on both coaches and players, who participate in a mental training intervention together. We have yet to determine how such joint participation impacts factors such as team cohesion or the relationship between the coaches and the team.

Limitations

The coaches provided generally positive feedback about the MMTS program and noted both the coaches' and their players' improved ability to tolerate aversive emotions and to focus back on task relevant cues. However, we contend that the head coach's preconceived belief in the value of meditation training may have inflated this positive feedback and noted improvements regardless of whether or not the researchers conducted the study. The head coach independently invited the meditation facilitator to work with the team for six-weeks. In addition, the data offers only a snapshot of a case example of how one group of coaches responded to participation in such a program.

Conclusion

This is the first study to examine the experiences of collegiate coaches, who participated in a mindfulness meditation based training for sport program alongside their athletes. These

interviews were perhaps one of the first opportunities for coaches to reflect upon and report any potential benefits or difficulties encountered when a sport team and coaches participate in a mindfulness meditation program. The coaches reported benefits of greater self-awareness and enhanced emotional control in their coaching, in their lives outside of sport, and benefits to their athletes – particularly a positively changed relationship to aversive sport-related emotions. Including coaches in a mindfulness-based training program may help to alleviate some job related stress, increase coach sensitivity of their players' emotional experience, and thus, empower them to coach their players more effectively. We recommend that practitioners invite coaches to participate in their mindfulness-based interventions for teams and consider tailoring programs for the coaches.

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Discussion Questions

1. The MMTS program consisted of 12 sessions over a 6-week period. When in the athletic season would it be most beneficial for the mindfulness facilitator to hold the sessions (e.g., pre-season, mid-season)? Would it be advantageous for MMTS facilitators to offer the coaches and athletes a refresher course or a check-in meeting on mindfulness? If so, when in the season might this be most useful?

2. Would having the mindfulness facilitator observe the team and coaches before teaching the MMTS program be helpful or beneficial to the coaches and athletes? If so, how long would the observation period need to be? What are the potential advantages or disadvantages to the MMTS facilitator making such athlete or team observations?

3. Athletic trainers spend copious amounts of time with athletes and their coaches. Is there a benefit in including athletic trainers in the MMTS program? Why or why not? Would it be more beneficial to separate their training from the athletes or the coaches? If so, what could the potential benefits of having coach-focused, athlete-focused, and athletic trainer-focused MMTS programs?

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Consumer Characteristics Associated with Compulsive Buying

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Abstract

Compulsive buying is part of overall consumer spending in the U.S. and can be a personal problem for those whose financial resources cannot support it. The present study describes three psychological traits that appear to promote compulsive buying. Data from a survey of 464 U.S. college students show that compulsive buying relates positively to brand engagement in self-concept and to status consumption, but negatively to being frugal. In this study, females and younger buyers show more compulsive buying, but income does not relate to the focal concept. The findings suggest that while demographic characteristics might explain or predict compulsive buying, it is primarily a psychological phenomenon. Still, compulsive buying is only one element of a constellation of individual differences that predispose some consumers to buy compulsively.

Keywords: compulsive buying, college students, consumer behavior, status consumption, brand engagement, frugality.

Introduction

How consumers behave in the marketplace is far from the ideal rational model economic theory describes. Sometimes, it even falls short of the less stringent decision models appearing in consumer behavior texts. In addition to the limits on rationality theories of "bounded rationality" or "satisficing" propose, emotions and environmentally conditioned responses drive many consumer decisions (Oliveira & Green, 2012). An even less rational pattern of buying is *compulsive buying,* O'Guinn and Farber (1989, p. 155) define as *chronic, repetitive purchasing behaviors that are a response to negative events or feelings*. Compulsive buying is important to policy makers, financial counselors, educators, and practitioners for a variety of reasons. Many studies find compulsive buying has negative consequences for individuals. These negative consequences include substantial debt (Lachance, 2012), credit card abuse, and debt (Joireman et al., 2010), and purchasing products that have a premium, an additional product, or service attached for free or a low price (Prendergast et al., 2008). Moreover, the proportion of consumers engaging in compulsive buying seems to be increasing (Ditmar, 2005).

Studies reveal several trait antecedents that correlate with and likely underlie or to motivate compulsive buying. The most important of these appear to be impulse control and materialistic tendencies (Bratko et al., 2013; Ditmar, 2005). Although these explanations are important to understanding the etiology of compulsive buying and can aid those seeking to help individuals resist the behavior, they only account for a portion of the variance in compulsive buying and leave open the opportunity to explore further possible antecedents, and thus gain a more granular view. The purpose of the present study is to add empirical evidence bearing on these presumed motivators by introducing the notions of brand engagement in self-concept, status consumption, and frugality as partial explanations for compulsive buying.

Literature Review

Compulsive Buying

We would like initially to clarify our use of the term "compulsive buying" in this study because it has more than one meaning, depending on the context. The first meaning in the literature terms the phenomenon "compulsive buying disorder" (CBD) and describes it as "excessive shopping cognitions and buying behavior that leads to distress or impairment" (Black, 2007, p. 14). In this sense, compulsive buying is a clinical disorder needing professional psychiatric treatment. Black (2007, p. 14) goes on to state:

> Subjects with CBD report a preoccupation with shopping, prepurchase tension or anxiety, and a sense of relief following the purchase. CBD associates with significant psychiatric comorbidity, particularly mood and anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, eating disorders, and other disorders of impulse control.

Having a 5.8% prevalence in the general U.S. population (Black, 2007), this understanding of the term is more relevant to a clinical setting than to our purpose and forms the theoretical background for the compulsive buying scale Faber and O'Guinn (1989) developed. Researchers often use this scale to distinguish compulsive buyers from "normals."

For our study, however, we understand compulsive buying to be less a discrete diagnosis and more a continuum of behavior akin to a personality or individual difference variable. In this sense, we follow Edwards (1993), Desarbo and Edwards (1996), and Palan et al. (2011), who distinguish impulsive buying from compulsive buying. External stimuli such as offering a premium, a coupon, or a deal often stimulate impulsive buying. In addition, being in a good mood or having depleted willpower can trigger an impulsive purchase (Faber, 2011). In contrast, our understanding of compulsive buying is that it is more like "an episodic urge to buy" (Palan et al., 2011, p. 83). We thus treat compulsive buying as a continuously distributed variable representing degrees to which consumers differ from each other in this pattern of behavior. This approach is consistent with Rook's (1999, p. 330) presentation of a continuum of buying behavior ranging from a low of "completely rational choice" based on perfect planning to the extreme of "compulsive buying" as the clinical disorder. Key to this approach is explicitly acknowledging that we treat compulsive buying as an outcome, where consumers describe the extent to which they engage in this type of behavior along Rook's continuum. Estimates of the percentage of consumers classified as "compulsive buyers" typically range from 6% to 9% (Norum, 2008). In our study, 5.4% of our sample had compulsive buying scores above two standard deviations above the mean score.

Studies of compulsive buying suggest a variety of motivations. The most important appears to be that consumers sometimes desire to improve their emotional state. Indeed, several studies show higher levels of compulsive buying correlate with low self-esteem (e.g., Roberts, 1998) or high anxiety (Norum, 2008). Compulsive buying can be a response to a negative state of mind where purchases temporarily elevate the consumer's mood. The strongest motivating characteristics associated with compulsive buying appear to be materialistic tendencies (Ditmar, 2005) and lack of impulse control (Billieux et al., 2008; Desarbo & Edwards, 1996).

The many studies of compulsive buying provide a consistent picture of this consumer behavior, agreeing that it is more typical of female consumers, consumers who tend to be younger, consumers who exhibit high levels of anxiety, have a short- rather than a long-term time horizon, and have materialistic tendencies. This picture is incomplete, however, as Roberts and Jones (2001, p. 236) note. They call for further research to include "familial, biological, psychological, and sociological variables." We propose to do just that by proposing that brand engagement in self-concept, status consumption, and frugality also contribute to compulsive buying.

Brand Engagement

Sprott et al. (2009, p. 92) define *Brand Engagement in Self-Concept* (BESC) as "an individual difference measure representing consumers' propensity to include important brands as a part of how they view themselves." This concept captures how consumers use brands to form and to express self-concepts and identities (Elliott, 2004). Some consumers see brands as relevant to their lives and form bonds with them (Fournier, 1998). Beyond bonds, consumers can use brands to construct how they see themselves and portray that self to others. Sprott et al. (2009) conceptualize BESC as an individual difference variable where some consumers are more likely to use brands to express their self-concepts than others do. They developed an 8-item self-report scale to operationalize this concept. A higher score on the BESC scale positively correlates with better recalling brand names, paying more attention to brands, and purchasing higher priced

goods because of a preferred brand (Sprott et al., 2009). Scores on the BESC scale also positively and strongly (r = .42, $p \leq$ .01) correlate with materialism (Sprott et al., 2009, p. 94) and with involvement in fashion clothing (r = .38, $p <$ .01) (Goldsmith et al., 2012). Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2012) find that scores on the BESC positively correlate (.26) with a measure of engagement with a specific clothing brand; and Goldsmith, Flynn, and Clark (2011) show that BESC positively correlates with liking to shop in two student samples. These findings all suggest that BESC predicts shopping and buying and thus is a candidate for a predictor of compulsive buying. Brand engaged consumers see branded goods as important to their self-image and are more likely to spend money to gain this form of self-expression. Brand engaged consumers might shop compulsively as they seek brands for their ability to express self-concept. Thus:

> H1: Brand engagement in self-concept and compulsive buying correlate positively with each other.

Status Consumption

Status seeking is a universal human motivation as people strive for respect and esteem within their social circles. The desire to achieve status or a position of respect within one's social group is something intrinsic to the human condition. It is a basic human need according to sociologists including Maslow (1970) and manifests itself in many aspects of human life. More recently, Saad and Vongas (2009) show that status consumption increases testosterone levels in men, thus offering a biological basis for this behavior.

Status consumption refers to a specific marketplace embodiment of the motivation for status. Status seeking often manifests in the display of objects or even service use with the intent of gaining recognition within one's social group. Marketers sell houses, clothing, jewelry, cell phones, cars, and all manner of publicly consumed products as generators of envy and admiration from family, friends, and passersby. Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn (1999) define status consumption as "the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others" (Eastman et al., 1999, p. 41). Eastman et al. (1999) developed a 5-item self-report scale (the Status Consumption Scale or SCS) to operationalize this construct. Status consumption correlates positively (r = .46) with brand engagement with self-concept (Goldsmith, et al., 2012), but describes a facet of consumer psychology unique and different from BESC.

Researchers have examined status consumption both from the point of view of discovering who consumes for status and from the perspective of what items people consume to gain status (Eastman et al., 1999; Gabriel & Lang, 2006; Hader, 2008). Status consumption relates to other consumer behavior variables. Status consumers score high on measures of opinion leadership, and normative social influence impacts them more than it does other consumers (Clark, Zboja, & Goldsmith, 2007). Several studies link status consumption positively to materialistic tendencies (e.g., Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Heaney et al., 2005) and negatively to role relaxed consumption, a consumption style emphasizing utilitarian benefits over superficial ones (Clark et al., 2007).

Roberts (2000) reports a positive relationship (r = .30) between compulsive buying and status consumption among a sample of U.S. college students, and Norum (2008) finds a similar positive relationship with a related concept, the power-prestige value of money. Moreover, one could expect that buying to gain status also motivates compulsive buying because status needs are seemingly unlimited. Supporting this surmise, Palan et al. (2011) provides evidence that prestige needs motivate student consumers to overuse credit cards and to shop excessively. Thus:

H2: Status consumption and compulsive buying positively correlate with each other.

Frugality

Finally, we expect that frugality or restrained spending and careful use of goods operate to reduce compulsive buying. Lastovicka et al. (1999) set the stage for this topic when they defined "frugality" as "a unidimensional consumer lifestyle trait characterized by the degree to which consumers are both restrained in acquiring and in resourcefully using economic goods and services to achieve longer-term goals" (p. 88). More recent literature builds on this definition to distinguish the concept of frugality from "miserliness," which denotes stinginess and excessive interest in money and saving (Hur et al., 2011), and to link it more to the ideas of prudence and care in managing personal resources. Evans (2011) even gives frugality an ethical dimension when he shows how wise use of money and other resources is similar to sustainable consumption. For our purpose, we think of frugality as denoting thrifty and prudent use of money, good stewardship of one's resources, and the motivation to spend wisely. Goldsmith and Flynn (2015) and Goldsmith et al. (2014) find that frugality differs from "frugal behavior" in that the former is an individual difference variable, much like a personality trait, that distinguishes people along a continuum from the very frugal to the opposite characteristic, wasteful spending and squandering money. Moreover, they distinguished *extrinsic frugality*, a situational occurrence, from *intrinsic frugality*, arising from more deep-seated motivations and cultural background. Finally, although Lastovicka et al. (1999) propose that frugality is unidimensional, the wording of their scale and the results from its use (Goldsmith et al., 2014) show that two related components, careful spending and taking care of material possessions, likely comprise frugality.

Most all discussions of frugality share the ideas that it implies prudent and careful use of money and possessions. Thus, we can propose that the frugal tendency and the tendency toward compulsive buying oppose each other. Compulsive buying implies wasteful spending, a lack of planning and consideration in spending, and an urge to spend with no specific goal other than the relief of anxiety. Moreover, empirical research shows that frugality and materialism operate against each other (Goldsmith et al., 2014; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015) and correlate negatively with brand engagement in self-concept and with status consumption (Goldsmith et al., 2014). Thus, we confidently propose a negative relationship between the tendency to frugality and compulsive buying. Keeping in mind that external conditions impose some frugal behavior that internal frugal tendencies do not drive, some compulsive buyers might not demonstrate this negative relationship because they might have to restrain their purchasing for lack of money. Thus:

H3: Frugality and compulsive buying correlate negatively with each other.

Control Variables

We include age and gender in the analysis as control variables to account for variance in the dependent variable attributable to demographic characteristics of the sample that are not of substantive interest because they are not motives or drivers of compulsive buying, but might correlate systematically with it. Some evidence exists that shows these systematic relationships in previous studies. For instance, O'Guinn and Faber (1989) find a negative association between age and compulsive buying among a sample of U.S. adults. Newer studies confirm this finding in other countries. For instance, Ditmar (2005) describes this negative relationship in survey of U.K. consumers, and Otero-Lopez and Pol (2013) report a small negative association between age and compulsive buying among Spanish consumers. Khare (2013, 2014) also finds a weak negative association between age and compulsive buying among Indian consumer. Ergin (2010), however, reports a positive relationship with age among his sample of Turkish adults and college students, but this result appears to be due to the unusual nature of his sample.

With regard to gender, the evidence is even less ambiguous. As Ditmar (2005) noted, "probably the most consistent finding in over 30 research studies on compulsive buying is that women are disproportionately affected" (p. 470). Many fewer studies, however, address the relationship between income and compulsive buying, and the few that do (e.g., Edwards, 1993) fail to find a consistent, pronounced relationship or none at all (Roberts, 2000). A recent review summarizes this lack of evidence and concludes: "Several studies have found that compulsive buying is unrelated to income" (Faber, 2011, p. 184). For this reason and because personal income fails to correlate with any of the focal variables in our study, we did not include income as a control variable in the analyses. As Carlson and Wu (2012) recommend, past evidence gives us a sound basis for including age and gender as control variables, so we formally hypothesize their relationships with compulsive buying. Thus:

H4: Age and compulsive buying correlate negatively with each other.
H5: Being female and compulsive buying correlate positively with each other.

Method

Data Collection and Participants

We collected the data via a survey of undergraduate students at two state universities in the U.S. southeast. This cohort of consumers is of particular relevance to the purpose of the study because millennials comprise such a large consumer segment. They use credit heavily and thus often carry a lot of debt; and they are at a life stage in which people form many of the consumption attitudes and habits that will guide their future behavior (Lachance, 2012). After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, the researchers made the survey available to students taking business classes via the online survey service, Qualtrics. We used two universities to enhance diversity in the data. Although students represent a convenient source of subjects, clinical studies show that compulsive buying emerges in the teen years (Christenson et al., 1994; Schlosser et al., 1994); and in addition, these subjects are active consumers whose welfare is a focus of genuine concern (e.g., Joireman et al., 2010). The questionnaire contained the measures of BESC, status consumption, frugality, and the measure of compulsive buying along with a

measure of Extraversion (Flynn & Swilley, 2007) to evaluate the influence of common method variance (CMV) because all the scale items used the same response format: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. We also randomized the order in which the program presented the items for each scale to the participants, which also should help mitigate CMV (Conway & Lance, 2010). We placed the questionnaires on the online survey Website, and e-mailed the URL to the students along with a consent form. The e-mails directed the students to read the consent form and to click on the URL, which took them to the questionnaire.

To enhance data quality, the questionnaire contained two questions: "If you read this item, do not respond to it." If the participants responded to either of these items, we flagged them as potentially poor sources of data owing to blind checking, where the participant may fail to read (or maybe understand) the question (Oppenheimer et al., 2009). Of the original 509 completed questionnaires, the quality items flagged 45 respondents. We removed these subjects from the analysis, leaving an effective sample size of 464, although missing responses for age (10) did reduce samples for some statistical tests. The effective sample consisted of 259 (56%) females and 205 (44%) males, with an average age of 21 years (SD = 3.8). Mean age did not differ statistically between the men and the women. The majority (92.4%) earned incomes below $29,999 per year, although the reported yearly incomes did occur in every income category. Note that age and income positively correlated (tau-b = .18) as one would expect. Seventy-two percent (333) of the sample was White or Caucasian, 14% was Hispanic, 9% African American, with 3% in an "other" category, and 8 observations or 2% missing.

Measures

The survey questionnaire operationalized the constructs via multi-item scales from published sources (see Table 1). We measured the dependent variable, compulsive buying, with five items from Edwards's (1993) longer scale. We chose this scale as a parsimonious measure based on factor loadings reported in the source article. In using this scale, we explicitly followed the recommendation of Manolis and Roberts (2008): "A conservative and very general recommendation might suggest that those interested in understanding and/or estimating the compulsive buying phenomenon among the general consumer population would do well to the use the Edwards scale. In this way, researchers are poised to test models and/or theory addressing the more common or everyday antecedents and outcomes of compulsive behavior" (p. 571).

We measured Brand Engagement in Self-Concept with the 8-item scale from Sprott et al. (2009). A 5-item scale (Eastman et al., 1999) measured Status Consumption. Lastovicka et al.'s (1999) 7-item scale operationalized Frugality. We randomized the order in which the scales appeared and the order of the items within each scale in the questionnaire for all respondents. In addition, the questionnaire collected respondent data on gender, age, and income, where the latter used a 9-item scale ranging from $20K or less to $90K or more.

Table 1
Scale items and factor scores

Item	EFA Loading

Compulsive Buying (Edwards, 1993; KMO = .834, % variance = 64.2)

I go on buying binges.	.860
I go on a buying binge when I'm upset, disappointed, depressed, or angry.	.816
I feel "high" when I go on a buying spree.	.714
I buy things even when I don't need anything.	.701
I buy things I don't need or won't use.	.617

Brand Engagement in Self-Concept (Sprott et al., 2009; KMO = .937, % variance = 64.2)

I feel as if I have a close personal connection with the brands I most prefer.	.819
I often feel a personal connection between my brands and me.	.817
I consider my favorite brands to be a part of myself.	.806
Part of me is defined by important brands in my life.	.791
My favorite brands are an important indication of who I am.	.767
I can identify with important brands in my life.	.749
I have a special bond with the brands that I like.	.737
There are links between the brands that I prefer and how I view myself.	.656

Status Consumption (Eastman et al., 1999; KMO = .834, % variance = 58.6)

I would pay more for a product if it had status.	.787
I would buy a product just because it has status.	.692
I am interested in new products with status.	.691
The status of a product is irrelevant to me.	.677
A product is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal.	.625

Frugality1 (Lastovicka et al., 1999; KMO = .822, % variance = .425)

There are things I resist buying today so I can save for tomorrow.	.782
I believe in being careful in how I spend my money.	.741
I am willing to wait on a purchase I want so that I can save money.	.717
I discipline myself to get the most from my money.	.629

Frugality2 (Lastovicka et al., 1999; % variance = 14.4)

Making better use of my resources makes me feel good.	.730
If you take good care of your possessions, you will definitely save money in the long run.	.521

There are many things that are normally thrown away that are still quite useful.　　.085

Extraversion (Flynn and Swilley, 2007; KMO = .721, % variance = 74.4)

I see myself as someone who is talkative.　　.810
I see myself as someone who is quiet.　　.790
I see myself as someone who is outgoing, sociable.　　.756

Note: n = 464

Results

Preliminary Data Analyses

We first factor analyzed each multi-item scales' scores using exploratory factor analysis (principal axis or common factor analysis with oblique rotation) to ascertain scale dimensionality and then computed coefficient alpha for each scale to assess internal consistency. The scales for brand engagement, status consumption, compulsive buying, and Extraversion all showed one-factor solutions, indicating unidimensionality. We summed the items of each scale so that higher scores indicated higher levels of each construct. Skewness for all the variables was less than 1.0. Internal consistency was acceptable with the exception of the second frugality scale (see Table 2). About 5% of the sample scored above two standard deviations on the compulsive buying scale, results similar to those reported in many other studies (see Norum, 2008).

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Compulsive	2.62	0.95	(.86)								
2. Age	21	3.8	-.10*	--							
3. Gender[a]			-.36**	.11*	--						
4. Income[b]	1.5	1.6	.00	.18**	0.02	--					
5. BESC	3.07	0.81	.26**	-0.07	-0.01	0.05	(.92)				
6. Status	2.83	0.76	.24**	-0.07	0.08	0.02	.36**	(.82)			
7. Frugality 1	3.97	0.68	-.35**	-0.06	0.04	-0.05	-.10*	-.19**	(.81)		

29

8. Frugality 2	2.89	0.35	-.15**	0	0.04	0.03	0.03	-.11*	.41**	(.35)
9. Extraversion	3.62	0.87	.15**	-0.01	-0.08	0.06	0.09	0.08	-.06	-.03	(.83)

Notes: n = 464; coefficient alpha on the diagonal in parentheses.
[a] where 1 = female and 0 = male.
[b] Kendall tau-b non-parametric correlations.

The same factor analysis results were not true, however, for the frugality scale. The factor analysis revealed two subscales. The first frugality subscale (Frugal 1) represents careful conservation of money, and the second (Frugal 2) represents reuse and conservation of resources. We chose to use the two subscales separately although Frugal 2 had low internal consistency. We tested the hypotheses using t-tests, Pearson correlation, and OLS regression.

Hypotheses Tests

Correlating the composite scores and demographics showed that compulsive buying did not correlate with income. This finding is consistent with prior research (Faber 2011). Compulsive buying correlated positively with brand engagement, supporting hypothesis one. Status consumption and compulsive buying also positively correlated with each other, supporting hypothesis 2. Compulsive buying and frugality negatively correlated with each other, supporting hypothesis 3. Compulsive buying negatively correlated with age, supporting hypothesis four and consistent with several prior studies (e.g., Spinella et al., 2014). Compulsive buying also positively correlated with being female, supporting hypothesis five and consistent with the majority of studies, including a recent one by Bratko et al. (2013). To summarize these findings, compulsive shoppers were more likely to be younger, to be female, to use brands to express their self-concepts, to acquire status, and to be less frugal than were other consumers.

Regression analysis (see Table 3) estimates the relative contribution to explained variance (R^2 = .32) of each of the variables, where age and gender act as control variables so we can observe the incremental contributions of the psychological characteristics. The analysis shows that when we control the demographics, brand engagement, status consumption, and frugality all explain unique portions of the variance. Finally, when we added to the regression equation interaction terms representing the interaction of gender with each characteristic, only the gender X BESC interaction significantly added to explained variance (ΔR^2 = .006, p = .038) so that compulsive buying increased as BESC increased, but the increase was stronger for women than for men.

Table 3
Results of regressing compulsive buying on the other variables

Variable	β	Part	R^2	R^2_{adj}	F	df	95% CI
Age	-.091*	-.090	.323	.314	35.6	6/447	.25-.39
Gender	.366***	.363					
BESC	.170***	.158					
Status	.148**	.134					
Frugal 1	-.281***	-.250					
Frugal 2	-.013	-.012					

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$; 1 = female, 0 = male; largest VIF = 1.260.

Notes: n = 454 owing to 10 missing values for age. Removing these individuals and rerunning the analysis yielded identical results for the remaining variables. The Part coefficient in SPSS is the semipartial correlation. The squared semipartial correlation is the proportion of the total variance in Y that is uniquely attributable to X_i, that is, the increase in R^2 with the addition of X_i to the model already containing the variables in the covariate set (Hayes, 2013, p. 74).

Follow-up Analyses

We conducted two follow-up analyses. In the first, we reran the regression analysis to include 44 of the participants whom we initially excluded from the analysis owing to their failure to pass our quality check method (n = 498). Comparing the results of this analysis to the results we report showed no significant differences, so our conclusions remain the same: Excluding these individuals did not influence the results.

In order to assess the extent to which CMV might bias the results, we included a "marker variable" in the questionnaire (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). A marker variable is a construct with the same response scale as the focal variables, but not correlated with them. Consequently, correlations between latent constructs using the same method, but theoretically unrelated, should yield estimates of CMV. We chose the construct of Extraversion from the Big Five personality inventory on the premise that this construct would not correlate with our focal constructs despite using the same measurement method. The correlations in Table 2 show that, despite sharing the same self-report format as the other constructs, Extraversion was uncorrelated with the exception of compulsive buying, thereby implying that CMV is does not play a role in these findings.

Although some studies show that Extraversion does not correlate with compulsive buying (Bivens, Gore, & Claycomb, 2013), others do find a small, positive relationship (e.g., Andreassen et al., 2013) or indirect relationships (e.g., Bratko et al., 2013; Otero-Lopez & Pol, 2013; Mowen & Spears, 1999) between the two constructs. Thus, our finding of a small positive correlation (r = .15) is compatible with those of other studies. The near-zero correlations between Extraversion and the independent variables, however, strongly suggest that common method bias does not account for any part of the substantive findings.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study is to add to our understanding of compulsive buying by testing whether three individual difference constructs, brand engagement in self-concept, status consumption, and frugality, can predict and possibly explain variation in compulsive buying. Although some previous studies suggested these relationships, none specifically tested them together. Our findings show that both brand engagement and status consumption have independent positive relationships with compulsive buying, while frugality has an independent negative relationship with it. In addition, females buy compulsively more than males do, as many previous studies show (e.g., Ditmar, 2005), and this demographic characteristic remains related to compulsive spending when we account for the influences of the other variables. The present study adds to our knowledge of compulsive shopping, showing that concepts not explicitly studied before associate it.

We will address three issues. First, the amount of variance ($R^2 = .32$) in the measure of compulsive buying that the variables in this study explain is modest but on par with other studies (e.g., Mueller et al., 2011). Thus, an understanding of compulsive buying will require a more complete model that incorporates a variety of independent variables other than traits to tease out the specific influence each one has on this behavior. For instance, Benmoyal-Bouzaglo and Moschis (2009) report that disruptive events early in life lead to greater compulsive behavior later. Brougham et al. (2010) show that college students who are responsible of repaying their own debt, who find money management to be challenging, and who are less future oriented in time perspective are more likely to buy compulsively. The impact of materialism on compulsive buying is especial interest. Several studies (e.g., Brougham et al., 2010) implicate materialism as a fundamental source of the compulsive buying tendency. Counselling efforts to replace materialistic tendencies with healthier alternatives such as social engagement and providing opportunities for doing social good might help college students especially resist compulsive buying.

Moreover, DeSarbo and Edwards (1996) argue persuasively that compulsive buying tendencies manifest themselves in two ways. Similar to frugality above, we can view some compulsive buying as stimulated externally by triggers such as the product on the shelf or a deal, making it more akin to impulsive buying behavior. Lack of self-control and other psychological traits such as extraversion (positively) and conscientiousness (negatively) (see Bratko et al., 2013) most likely explain this type of compulsive buying. Owing to their lack of self-control, compulsive buyers give into momentary urges to buy. Perhaps counseling efforts should focus on recognizing the signals of such behavior and promoting actions that do not simply resist the urge but substitute other small rewards for resisting the behavior. Because compulsive buying relates to short-term rather than long-term time horizons, substituting a small short-term reward to replace a compulsive purchase might be a way to mitigate these compulsive purchases.

Internally triggered compulsive buying is akin to the clinical disorder, which focuses on anxiety reduction as the underlying mechanism (Black, 2007). Models that predict externally triggered compulsive buying well will likely contain antecedents different from those that do a good job explaining and predicting internally triggered compulsive buying. Our model is the latter type, but because the scale we used to operationalize compulsive buying does not itself distinguish which type of the behavior it measures, we might expect attenuated results. One goal for future research is to develop and to validate scales to operationalize compulsive buying with more

specificity with regard to the type (internally or externally triggered) of behavior they seek to explain. That way, researchers can more precisely tailor models of the antecedents of each type to the different theoretical explanations.

In addition, much of the research on compulsive buying uses student samples. Nothing is inherently wrong with this practice, especially because many agents are interested in helping students learn to practice sound consumer behaviors. However, the link between stress and anxiety with compulsive buying that research often observes suggests that populations especially prone to stress, such as those low in socio-economic status (Pampel et al., 2010), greatly need studies focused on healthy stress reduction.

Next, the more fundamental driving force of materialism likely underlies much of the nomological network of antecedents of compulsive buying, perhaps of both types. Future model development should incorporate more complex nomological networks than in the present study and most previous studies, which contain only a few variables and few mediating relationships. Veridical accounts of compulsive buying will most likely need to be more like nomological networks to account for the complexities underlying this behavior.

Finally, future research should focus on explaining the consistent finding that women buy compulsively more than men do. Prior research suggests some profitable leads to follow. Men and women score differently on basic personality measures such as the Big Five, and research has linked these traits to compulsive shopping (Bratko et al., 2013). Mueller et al. (2011) also delineate male-female differences in compulsive buying related to differences in impulse control for women and materialism for men. Moreover, as noted above, exposure to marketplace stimuli increases the opportunities to buy, and thus can lead to increased compulsive buying. Women are more likely to shop than are men, and thus this factor could account for at least part of the gender differential. In addition, we predict that the effects of more precise indicators of compulsive buying combined with more complex model will explain the frequently observed male-female difference in compulsive buying.

Conclusions and Implications

Compulsive shoppers tend to be brand engaged and to seek status through consumer goods and services. They tend not to be frugal. Public policy makers seeking to mitigate the negative consequences of compulsive shopping can use this information to try to persuade consumers that real self-concept and status do not come from what one owns but from more positive and constructive activities such as doing kindnesses for others, socializing with friends, and generally contributing positively to the social welfare. Moreover, frugal consumers are less likely to shop compulsively, so helping consumers to live frugal lifestyles might also have a positive effect. Another factor to consider is that the more frequently products, ads, and other marketing stimuli confront consumers, the more opportunities consumers have to buy impulsively. Limiting one's exposure to the marketplace is one way to counteract such opportunistic tendencies.

Financial education in high school and in college could benefit people by raising awareness of the trap of compulsive buying. Financial counseling might help stop compulsive spending before it becomes a larger problem leading to financial difficulties. Financially healthy citizens are more able to own houses and to save for retirement, which is overall good for the economic health of the country.

Finally, the limitations of the study lie in the non-representative sample and the choice of variable operationalizations. Representative samples and multi-operationalizations will enhance the generalizability of the findings. In addition, studies of non-U.S. populations will contribute greatly to the global understanding of compulsive buying as well.

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Discussion Questions

1. Is compulsive buying the same phenomenon for every consumer, or could it be a pattern of behavior motivated by different drives for different people?

2. Is compulsive buying harmful to everybody, or is it possible that it does bring benefits to some consumers that outweigh its costs; that is, on average, compulsive buying appears to be associated with negative side effects, but does this average obscure possible positives for some people?

3. Do situational factor contribute to compulsive buying, so that it might be a behavior partially influenced by time, social circumstance, or task definitions?

4. How can we study compulsive buying experimentally?

5. Is compulsive buying the same behavior across different cultures? If so, does this imply a set of basic human motivations?

6. One of the more important outcomes of any research study is to point to what needs to be studied next, implications for future research. Can you think of some other avenues for future research?

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Application of SWOT Analysis to Explore Impressions of Researchers involved in an Integrative Multidisciplinary Health and Wellbeing Study

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Abstract

This article reports on the application of the SWOT analysis in order to explore the impressions of researchers from different disciplines involved in an integrative multidisciplinary (IMD) health and wellbeing study. We report the impressions of the research members involved in the IMD health and wellbeing study by means of self-reflections on the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). We based the SWOT analysis on the team members' research experiences during 2013 and the first quarter of 2014. The authors view these impressions against the background of the IMD, which is a sequential research process progressing from the disciplinary (D) to the IMD to the transdisciplinary (TD) phases. We focus the research of the IMD research project on clustered disciplines sharing related foci or methodologies on this specific (health and welfare) research in Bekkersdal, South Africa. The results are indicative of the usefulness of the SWOT analysis as a qualitative data collection technique in this context.

Keywords: Ecohealth, wellbeing, integrative multidisciplinary research, SWOT analysis, research methodology, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary

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Introduction

As of January 2013, a team of researchers officially engaged in an Integrative Multidisciplinary (IMD) science communication research model in an NRF funded project on community engagement in health and wellbeing matters in Bekkersdal. This township, located in the Westonaria Local Municipality in the Gauteng Province, forms part of the West Rand District Municipality (IDP 2013/14:1). Bekkersdal, formally established in 1949 as a proclaimed township, mainly served as a settlement for migrant black mine workers that nearby goldmines employed (Pelser, 2013). From all over Southern Africa, people came to seek employment on the gold mines in the West Wits Gold Line. A growing flare of informal establishments around the original Bekkersdal gained momentum since the late 1960s and by the 1980s had extensively escalated to about 70,000 residents (Van Eeden, 2014). The population has since further increased to 94,000 as the 2011 census calculated (IRR, 2013; Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), 2011).

Bekkersdal not only has to face some unique historical complexities, but also has to address challenges similar to those that other local townships experience. These challenges include extensive urban development, complexities in asset management, soaring poverty rates, unemployment and concomitant escalating crime, and the culture of non-payment for services by the community (Stats SA, 2011; Van Eeden, 2014). A declining mining sector, geo-technological complexities, unavailability of scarce resources, electricity tariff escalation, inadequate resources to deal with increasing demands (IDP 2013, 2014), as well as social upheavals such as protests and boycotts (Matlala & Aboobaker, 2013; Poplak, 2014), also contributed to the difficulties that inhabitants of the township experienced (Van Eeden, 2014).

It was against the above-mentioned background that the team decided to conduct research with the following main objectives in mind:

- Is it possible to do Integrative Multidisciplinary research on the ecohealth and wellbeing status of communities – especially from a humanities and social sciences perspective?
- What is the broader ecohealth and wellbeing status of the Bekkersdal Community in Westonaria that the project team researched on the structural basis of the IMD research methodology?

The project team deemed the overall focus on the ecohealth and wellbeing of the inhabitants of the informal settlement of Bekkersdal necessary because the rapid, uncontrolled, and unplanned growth of the informal settlement resulted in intense pressure on existing services. The government and local municipality initially designed those services for the limited

population of the former Bekkersdal formal settlement. These services currently have to attempt to meet the demands of the vastly expanding informal settlement (Van Eeden, 2014).

The IMD team members orally agreed in February 2013 to utilise the broad definition of ecohealth that the team adopted since the initial meeting to progress towards an IMD team. The project covered a broad understanding concerning ecohealth and wellbeing. It also included the standard issues that ecohealth experts accentuate and which are to determine the ecohealth (and wellbeing) status of people (Charron, 2012) in:

- their built environment (e.g., services, housing, service delivery, local management, security);
- their immediate or natural environment (e.g., environmental capacity, experiences, issues, concerns);
- their wellbeing environment (e.g., financial, physical, social, emotional, and psychological).

In this article, we share the experiences of researchers from various disciplines who are doing research together as a project team on ecohealth and wellbeing.

The Integrative Multidisciplinary (IMD) Study

The IMD study is a newly developed integrative multidisciplinary model that provides space for independent disciplinary (D) as well as joint interdisciplinary (ID) inputs with the purpose of communicating with the community during both phases (Van Eeden, 2010, 2011). In progressing toward a refreshed defined transdisciplinary (TD) mode as a third phase of the model, the Bekkersdal community engagement project would advance toward an increased engagement mode and explicit communication with all layers of the community and other professional experts. The IMD is a science communication model within the continuum of D, ID and TD elements in the research. It is also expressive both in research data collection and in reporting (Van Eeden, 2010; Van Eeden, 2011).

Though researchers structured the IMD research locally in South Africa, they developed it on the mode of integrative thinking by internationally acclaimed theorists like Gertrude Hirsch-Hadorn, Julie Klein, Basarab Nicolescu and Ken Wilber. A community and discussions with a community in a particular space are important in all the phases of IMD research, but the spontaneous integrative nature among related disciplines is the major focus in the first two phases of the model. As a result, researchers organised themselves into clusters of related disciplines (e.g., social sciences and natural sciences).

The IMD research model thus requires research input from several disciplines in a particular way – other than the usual or traditional disciplinary way of thinking. The model furthermore requires a research setting not that familiar to all the research participants so as to allow all the research participants to depart from their familiar research background while being unfamiliar with the particular research setting (environment and community). All participants can thus apply their disciplinary skills and knowledge that they already have acquired from their familiar research backgrounds to make a creative and fully cooperative contribution to this study

when the IMD also progresses to an initial interdisciplinary and subsequent transdisciplinary phase of research (Van Eeden, 2011).

Problem Statement

One of the motivations for doing IMD research was to establish whether several disciplines had the potential to collectively engage in rigorous integrative research (Van Eeden, 2012). The focal point of this part of the research was thus the researchers who represented different disciplines and who were taking part in the IMD research on the ecohealth and wellbeing of inhabitants of the informal settlement of Bekkersdal. Those involved decided to focus on that particular informal settlement as their area of research for the first two years of the three-year project. Prior to this project, most of these researchers had had no or limited exposure to working in an integrative manner in the research field. The reason was that some were still in a starting phase of their postgraduate research career, whilst most of the others were established (yet part-time) researchers in disciplinary-focussed environments at tertiary educational institutions. These challenges that faced the IMD team, as well as the intensity owing to the variety of disciplinary fields engaging, called for an occasional assessment of how the group was actually progressing as an integrative goal-focussed team and whether it was in effect pursuing the objectives with a view to exploring the possibility of doing IMD research on the wellbeing status of communities.

Research Question and Objective

Based on the broader project research scope and a need for critically reflecting on the process of engaging in the IMD study, the researchers posed a secondary research question related to the original research question as objective, namely: How did the research team anticipate and experience having to work in an integrative manner in a multidisciplinary team? Concomitant with this question was the objective of exploring and describing team members' experiences of having to work in an integrative manner in a multidisciplinary team by conducting a SWOT analysis in a research environment.

Method

Research Design

Researchers used a qualitative, interpretive-descriptive research design (Sandelowski, 2000; Thorne, Kirkham, & O'Flynne-Magee, 2004) for this study. Originally, researchers introduced the design in nursing science as nursing scholars were drawing inspiration from a broad range of qualitative inquiry approaches stemming from various and diverse disciplines and, as time passed, found it increasingly difficult to adhere to methodological orthodoxy to traditions that no longer fitted the emerging qualitative nursing scholarship (Thorne et al., 2004). As a result, nurses began to articulate distinct methodological approaches designed to fit the kinds of research questions they and other researchers might be inclined to ask. Interpretive description, therefore, developed as one such expression of a qualitative approach (Thorne et al., 2004). The design was appropriate for this study as it followed an inductive-investigative approach that

researchers would use in order to construct ways of understanding different phenomena (Thorne et al., 2004). Figure 1 provides the design map.
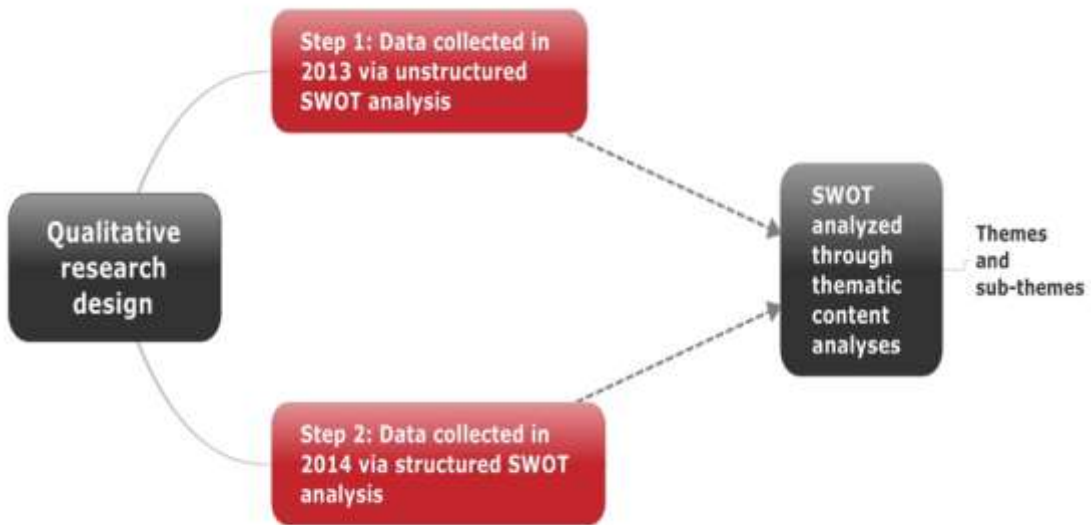

Figure 1. Design map

Participants

We selected the sample purposively and included the researchers who formed part of the IMD team during 2013-2014. Table 1 provides a profile of the research team that made up the sample.

Table 1
Profile of the IMD research team

Cluster	Researcher status	Discipline	Working environment A-D	Current status	Participated * SWOT 1 ** SWOT 2 *** Both
Cluster 1	Senior researcher	Public management	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Public management	C	Active	**
	Senior researcher	Natural sciences	C	Active	**
	Junior researcher	Disaster management	A	Resigned	*
Cluster 2	Senior researcher	Sociology	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Public management	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Social Work	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Social Work	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Nursing	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Psychology	A	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Psychology	B	Active	**
	Junior researcher	Public management	A	Active	*
	Junior researcher	Public management	A	Active	***
	Junior researcher	Psychology	B	Temporary	*
	Junior researcher	Psychology	B	Temporary	*
Cluster 3	Senior researcher	History	B	Active	***
	Senior researcher	Political sciences	B	Active	**
	Junior researcher	Environmental & social management	D	Active	**
	Junior researcher	Disaster management	D	Active	**

A group of 19 of the 22 researchers who formed part of the IMD team during 2013-2014 participated in the SWOT analysis. The research team consisted of 12 senior and 7 junior researchers and represented ten disciplines. As the IMD group progressed with research since 2013, they organised themselves into three working clusters for the following reason(s): possible disciplinary relatedness, distance, and practical considerations. Some of the original members left the team during this period by either resigning in order to complete their studies or to venture into new career opportunities. Later, others would join the team of researchers. As a result, nine team members participated in both SWOT analyses to gather data, while four participated only in the first and six only in the second SWOT. In total, four groups of researchers from different working environments and between one to two hours' drive apart (60-120 km) were involved. Participants were from the NWU Potchefstroom Campus (indicated as group A), from the NWU Vaal Triangle Campus (indicated as group B), from other universities (indicated as group C), and postgraduate students on a part-time basis and employed elsewhere (indicated as group D).

Data Collection

The researchers collected the data by means of two SWOT analysis opportunities. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool, one that researchers originally developed in the 1960s, and which is useful for planning and decision making at multiple levels within an institution, organisation or business. One could claim that strategic planning in general, and the SWOT analysis in particular, have their mutual origins in the work of business policy academics at the Harvard Business School (McCraw & Cruikshank, 1999) and that the dictum that a good strategy means ensuring a fit between the external situation that a group faces (threats and opportunities) and its own internal qualities or characteristics (strengths and weaknesses) (Helms & Nixon, 2010; Hill & Westbrook, 1997) popularised it subsequently.

One can carry out a SWOT analysis for a product, a place, an industry, a person or a group of persons. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are either favourable or unfavourable for achieving that objective. The concept of strategic fit (Helms & Nixon, 2010; Kroon, 1996) expresses the degree to which the internal environment (strengths and weaknesses) of the product or unit matches the external environment (opportunities and threats). In an IMD-structured research context, one could perhaps rephrase this observation to read: The extent to which the research process, as a "product" of the internal structured project environment (strengths and weaknesses), matches the external environment in which researchers must conduct, operationalise or disseminate the research (opportunities and threats) will eventually determine the success and "strategic fit" of the research model or the theory that is closely knitted to human capability (knowledge) and resources (both tangible and intangible).

The research team conducted two SWOT analyses, the first one in April 2013, six months after the team had started working actively in the field, and the second one a year later in April 2014. During the second structured SWOT, the team prioritised and verified entries. This exercise often falls short in studies using SWOT. The first SWOT was merely a single-level analysis to list entries and no prioritisation, verification, or weighting took place (compare Hill & Westbrook, 1997).

Data Analysis

We used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyse data using the SWOT as an overarching framework to categorise the data. Two of the researchers analysed the data independently through the use of a work protocol for data analysis and subsequently had a consensus discussion to identify emerging themes (See Figure 1).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to what quantitative researchers call validity and reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researchers considered and implemented (wherever relevant in order to ensure trustworthiness) the following criteria: (1) Credibility, which they ensured through reflexivity and structural coherence through the conduction of a literature integration; (2) Dependability, which they ensured through the use of dense description and the code-recorder procedure; (3) Confirmability, which they ensured through reflexivity by being

honest, critical and reflective throughout the process; and (4) Transferability, which they ensured through dense description (De Vos, 2002).

Ethical Considerations

The researchers obtained institutional permission to conduct the research for the umbrella IMD project. They paid due attention to various ethical issues, including anonymity, respect for the dignity of persons, nonmaleficence, and confidentiality in order to make sure that they duly considered the rights of the research participants (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). Participants had to give informed, voluntary consent to participate, and participation in the research was voluntary. Researchers protected the identities of participants in the reporting of the findings. Researchers would store the data in a safe and secure manner and destroy these after six years in order to conform to the regulations of the relevant institution. Throughout the process, researchers took steps to see to it that they treated participants fairly and protected them from harm by considering the balance between the risks and benefits of their participation (Botma, Greeff, Malaudzi, & Wright, 2010).

Findings

This section describes a number of perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that resulted from the participants' consideration of having to work in an integrative manner in a multidisciplinary team by means of the two SWOT analyses. We present the findings in Figure 2 as themes and subthemes, and we will elaborate on these subsequently.

Figure 2. Overview of themes and subthemes
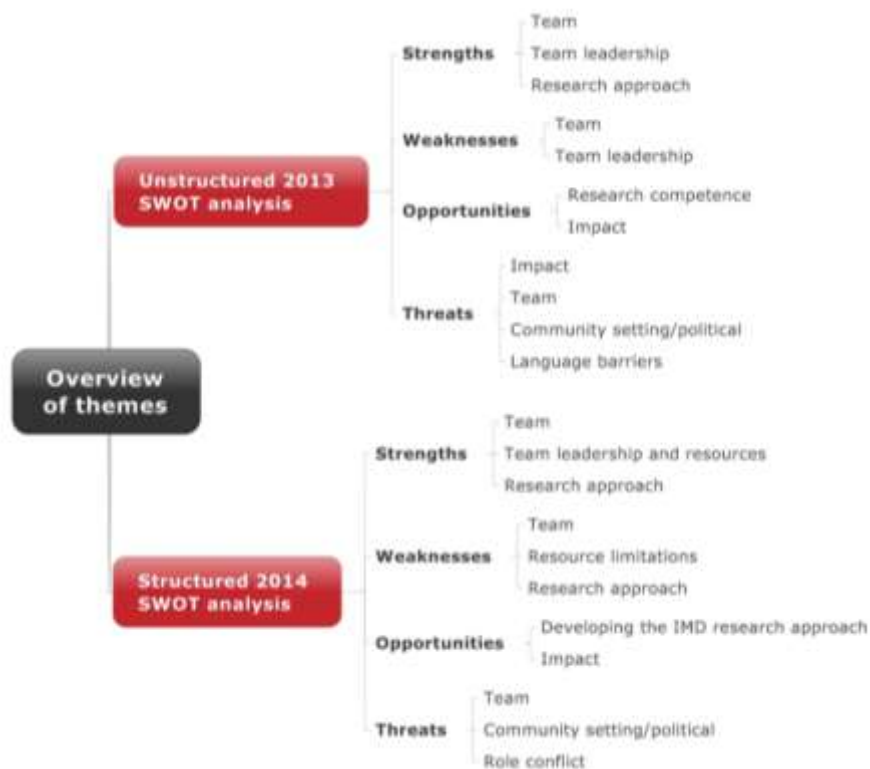
Strengths

We list the items that we categorise as strengths into three subthemes, namely the team, the team leader, and the research approach.

The team. The strengths associated with the team members were their combined knowledge and experience, especially on the topics we researched, as well as their particular discipline and information technology communication. Personal attributes one could point out included, amongst other things, their commitment, positive attitude, and focus and the fact they experienced one another as easy-going. We also regard the fact that the team consisted of both experienced and inexperienced members as a strong point. Participants also identified as a mutual strength the skills of specific members, such as those of two members who could act as translators in the research setting of meeting with fieldworkers. During the second SWOT, we prioritised as definite strengths of the team the combination and collaboration of various experts (from various disciplines) and the multi-generational nature of the team consisting of older and younger as well as experienced and inexperienced members who would make reciprocal co-mentoring possible. Experienced researchers acted as mentors for the younger ones, while the exercise enriched more experienced researchers by way of the new perspective the younger ones presented.

Team leadership. The SWOT identified the leadership as solid and supportive in terms of time investment and organising concerning the required funding and institutional resources. Members reiterated these strengths during the second SWOT.

Research approach. During the first SWOT, researchers also identified as strengths the meeting with stakeholders such as several experts, the fieldworkers and Bekkersdal council members. During the second SWOT, the participants prioritised the societal and scientific relevance of the research approach and focus. Another strength that members prioritised in this category was that participation in the project had allowed some researchers to revisit and reflect on their own discipline and clarify their perspective.

Weaknesses

Researchers categorised items listed as weaknesses into four subthemes, namely the team, team leadership, time limitations and the research approach.

The team. During the first SWOT, members pointed out certain team weaknesses. Some members were unprepared for meetings; others were either not as knowledgeable as we anticipated or were totally inexperienced. This wasted time and caused unnecessary repetition that was a frustration to some more experienced or more diligent members. The team also identified the following as team weaknesses: having different definitions of concepts, a lack of experience in multidisciplinary projects, difficulty in adjusting to teamwork, and not being familiar with the circumstances and language of the Bekkersdal residents. By the time of the second SWOT, these weaknesses diminished in priority, while communication (internal between team and team research setting) remained an issue. Participants prioritised communication during team meetings as sometimes being cumbersome, ineffective (especially during the early

structuring phases of the project) and repetitive in content exposure regarding construct analysis and clarification.

Team leadership. Members listed weaknesses in terms of team leadership in the first, but not in the second SWOT. They listed as weaknesses, amongst other things, *burden team with unrelated tasks* and *working till late*. We, therefore, can interpret this as indicating that researchers had mostly sorted out the problems in terms of leadership in time and that the team found a rhythm enabling it to perform more smoothly.

Time limitations. During the second SWOT, researchers had only limited time available for working on the project. Participation in the project was voluntary and demanded researchers' personal time and energy in addition to their normal academic duties and work responsibilities. Participants prioritised the points above as a weakness of the IMD research project. The fact that Bekkersdal, the research setting, was located relatively distant from the work settings of the researchers added to the experience of limited time as a resource. Over and above time limitations, the additional cost brought about by travelling the distance exacerbated the resource limitations that researchers already experienced.

Research approach. The second SWOT identified weaknesses related to fully applying the IMD research method in a research group literally scattered over four institutions or working environments (see Table 1). Individual participants expressed their sense of isolation when separated from the group while working on the project. This furthermore created an inherent tension between a solo and a team approach.

Opportunities

We categorise the items listed as opportunities into three subthemes, namely research competence, developing the IMD research approach, and impact.

Research competence. During the first SWOT, participants listed the following as opportunities: to grow and develop as researchers, to apply this research experience to other loci, and to learn from one another and from the community stakeholders. Another opportunity they perceived was to exploit available information in the public domain at Bekkersdal while they could become familiar with its history as cornerstones for understanding current conditions and circumstances.

Developing the IMD research approach. During the second SWOT, the perception shifted from the opportunity to develop research competence to the opportunity to develop the IMD model as a research approach. This included identifying ways to progress toward the IMD-defined transdisciplinary phase of the model, thus to further integrate the research efforts to both involve and inform the community. They would, in addition, be able to use or recommend research data as opportunities in community and science communication; to find ways to advocate for change; to establish ways of how particularly the university can invest in communicating research through another way of doing integrative research; and, finally, to contribute toward research methodology internationally.

Impact. Participants identified an opportunity to have an impact on the community and the broader South African society, namely to address local environmental issues such as the rehabilitation of acid mine drainage (AMD) water in the Bekkersdal area. During the second SWOT, participants identified an opportunity to strengthen cooperative governance via the IMD project and civic dissemination in order to once again have an impact on society.

Threats

We categorised the items listed as threats into five subthemes, namely research impact, the team, community setting (or political issues), language barriers and role conflict.

Impact. The first SWOT pointed out a number of perceived threats, namely the limited availability of journals in which to publish IMD research, failure to succeed in obtaining research (NRF) funding, and ethical clearance to proceed with the project. However, the second SWOT identified only strengths in terms of research approach and thus indicated that participants balanced these fears out in time.

The team. During the first SWOT, participants identified threats to the achievement of the goal of working in an integrative manner in a multidisciplinary team. Threats included, amongst other things, the fact that team members were mainly whites, while they conducted research in a mainly black community. Members failed to establish and maintain the envisaged IMD teamwork and effective collaboration. Furthermore, participants had a heavy academic workload and consequently only limited time to devote to the project. Also, there was a tendency to overemphasise specific individuals' understanding or knowledge (input). During the second SWOT, participants narrowed threats down in terms of the team's competing priorities and expectations in university context, as well as possible failure to engage effectively with the community over time. They created more balance in the team by recruiting black researchers.

Community issues and political setting. A threat participants perceived during the first SWOT was possible hostility from Bekkersdal residents because of internal service delivery issues and the then upcoming 2014 elections. Serious service delivery protests had indeed occurred since September 2013 and although participants made mention of these again, they did not prioritise these as a threat during the second SWOT. The reason for this was that during 2013 the research team was apprehensive of impending protests just prior to their entry into the community, while by 2014 they had already collected the data. As a result, the threat was not an immediate issue any more.

Language barriers. Although participants pointed out language barriers during fieldwork as a possible threat during the first SWOT, this was not the case during the second one. It therefore did not seem to pose an insurmountable challenge as they initially had feared.

Role conflict. By the time of the second SWOT, participants experienced role conflict between the demands of the university (employer) on the one hand and those of the project on the other hand. They identified this as a threat that symbolised a perceived lack of institutional support and an impractical subsidy model of the university. In addition they also once again prioritised the defending of disciplinary boundaries as a perceived threat to the project.

Discussion

The findings point out similarities, yet also differences, between the first and the second SWOT under all four themes. We need to view these differences in focus between SWOT 1 and SWOT 2 against the background of the time frame of the research: SWOT 1 toward the beginning of the project, and SWOT 2 a year later when the project had already made some progress. SWOT 1 indicated that the project team members were typically in the "forming and storming" (Tuckman, 1965) phase of developing as a group, while a year later they were undoubtedly more established with clearer focus on the goal of the project. Team members

characterised forming as positioning themselves within the group, storming with differences, tension, and struggle.

Drawing on the findings of the two IMD SWOT analyses, the data confirmed that the IMD research teamwork occurred collectively and in an integrative fashion, but that certain weaknesses and threats (as pointed out earlier) were present and that we had to overcome or at least minimise them. These weaknesses and threats, however, were not unique to the IMD project. Goebel, Hill, Fincham, and Lawhon (2010), for instance, describe their experience of working transdisciplinary as often messy, difficult, imperfect, and slow. These authors also point out the fact that insufficient funding as well as inadequate institutional support remained obstacles. They ascribed these two phenomena to the newness of the transdisciplinary approach in South Africa and to uncertainty regarding purpose and measurable outcomes. Smith and Katz (2000) also allude to the challenges institutional managers and policy makers face in developing flexible management and funding models and point out that they often fail to even try.

The perceived strengths and opportunities to some degree confirm the principle of variability – one of the seven principles that underlie interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research that Klein, Grossenbacher-Mansuy, Häberli, Scholz, and Welti (2001) defined and elaborated on, as did Klein (2005; 2008). The principle of variability includes aspects such as co-mentoring and the broadening of disciplinary boundaries.

Research of peer-reviewed literature in which the findings have shown that SWOT continues as a methodology for strategic positioning (Helms & Nixon, 2010) supports the fact that the Bekkersdal IMD research team made use of SWOT analyses to determine whether it still was pursuing its strategic objectives in the research area. However, particularly in a research environment, it is not always a matter of strategic positioning, but rather whether the research team can exercise the ability to optimise its internal strengths (like vision and expertise) in order to pursue external opportunities made possible through scientifically disseminated and applied research. We can approach the challenges (whether limited support by the institution, lack of skills of the team, or the logistics such as distance from the research site and from one another as team members) either strategically in order to transform them into opportunities, or they can totally overwhelm the group and remain as threats or weaknesses. Indeed, the degree to which the research process as a "product" of the internal structured project environment (strengths and weaknesses) matches the external research environment (its opportunities and threats) will eventually determine the success or "strategic fit" of the research model or theory that human capability (knowledge) and resources (both tangible and intangible) can closely knit together.

Limitations

The limitations that the IMD researchers experienced were as follows:

- Most of the researchers were initially familiar with mono-disciplinary research, but not with multi-disciplinary research. This might have influenced them to be reluctant to fully participate in the IMD team in the beginning.
- Internal dynamism: Some of the researchers left the team to pursue other career opportunities or urgent research work (e.g., completion of Master's and Ph.D. studies).

- In team leadership and project management, we must take into account the various contexts (junior or senior, other important research work, long-term commitments, institutional policies, politics, social upheavals, etc.) of each researcher and of the project.
- At the start of the IMD research project, the team members were not a close-knit whole and *esprit de corps* was totally lacking. This is quite understandable, because the team members relied on their discipline-specific domain and felt safe within its parameters. The initial level of commitment to the project and to fellow researchers, therefore, was low – with a wait-and-see-approach, although it did improve over time.
- The team experienced the tension between the IMD research demands and academic responsibilities for which the researchers' respective institutions appointed them in the first place, as impediments and limitations.
- Disciplinary conflicts in research method also hampered the pace of departure. For an extensive period of time, the research group appeared to have preferred to just robustly enter the research in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data – without considering a solid, in-depth contemplation of the proposed IMD approach. Eventually, they skipped some valuable prerequisites for commencing with research in order to maintain the researchers' goodwill and limited opportunities to do the actual research. Also, and quite ironically, some researchers pointed out in the second SWOT the lack of understanding issues from a disciplinary perspective as a weakness of the IMD.

Recommendations

- A professional in the particular field must formally facilitate future IMD SWOT exercises in order to ensure efficiency in integrative research environments such as the IMD effort.
- In future stages of IMD strategic processes, participants must use the prioritised and verified results of the second SWOT. According to Hill and Westbrook (1997), without actions flowing from the results of a SWOT, the findings are meaningless. The next step for the IMD research team would be to incorporate the verified, prioritised, and weighted SWOT-findings in its integrative approach to research so the chosen approach would then lead to making maximum use of the strengths, utilisation of the best opportunities and elimination or at least reduction of the most prominent threats and weaknesses (Kroon, 1996:147). This would establish a logical link with the implementation phase of the strategic plan.

Conclusion

The results indicate that both of the SWOT analyses proved useful as qualitative data collection techniques in this context and that a SWOT analysis furthermore has potential as a qualitative data collection technique in other contexts. With two SWOT analyses opportunities that occurred one year apart, the technique provided insight into the project's growth and development, as well as into areas that were still lacking or even presented new challenges that emerged as the project grew. It would, however, have been more ideal if the nineteen research members (participants) all participated in both of the SWOT analyses opportunities. The fact that only nine of the nineteen participants participated in both opportunities could have had an

impact on the validity of the findings. Also important to note is that, during the second structured SWOT, we prioritised and verified entries whereas, during the first SWOT, we did only a single-level analysis; that is, we listed entries without any prioritisation, verification or weighting. The processes of prioritisation and verification were evidently more meaningful and researchers must consider this for the use of the SWOT analyses in other contexts. In spite of this, the SWOT technique in conjunction with thematic analyses has provided scientifically sound and acknowledged frameworks by which researchers can explore the combined work of a team of academics' progress within the context of the IMD project.

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Discussion Questions

1. Were the findings from this study a surprise? Why and why not?

2. What are the main challenges of working in a multidisciplinary research team?

3. List two strengths and weaknesses associated with this study. What would you do differently if you were to design a study to explore the impressions of researchers on being part of a multidisciplinary research team?

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EU Measures Toward Israeli Activities in the Occupied Territories and the BDS: A Diplomatic Achievement or a Pyrrhic Victory?

Nellie Munin

Abstract

In light of 2015-2016 developments, this article re-visits the European Union's (EU) formal and informal measures toward Israeli civil activities in the territories Israel occupied in 1967. It analyzes the accumulative legal, political, and economic effect of EU formal measures, gradually applied in recent decades to such Israeli activities, on the one hand, and of the activities of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement, which the EU partly finances, on the other hand. Reviewing the gradual development of the EU and Israel's relevant positions and strategies, it tries to assess whether, and to what extent, this rolling EU strategy actually enhances EU's political goals in the region.

Keywords: EU, Israel, BDS, Occupied Territories, diplomacy

Introduction

More than 15 years ago, the EU first excluded from the EU-Israel Association Agreement's scope of application goods Israel exported to the EU, originating in the territories Israel occupied in 1967: the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights (hereby: 'the territories'). By that step, the EU intended to make a political statement as to its position regarding the Israeli presence in these territories. The European Court of Justice (CJEU) justified this initiative in the Brita case (CJEU, 2010), which established a legal basis for additional EU measures aiming at the same purpose, such as policy guidelines the European Commission published in 2013 (European Commission, 2013), providing that Israeli entities established in the territories, and activities that entities established in Israel hold in the territories, would not be eligible to certain grants, prizes, and financial instruments the EU offers with regard to research, culture, education, and sports activities (hereby, 'the financial policy guidelines').

Simultaneously, since 2005, Palestinian civil society groups run a campaign for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) of Israel, aiming to encourage Israel to allegedly comply with public international law and recognize Palestinian rights. Recently, this movement seems to gain growing public attention and collaboration, particularly in Europe.

These two trends impose a complementary threat on the Israeli economy.

Following an assessment of the current and potential effect of these initiatives on the Israeli economy, which the Israeli Ministry of Finance published during 2015, this article analyses the legal, economic, and political implications of these initiatives, attempting to evaluate whether they form a diplomatic achievement or rather a Pyrrhic victory.

It describes the implications of excluding imports of goods originating in the territories to the EU, from the EU-Israel Association Agreement's scope of application. Comparing these measures with the financial policy guidelines, and referring to further escalating steps the EU took toward the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016, it evaluates their relative effectiveness in terms of achieving EU goals. Examining the potential effect of the BDS campaign, it compares it with EU measures described, in terms of functioning and effectiveness, introducing the current and potential economic effects of these measures on Israel and on the territories. Assessment of the political effectiveness of these strategies and the Israeli reaction thereto precede a conclusion.

Non-Application of Import Benefits to Goods Originating in the Territories

In the mid-1990s, the EU first had raised the claim that imports to the EU of goods originating in the territories Israel occupied in 1967 are not entitled to the benefits of the Israel-EU Association Agreement. Before that time, such imports enjoyed the benefits of the EU-Israel 1975 Free Trade Area Agreement (which preceded the current EU-Israel Association Agreement).

In 1995, the EU changed its strategy toward the Mediterranean region. In the euphoric atmosphere of the peace process negotiations that took place at that time, the EU initiated the Barcelona Process. Aiming to implement the EU model in the region, this process envisioned the creation of a free trade zone among all its parties, and between them and the EU.[1]

The EU and Israel concluded the Association Agreement between them in 1995. It came into force in 2000. Like all the Association agreements the Mediterranean countries involved in the process[2] concluded with the EU, it includes two political provisions: Article 2, expressing the commitment of the parties to democracy and human rights values, and Article 3, establishing an ongoing political dialogue between the parties, thus formally subjecting, for the first time in EU-Israel's relations, trade benefits to political context. The change in context facilitated the link the EU made later, between political requirements and economic benefits, with regard to Israel's presence in the territories.

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[1] While most of the Mediterranean countries involved in the process signed Association Agreements with the EU, free trade area agreements between these countries were hardly signed, due to the political reality in the region.

[2] Including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel. For further information on this process, see http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/barcelona_en.htm

Soon after the conclusion of this Agreement, the EU concluded an Association Agreement with the PLO, in a similar format, under the umbrella of the Barcelona Process.[3] The PLO perceived this Agreement as a legal alternative for the Israel-EU Association Agreement. Although it explicitly refers only to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (thus excluding other occupied territories such as the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem),[4] it served as an incentive for the Palestinians to assume political pressure on the EU, to confront Israel regarding the status of imported goods originating in the territories.

Israel thought the EU position was politically and legally unjustified. Israel pointed out that since the parties to the Oslo 1993 and 1995 interim agreements never completed the process these agreements envisioned, part of the occupied territories are still under full Israeli government. Moreover, these agreements expired with no alternative legal arrangement, creating a legal lacuna. Consequently, both parties – Palestinians and Israelis – continued the 'customs envelope' arrangement the Oslo agreements provided for, whereby the Israeli customs authority is in charge in the territories still under the Israeli government, collecting the taxes to which the Palestinian authority is entitled and transferring the money to it. Depriving imports of goods

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[3] Israel may argue this Agreement breached the customs envelope between Israel and the PLO that the Oslo interim peace arrangements from 1993 and 1995 created, by an identical Economic Protocol (Annex V), which gave the Israeli customs authority broad authorities in the region, explicitly limiting the PLO's authority to conclude separate international trade agreements only with some Arab countries, included in an exhaustive list. The EU, which signed the 1995 Oslo Agreement as a witness, was well aware of these limitations. Nevertheless, the EU negotiated and concluded an Association Agreement with the PLO, contrary to the Oslo agreement's limitations, within its original period of application (five years). The AG and the CJEU in the Brita case overlooked this aspect (CJEU, 2010).

[4] The EU remains vague on the relationship between 'East Jerusalem' and 'the West Bank.' In fact, there may be two definitions to the term 'East Jerusalem.' The narrow definition includes a territory of some 6 sq. km. that according to the UN Plan for the Partition of Palestine (1947) should have been an international territory under UN holding. This plan was not implemented and in the Israeli independence war (1948), Jordan occupied this territory, which held it from 1948 to 1967. In 1950, Jordan annexed this territory, applying to it the Jordanian law. Only two countries, the United Kingdom (UK) and Pakistan, officially recognized this annexation, while some other countries recognized it de facto. However, by and large (subject to certain exceptions), public international law rules do not legitimize the acquisition of territory by occupation or by annexation. Before Jordanian holding of this territory, it was under the mandatory regime of the UK, which expired, so it is unclear who public international law might consider as the legitimate sovereign in this territory. In that sense, the legal status of this territory is different than the rest of the territory - more than 60 sq. km. composing the broader term 'East Jerusalem' – that Israel annexed after 1967, including territories that belonged to 28 villages in the West Bank and territories belonging to the municipal areas of Beit Lehem and Beit Jala (now under Palestinian sovereignty).

Thus, the legal status of 'East Jerusalem,' at least in its narrow sense, is different than that of 'the West Bank.' The EU seems to have acknowledged this fact, referring to East Jerusalem explicitly and separately in all its relevant decisions and documents, including the Brita judgment (CJEU 2010), the financial policy guidelines (European Commission, 2013), and the labelling guidelines (European Commission, 2015). The EU-PLO Association Agreement does not define the term 'West Bank,' but at the same time does not mention 'East Jerusalem,' unlike other decisions and documents that explicitly mention it. Thus, it is doubtful whether the agreement implicitly includes East Jerusalem. One may argue the fact that the EU refers to a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital suggests that implicitly East Jerusalem forms part of the West Bank, but in fact, peace initiatives envisioned that this future capital would be situated in Abu Dis, which is part of the broad – not of the narrow – definition of East Jerusalem. It is also unlikely the parties concluded an agreement referring to a territory that is pragmatically not under the PLO government.

originating in these territories to the EU, of the Israel-EU Association agreement's benefits thus adversely affects the Israeli, but also the Palestinian population in the region, harming potential economic collaboration and dialogue between the two populations. Israel cited many cases overlooking international controversies over territories (even by the CJEU)[5] in favor of a pragmatic approach, improving the quality of living in the regions under political dispute. Moreover, Israel referred to the approach of the World Trade Organization's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), addressing customs territories, rather than political territories, in the context of international trade.[6]

After diplomatic efforts failed to solve this controversy between Israel and the EU, in 2004, Israel finally politically surrendered to the EU's demand to specify, on each certificate of origin the Israeli customs authorities issue, the exact place of origin of the goods it accompanies. This specification facilitated the exclusion of goods originating in the territories from the EU-Israel Association Agreement's scope of application. Israel gave up its position regarding this issue due to intensive pressure the Israeli export community suffering substantial delays by EU countries' customs authorities, even regarding goods originating within the 1967 borders, assumed on the Israeli government. These customs authorities justified such delays by the necessity to examine the origin of the goods thoroughly.[7] Israeli decision makers preferred to avoid the dispute settlement procedure Article 75 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement provides for, being afraid of a decision that might indirectly affect the definition of Israel's permanent borders. However, this was not the end of the story.

In the meantime, the German customs authorities approached the CJEU, asking to determine whether soft drinks a German company: Brita, imported from an Israeli factory situated in the territories, are entitled to the benefits of EU-Israel Association Agreement. Israel had no legal standing in this case and was thus unable to present its legal claims before the CJEU. The Advocate General's[8] opinion and the CJEU's decision in this case established the legal justification for the political position of the EU, determining the following principles (CJEU, 2010):

- This is not a technical customs dispute but rather a controversy about the territorial scope of the EU-Israel Association Agreement (AG's Opinion, paras. 72-81, 86, 92-96; CJEU's judgment, para. 70).[9]

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[5] E.g., the case of North Cyprus, the subject of the Anastasiou Case (2000), the case of Ceuta and Melilla (under political dispute between Spain and Morocco), etc.

[6] GATT Article XXIV refers to the '*metropolitan customs territories*' of its Members, thus preferring, for trade matters, the pragmatic notion of customs territories over political territories. This preference allows citizens of territories under political dispute to enjoy trade agreements' benefits.

[7] In many cases, one could have regarded these unjustified and costly delays as non-tariff barriers breaching Article 16 of the Association Agreement between the parties. Nevertheless, Israel never invoked this claim.

[8] The CJEU has 11 Advocates General whose role is to consider the written and oral submissions to the Court in every case that raises a new point of law, and deliver an impartial opinion to the Court on the legal solution. Although Advocates General are full members of the court, they do not take part in the CJEU's deliberations, and the Advocate General's opinion is not binding on the Court.

[9] The CJEU explained that any other interpretation could lead to continuous legal uncertainty and to non-uniform treatment of the products originating in the occupied territories in different Member

- The West Bank and the Gaza Strip do not form part of the State of Israel (AG's Opinion, paras. 109-112).[10]
- Subjecting the products originating in the West Bank to the benefits accruing from the EU-Israel Agreement would have consequences of divesting the EU-PLO Agreement of some of its effectiveness (AG's Opinion, para. 125, CJEU's judgment, para. 52).
- Hence, for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the qualified authority to issue certificates of origin (according to EU-PLO's Association Agreement) is the Palestinian customs authority (CJEU's judgment, paras. 56-57).
- However, the AG recognized that pragmatically it may be 'difficult' for the Palestinian customs authority to exercise its authority (AG's Opinion Para. 140).[11] This analysis ignored the fact that Israel never redeployed the settlement under dispute – Mishor Adumim – to the Palestinian Authority. Hence, it is still under full Israeli government. Thus, it is not 'difficult' but rather impossible to obtain such certificates there.

Scholars heavily criticized the Brita decision, both legally and pragmatically (e.g., Harpaz & Rubinson, 2010; Puccio, 2011; Cardwell, 2011; Pardo & Zemer, 2011; Munin, 2011). Its pragmatic consequences are as follows:

- The CJEU ruled in Brita that the EU-Israel Agreement does not apply to the territories at stake, while the Palestinian Authority is unable to implement the EU-PLO Agreement in the territories that are under the Israeli government. This interpretation deprives Israeli and Palestinian businesses and populations in these areas of both Association Agreements' benefits.
- Following the Brita decision, not only goods originating in the West Bank but also goods originating in East Jerusalem and in the Golan heights, which the EU-PLO Agreement does not even cover, explicitly referring only to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, cannot enjoy the EU-Israel Association Agreement's benefits.
- Following this decision, some of the Israeli industries situated in the territories relocated into the pre-1967 Israeli borders. Consequently, many Palestinians who used to work for these industries lost their jobs. The Brita interpretation thus undermines desired cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian industries and workers. Such cooperation could have encouraged normalization of economic relations and a daily dialogue between the two peoples that might, in the long run, contribute to the enhancement of the peace process, a desired EU goal.

Nevertheless, legally, the Brita judgment became part of EU law, thus affecting any further action by EU institutions and Members, as well as future CJEU judgments.

States, as their customs authorities may differently refer to these certificates of origin (CJEU's judgment, para. 38).

[10] The CJEU simply concluded that each of the Association Agreements involved has a different scope of application (CJEU's judgement, paras. 47, 53).

[11] Paras. 47 and 53 of the CJEU's judgment refer to the division of powers.

Politically, the EU's measures neither enhanced a speed-up of the peace process or negotiations toward permanent arrangements in the region, nor had they facilitated the desired upgrade in the EU's political involvement in the region. On the contrary, in Israeli eyes, these acts eroded the image of the EU as a potential neutral mediator.

The Financial Policy Guidelines

EU legislation and administrative acts since the Brita judgment well reflect its legal effect. Policy guidelines the European Commission published in 2013 provide for non-eligibility of Israeli entities established in the territories, or activities entities established in Israel perform in the territories, to grants, prizes, and financial instruments the EU offers with regard to research, culture, education, and sports activities.

The guidelines state that their aim is

to ensure the respect of EU positions and commitments in conformity with international law on the non-recognition by the EU of Israel's sovereignty over the territories… (European Commission, 2013, para. 1).[12]

They further stress these guidelines are in line with the EU's Foreign Affairs Council's position, which

has underlined the importance of limiting the application of agreements with Israel to the territory of Israel as recognized by the EU (ibid., para. 3).

Specifically referring to the Brita judgment as determining the territorial application of the EU-Israel Association Agreement (European Commission, 2013, footnote 1), the guidelines aim at the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but also at East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, to which neither the EU-PLO Association Agreement nor the *circumstances* of Brita case refer.

Indeed, the two sets of measures share many common aspects:

- The actors in both cases are Israel and the EU.
- In both cases, the parties play similar roles: The EU is imposing the measures at Israel.
- Both cases share the same political context: the Israeli-Palestinian ongoing dispute.
- Both sets of measures have the same territorial application.
- In both cases, action by the EU relies on a political decision of the Foreign Affairs Council (EU Commission, 2013, footnote 3; Foreign Affairs Council, 2012).
- Both sets of measures rely on the EU-Israel Association Agreement, and the Brita judgment interpreting it, as legal justification.

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[12] While the Israeli popular discourse refers to EU measures as 'sanctions,' the EU stresses these are not 'sanctions' according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, but rather measures reflecting the EU's insistence on respecting public international law rules, as well as the EU law as the CJEU interpreted it in the Brita case (CJEU, 2010).

- The EU's motivation for both sets of measures is similar.
- The manner of operation: Both sets of measures share the use of allegedly 'neutral' technical provisions, to justify steps allegedly necessary to ensure compliance with the rules of public international law (as the EU understands it) (European Commission, 2013, para. 1).[13]
- The EU perceives the policy guidelines as complementing and reinforcing the former measures, to improve desired political results (European Commission, 2013b, answer to question 2).

The differences between the two sets of measures reflect the lessons the EU drew from the application of former measures, and implemented in the financial policy guidelines:

- The implementing authority: While the national customs authorities of EU Member States enforced the exclusion of goods originating in the territories from the scope of application of EU-Israel Association Agreement (a fact that caused confusion and differences in the interpretation and implementation of EU law by different customs authorities before the Brita judgment), EU institutions and agencies apply the financial policy guidelines. This fact ensures centralized and uniform implementation.
- The instruments the EU uses are different: In the import benefits' case, the Commission first published warnings to EU importers (EU Commission, 1997, 2001) - an administrative instrument. The Brita judgment (a legal means) followed. The policy guidelines form an administrative instrument. The guidelines preview future inclusion of their content in international agreements, protocols thereto, or memoranda of understanding with Israeli and other counterparts (legal means).
- The timing of instruments is different: In the import benefits' case, the EU published both instruments ex post, while it published the guidelines ex ante.
- The affected subjects are different: import benefits in the former case, access to prizes, grants, and certain financial instruments in guidelines' case.
- The affected persons in the two cases are different: Exporters (and indirectly, producers) of goods originating in the territories in the former case, Israeli entities established in the territories and activities that Israeli entities perform there (and indirectly, the Israeli individuals who might have been potential beneficiaries of this financing) in the latter case. Moreover, the policy guidelines do not refer only to one sector. Thus, at least potentially, they may affect much broader populations.
- Effect on the Palestinian citizens in the territories: Learning from the consequences of the Brita decision, from which both Israeli and Palestinian individuals suffered, the policy guidelines explicitly exclude from their scope of application Palestinian subjects, and activities made in favor of 'protected persons' according to the 4th Geneva Convention, or to promote the peace process in the region. These persons and activities may thus be entitled to the financing offered.

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[13] For more information on alternative interpretation of international law rules, and on the selective EU insistence on their enforcement, see Munin, 2011. For more information about the political use of rules of origin, see Hirsch, 2011.

- Prediction and assessment of economic effect: While the economic value of non-eligibility of goods originating in the territories to import benefits is transparent and quantifiable, the guidelines' effect is difficult to assess, for the following reasons:
  - Any financial support of the kinds the guidelines cover is *potential* even for eligible candidates, being subject to a process of selection from competing applications.
  - The guidelines apply to different areas of activity: research, culture, education, and sports. They may affect each of these fields differently.
  - Since the guidelines are long standing, it is difficult to predict their effect in future years.
  - Indirectly, the guidelines also deprive the affected individuals and entities of indirect benefits such as international professional networking, exposure, and recognition that may be by-products of participation in international programs. Such losses are difficult to quantify.
  - The language of the guidelines is open to discretionary interpretation. This assumption underlined the EU invitation to Israel, to discuss its implementation.[14]

Nevertheless, one should not underestimate the potential economic effect of the guidelines. The difficulty to quantify it *ex post* seems to reinforce its deterring effect in Israeli eyes.

The accumulative effect of the measures described created, for the first time, a sense of a gradual scale of measures that may include future, additional, more severe steps. This implied threat is reinforced, since then, by additional measures taken. Between the two sets of measures discussed above, the European Commission issued two other official documents applying agreed provisions to Israel while excluding the territories from their scope: one with regard to protection of personal data (European Commission, 2011, Article 2) and the other with regard to marketing standards in the fruit and vegetables sector (European Commission, 2013a, para. (7)). In 2014, this policy was further extended to non-recognition of veterinary certificates issued by the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture for meat (European Commission, 2014, para. 9), and to eggs and dairy (Coren, 2014) originating in the territories and imported to the EU. In November 2015, the European Commission published an 'interpretative notice' providing for labelling products originating in the territories with special labels declaring their origin, allegedly justified on consumer protection's grounds (European Commission, 2015). This instruction inflamed a public debate among EU Member States, as some of them, like the Czech Republic, refused to follow this instruction.

In January 2016, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, that the EU considers to sue damages from Israel for destruction of EU-financed constructions in area C (an occupied territory that Israel still did not redeploy to the Palestinian Authority). The EU argues it financed these constructions for housing of Bedouin tribes roaming in this area, from humanitarian motives. Israel argues that these constructions are illegal, since they took place without formal authorization. The undermining context is the competition over

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[14] Ashton, 2013, held the following:
In the meanwhile the EU looks forward to working and consulting with Israel on a broad range of bilateral issues, and has invited Israel to hold discussions on the territorial scope of agreements with the EU that are currently under preparation.

the right to permanent holding of this piece of land (Lis, 2016; Rotter, 2016). During the second Intifada, Israel destroyed much more elaborated and costly constructions that the EU financed in Gaza Strip, such as a newly built airport. Nevertheless, the EU did not sue damages. If the EU would eventually take this case to court, this might mark another escalation in the scale of measures it takes against Israel. A few days later, still in January 2016, the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs decided that all EU agreements with Israel will not apply to the occupied territories (Ravid, 2016).

The Israeli reaction: In fact, the financial policy guidelines do not set a global precedent: Israel had already signed similar research agreements with other countries (Gordon & Pardo, 2014a, pp. 5-6).

Nevertheless, their publication in Israel caused a huge media fuss, opening up again the ongoing Israeli discourse on the status of the territories. The Israeli government chose to respond to the guidelines by reinforcing Israeli activities in the territories, restating the government's political commitment to the Israeli settlements in the territories. It further announced some political counter-steps, attempting to limit the EU's involvement in the territories, and considered to avoid participating in Horizon 2020 (see details in Gordon & Pardo, 2014a, pp. 6-7). However, the media fuss faded after some days. Israel has abandoned the furious political declarations, and finally joined Horizon 2020, subject to mutual political understanding with EU decision makers, not to agree on the territories' status. A similar political (Tuchfeld, Jacob, & Diez, 2015) and media fuss, that subsided after a few days, accompanied all recent EU steps.

The BDS Campaign

Unlike the formal, top down measures, EU authorities apply, the BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) movement (BDS Movement, 2015) emerged from the bottom, from the civil society.

In 2005, 171 pro-Palestinian NGOs (some of which enjoy EU funding: NGO Monitor, 2015) launched this initiative, which is recently gaining momentum, particularly in European countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, and the UK. This movement is running an ongoing campaign encouraging the public, globally, to boycott Israeli products and services, academic scholars, and cooperation with Israeli academic and cultural institutions. It further calls to avoid investment in Israel, and in Israeli firms and ventures. To a certain extent, it attempts to join forces with the Socially Responsible Investments campaign, reiterating investors to invest while taking into account social, not only economic, considerations. The BDS movement lobbies decision makers globally, to convince them to impose sanctions on Israel. The idea behind this campaign, covering economic, academic, and cultural aspects, is to assume global pressure on Israel to change its policy toward the occupied territories, which the BDS movement perceives as illegal according to public international law.

Comparison with EU measures described reveals the following differences:

- *The covered* territory: While EU measures aim at the territories, the BDS campaign aims at Israel.
- The initiating entity: EU institutions initiate EU measures. The BDS campaign is a private entities' initiative, although these entities sometimes enjoy EU financing.

- The legal status of the two groups of measures is different: Thus, for example, the GATT legally rules out most options of goods' boycott between its Member States, offering affected Member States legal instruments to challenge such practices.[15] Chapter VII of the UN Charter allows for international economic sanctions against a country in response to 'threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression,' subject to strict terms specified, including a Security Council decision (Article 41). These legal limitations are inapplicable to boycott that private entities initiate. Challenging such boycott thus stays within the realm of political and public counter-campaigns, which is a vaguer and tougher field of battle. Consequently, private sector initiatives as the BDS campaign may cover actions that countries are not allowed taking, thus reinforcing and complementing the governmental, formal efforts the EU takes toward Israeli activities in the territories.

Potential Economic Implications

Israel is a small economy, heavily relying on export. Export of goods and services forms more than one third of its GDP.[16] The EU is Israel's major trade partner, destination for 28% of Israeli exports.[17] The EU keeps its position as the major Israeli export destination, despite constant Israeli efforts to develop new markets, particularly in Asia. Among other reasons, this is due to geographic and cultural proximity and due to the fact that EU developed Member States are more interested than developing countries in Israeli sophisticated technologies and services (Schwartzmann & Hofman, 2015, p. 5).

The decisive role of exports and foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the development of the Israeli economy, that these figures reflect, may explain the obvious fear from an adverse effect thereto, that a pincer grasp of governmental measures and private initiatives of the kind this article describes may potentially cause.

Hitherto, however, attempts to boycott, or otherwise undermine, Israeli exports did not have substantial macro-economic adverse effects. On the contrary, in recent years, Israel is attracting substantially higher amounts of FDIs than before. In 2013, Israel attracted FDIs amounting to $11.8 billion.[18] The total foreign direct investment in Israel at the end of 2013 amounted to $88.2 billion (Kofman, 2014, p. 8).

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[15] This common interpretation of GATT stems from a combination of its non-discrimination provisions: articles II and IV, and their specified exceptions in articles XX and XXI, which do not mention political reasons as justification for deviation from the non-discrimination principles. GATT Article XXXV allows newly acceding Member States to opt out of GATT's requirements with respect to particular Members. This provision mutually applies between pairs of countries that do not recognize each other. It applies between some Arab countries and Israel. Even upon application, it does not cover cases of secondary and tertiary boycott, namely boycott against firms in other countries (to which the boycotting country did not apply this provision) trading with Israel (Kontorovich, 2003, pp. 288-294). This provision does not apply between the EU and Israel.

[16] In 2013, export formed 34.5% of the Israeli GDP. Since economists measure export in gross terms (including imported inputs) while they measure GDP in net terms (excluding imported inputs), the share of export in the GDP is in fact somewhat lower (Kofman, 2014, p. 3).

[17] The United States forms a destination for 27% and Asia forms a destination for 20% of Israeli exports (ibid.).

[18] This amount is 78 times higher than the amount of FDIs in Israel in 1990 (ibid., p. 8).

The volume of export from Israel to the EU grew, despite the measures described. Counter acts U.S. institutions took against the BDS's initiating private entities, and the fact that the boycott usually aims at final products, while Israeli inputs used in final products originating elsewhere often escape its effect, may partially explain this fact. Furthermore, in specific cases, exporters may have reduced adverse effects of such measures by turning to alternative export destinations, e.g., in Asia (Kofman, 2014, pp. 10-12).

Additionally, export from the territories forms only a small share of the entire Israeli export to the EU (products 1.47%, agricultural export 2.5% in 2013). This fact implies a modest maximal potential of damage. Acquisition of products originating in the territories by consumers abroad, preferring them ideologically or because of their quality may further reduce it (ibid., pp. 6-11).

The non-recognition, by EU authorities, of phytosanitary, quality (for organic products), and veterinary certificates the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture and entities authorized by it issue, with regard to products originating in the territories, forces producers in the territories to turn to foreign firms entitled to issue such certificates, but this extra administrative burden does not seem to create a substantial economic burden. It is rather perceived as a more symbolic act (ibid., p. 11).

At the same time, certain international firms already decided to avoid investment or withdraw their investments in Israel. Such phenomena may expand, and in any case it may have an indirect adverse effect on the public opinion. [19]

Strategy Assessment

The Power Game among the Parties

EU Measures. The comparison between the different measures EU authorities imposed on products and activities originating in the territories seems to lead to some insights, both regarding the management and essence of this controversy.

Management of the Controversy. In terms of dispute management, Israel seems to have failed to prevent the imposition of EU measures. While in the import benefits' case Israel invested substantial diplomatic and political efforts to prevent the measures but consciously gave up the legal option, in the financial policy guidelines case, according to the Israeli press,[20] Israeli diplomats and decision makers were not fully aware of the guidelines' development by the EU, until they were nearly published. Furthermore, when the EU published the guidelines, reactions by Israeli politicians reflected the public rage these guidelines invoked, instead of reflecting a well informed and weighed understanding and strategy. In the labelling instructions' case, Israel was more alert and received the information about the intention to do so before action took place. It

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[19] Thus, for example, two European pension funds decided to withdraw their investments in Israel: GPFG (Norway) $5.2 million, PGGM (the Netherlands) $12.5 million. One pension fund, FDC (Luxemburg), and two banks, Danske Bank (Denmark) and KLP (the Netherlands), decided to avoid investing in Israeli firms involved in construction in the territories (ibid., pp. 13-14). In January 2016, the United Methodist Church's pension fund in the United States (representing more than 7 million members) included 5 Israeli banks in a 'black list' of corporations it would not invest in, due to alleged Israeli infringements of human rights (Spiegelman and Calcalist, 2016).

[20] See, for example, Somfalvi, 2013; Rotter.Net, 2013.

acted in diplomatic channels to change this decision, alas unsuccessfully. However, assuming strong political pressure in EU capitals after the publication of the guidelines, it succeeded to convince some Member States to refuse acting upon Brussels' instructions, e.g., the Czech Republic, Austria (Mida, 2015), and Hungary (Somfalvi & Eichner, 2015).

The gradual imposition of measures on Israel puts in question Israel's choice not to opt for a legal dispute settlement in the first round, which could have changed the legal result the Brita decision established and maybe discourage the EU from taking further action. Discussions the parties took after the initiation of the financial policy guidelines may have yielded some marginal restraining effect regarding the implementation and interpretation of the guidelines, but obviously at that stage this effect was much more limited than it could have been, had Israel reacted to this initiative in due time. This lesson seems to have dictated a more determinant (and effective) action with regard to the labelling guidelines.

The EU leads the process in all its stages, dragging Israel into it. In all cases, the EU initiated the measures, thus having enough time to plan, consider, and weigh the options and choose the manner of action as well as the timing.

Comparison between the first two sets of measures (prevention of benefits from imported goods and prevention of financial benefits from activities) reflects that unlike Israel, the EU had learned some pragmatic lessons from the former round of measures, applying them in the latter one. However, the next round (labelling) may mark a change in the Israeli reaction, toward more awareness in advance and a more determinant position *ex post,* that may, for the first time, deviate EU Member States' positions toward this ongoing, gradual strategy the European Commission leads. Similarly, using diplomatic channels, Israel succeeded to soften the wording of the last EU decision, that its agreements with Israel would not apply to the territories.

Aim and Effect. It is clear to all parties that the underlying theme of all EU measures is the political context: the status of the territories and the potential role of the EU in the region.

In light of the modest results in the import benefits' case, it is hard to imagine that the EU expected the financial policy guidelines to make an extreme difference. These measures may imply economic damage to certain entities and activities, thus indirectly affecting certain individuals. In a two years' perspective, data now reflects their limited effect. From the start, it was highly probable that they would not change Israel's position toward peace negotiations and their results. This also may be true with regard to labelling. While it may discourage certain customers from buying the labelled products, it may encourage others, who support the Israeli position, to do so.

Consequently, one cannot avoid wondering whether the EU deliberately chose to use measures of a symbolic nature, with limited adverse effects, to make a political statement. Ironically, by its furious political reaction, Israel contributed to the 'visibility' of these measures by media coverage, thus contributing to their public effect, which seems to be greater than their economic effect (Gordon & Pardo, 2014a).

Israeli decision makers' recent attempts to figure out the full potential of such measures reflect the effectiveness of the EU strategy's deterring effect. It seems that recently, Israel realized this is a gradual, ongoing scale of measures, and is becoming aware of this threat. It tries to figure out what might be a scenario that would turn the EU's policy and practice toward the Israeli presence in the territories into a more economically motivated threat, and how to avoid such escalation (Rotter.Net, 2016).

While from an EU perspective these measures may paradoxically create 'a normative justification to continue business as usual with Israel' (due to the clear normative separation they made between Israel and the territories) (Gordon & Pardo, 2014a, p. 8), the negative Israeli public opinion regarding the EU's position toward the regional dispute, strengthened by these measures, makes it very difficult for the EU to position itself as a normative power (Harpaz, 2007), deterring Israeli politicians from supporting the enhancement of EU involvement in the region as a mediator.

The BDS. Hitherto, the effect of the BDS movement's campaign on the Israeli economy is marginal. Nevertheless, one should not underestimate its accumulative effect. It affects the global public opinion, eroding Israel's image,[21] thus indirectly affecting preferences of consumers and investors as well as governments' political choices that seem to encourage additional EU measures.[22]

Since there are no international legal instruments to deal with the BDS phenomena, which is a private entities' initiative, the main challenging tactics are political, i.e. intensifying the battle over the global public opinion, and commercial, i.e., offering consumers non-compatible, high quality goods.

EU's Global Image

Despite their macro-economic current limited effect, EU measures hold some advantages in term of the EU's global policy and image: The EU succeeds, once and again, to surprise (and maybe embarrass) Israel. The EU succeeds to make a political statement that is valuable in terms of its international position[23] and image as a determinant fighter for peace and human rights. It found an original way to leverage measures, which, although other international players took, to a certain extent, they never leveraged them in this manner. These achievements promote the image of the EU as a 'normative power' (Gordon & Pardo, 2014, pp. 87-88) at a relatively small cost: The instruments the EU chose are not expensive to operate and are flexible, allowing for discretion regarding their implementation, thus creating a trigger for an ongoing dialogue with Israel, attempting to affect its position. The accumulative effect of these measures implies a threat for further action, along the same lines. The effect of the BDS campaign reinforces this effect. While bearing a limited potential maximal economic threat, these moves invoke an Israeli concern that they may lead to future possible global escalation, whereby what is currently globally perceived mainly as a moral norm might turn into a global legally binding rule (Schwartzmann & Hofman, 2015, p. 3). 'Refreshing' a 1995 guidance for labelling imports to the U.S. of goods

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[21] The literature thoroughly establishes the link between a country's image and the willingness of the global public to trade with a country and invest in it. See, for example, Kotler and Gertner, 2002; Dinnie, 2008; Kalamova and Kai, 2010, pp. 400-431.

[22] Gordon and Pardo, 2014a, p. 2, Interviewed senior EU officials and MPEs contending that the Commission and the EEAS were hesitant to issue the Guidelines, but ended up doing so as a result of pressure from MEPs and local (as well as international) NGOs, who were, in turn, responding to pressure from their own constituencies that wanted to create a linkage between Horizon 2020 and Israel's settlement policy in the OT.

[23] Some commentators suggest the EU is trying to establish its international position as a counter super-power to the United States, to create a bi-polar global power structure through a 'balance of practices' by 'bringing stability, security and well-being more often and to a greater number of peoples than the US did by means of material power' (Adler & Crawford, 2004, p. 8).

originating in the territories, that took place at the end of January 2016 (Globes, 2016), may be a first sign that this process may have already started. The U.S.'s customs authorities and the State Department tried to portray this instruction as a technical clarification (rather than a political statement), allegedly following complaints about weak enforcement, but the fact that enforcement was weak for 20 years and the timing of this 'refreshing,' which includes a warning about fines for disobedience, shortly after recent EU steps, may suggest otherwise. It is interesting to note that this guidance applies to Israeli *and Palestinian* products, referring only to their territorial origin.

The 'normative power' concept suggests that 'not only the EU constituted on a normative basis, but importantly that this predisposes it to act in a normative way in world politics' (Manners, 2002, pp. 240, 252). However, the double standard the EU applies to other international territorial conflicts, particularly conflicts (such as North Cyprus, and Ceuta and Melilla) where territorial interests of EU Member States are involved, may erode this image. Applying the same pragmatic approach to the territories could have better established the desired status of the EU as 'a normative and practical model of regional or even global governance' (Adler & Crawford, 2004, 12; Nicolaidis & Howse, 2002, pp. 768, 771, 782).

Flexibility allows the EU to be more generous where European interests, such as cooperation with Israel in research and development (R&D) ventures, are at stake. Such flexibility seems to correspond to the neorealist approach, whereby

> member states will only allow the EU to act as the repository for shared ethical concerns as long as this does not conflict with their core national interests. The example of economic relations with Putin's Russia, or of arms sales to China, underscores the limits of the concept of Europe as a 'normative power' (Hyde-Price, 2006, p. 223).

While Palestinians may view such flexibility as an EU neorealist 'compromise' in terms of 'normative power,' to secure EU Member States' core interests in their relationships with Israel, many Israelis view EU measures toward the territories (which they perceive as indirect incentives for further hostilities in the region), as an EU 'compromise' in terms of 'normative power' values, aiming at securing EU Member States' core interests in their relationships with the Palestinians (and maybe with the rest of the Arab world).

The neorealist approach also may explain the unchanged Israeli position toward the territories, despite EU measures and the BDS: Israel views the prevention of the economic consequences of these measures as a second order concern, in comparison to its security concerns, and is thus ready to sacrifice them to guard the latter. This may explain the limited full political potential of these measures.

Conclusion

One may safely assume that frustration in both sides will sooner or later lead to EU attempts to tighten the regime of measures it imposes on Israeli activities in the territories. This assumption relies, among other things, on the tough positions Israel continues to express and exercise, on the intention of the EU, it explicitly expressed in the financial guidelines, to 'endeavor to have the content of these guidelines reflected in international agreements or

protocols thereto or Memoranda of Understanding with Israeli counterparts or with other parties' (EU Commission, 2013, para. 21) and on former discussions in the Foreign Affairs Council and in other EU forums, that considered total suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, for example, during the second Intifada. The European public opinion, which campaigns such as the BDS campaign help to shape, may encourage such EU positions.

The Israeli Ministry of Finance estimates that a total ban of access into the EU of products originating in the territories could amount to a damage of $300 million (0.1% of the Israeli GDP), assuming no trade diversion occurs, that might decrease this damage. It further estimates that complete EU withdrawal from its trade agreements with Israel could lead to a loss of $1.2 billion (0.4% from the Israeli GDP) (Schwartzmann & Hofman, 2015, pp. 19-20).

Thus, the EU and the BDS movement succeed to create complementary economic instruments that keep the Israeli-Palestinian dispute within global public awareness and imply a gradually growing potential economic threat on the Israeli economy, while improving their political image globally and guarding the EU's core economic interests in their relationships with Israel. In this sense, they seem to have gained a diplomatic achievement.

Nevertheless, these strategies, no matter how effective, are too limited to drive the parties back to the negotiations table, to decide a permanent arrangement in the region. In the meantime, these strategies deprive both Israelis and Palestinians living in the territories of a chance to develop common economic initiatives and collaboration that may lead to improved dialogue between the peoples. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether these strategies serve long-term EU interests in the Mediterranean region in light of recent years' political changes in the Mediterranean countries and regimes. It seems the fact that the labelling guidelines divided EU Member States to supporters and opponents also should concern the EU, maybe marking a red line for that policy. In these respects, it may turn into a Pyrrhic victory.

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About the Author

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Discussion Questions

1. Could the European Union devise a better strategy to enhance its political goals in the Mediterranean Region? How?

2. Is a selective insistence on respecting public international law norms legitimate? If the answer is affirmative, under which circumstances?

3. What constructive methods to enhance international political goals by economic incentives can you think of? Which of them may be effective to enhance a solution of an ongoing political dispute?

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"Blue Moon"
2013
Oil on canvas, 30 x 30 in.
by Helen M. Weinstein

All Brands Are Not Created Equal: Understanding the Role of Athletes in Sport-brand Architecture

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Abstract

While previous studies in sport branding have advanced our knowledge about building and managing strong brands, most have focused on sport teams. As an extension of recent attempts to embrace athletes as brands, the paper conceptualizes the role of the athlete in the sport-brand architecture. Applying Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) conceptualization, this study proposes the Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum (ABRS). The ABRS extends extant literature by highlighting the various roles athletes hold in a sport organization's brand architecture. The authors discuss implications and limitations in terms of their significance for future study.

Keywords: sport, athlete brand, brand relationship spectrum, brand architecture

Introduction

In today's highly competitive market, branding has become an integral part of marketing and management, as a traditional marketing mix approach alone is no longer sufficient to differentiate the product or service from that of competitors (Kapferer, 2012). As Keller (1998) quoted the famous words of Levitt (1960), "New competition is not between what companies produce, but what they add in the form of things that people value" (p. 4). Managers now strive to understand consumer value to build strong brand equity. This includes sustainable growth drivers, such as brand loyalty, extension opportunity, as well as increasing sales and image enhancement (Aaker, 1996a, 1996b; Berry, 2000; Keller, 1998). This paradigm shift from product marketing to branding has changed our perspective from product-oriented management to customer-oriented (e.g., Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), and the sport industry is no exception.

Sport managers and scholars realize that winning alone does not equal success for sport organizations (Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kaynak, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2007). As a result, sport managers and scholars now view and manage teams and organizations as brands and focus on the value consumers for the products and services they provide (e.g., Bauer, Sauer, & Schmitt, 2005; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Ross, 2006; Ross, James, & Vargas, 2006). Prior studies have advanced our understanding of branding; however, with regard to sport, team sport brands have garnered most of the attention. Keller (2002) argued that branding research has focused exclusively on what he defined as the small "b," whereas the industry has been applying large "B" concepts in various areas. For example, while practitioners across various areas (e.g., religion, politics, education, entertainment, sport) have advanced their application of branding to human beings (Rein, Kotler, & Shields, 2006), scholars have restricted the scope of inquiry to the inanimate targets such as corporations, products, and services (Hughes, 2007). Williams, Kim, Walsh, and Choi (2015) acknowledged this limitation and argued that future branding research should examine the role of the athlete in brand management research.

Although referring to humans as brands is relatively new, in sport there are many examples of successful athletes who have enjoyed benefits from applying branding concepts to their careers (Arai, Ko, & Ross, 2013; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012). Furthermore, leagues, teams, and tournaments also benefit from athletes' high visibility as human brands. Examples include Tiger Woods, David Beckham, and Derek Jeter. Despite the prevalence of athletes using their celebrity status in the greater marketplace, researchers have not investigated this phenomenon (e.g., Arai, Ko, & Kaplanidou, 2013; Arai et al., 2013; Hughes, 2007; Parmentier & Fischer, 2012; Thomson, 2006). Therefore, we reason that given the scope and utilization of athlete brands in the marketplace, a conceptualization of the various role athletes have in the brand architecture is warranted.

The purpose of this article is to build and provide a foothold for further development of athlete-branding research. Therefore, in the ensuing sections of this article, we evaluate prior literature in order to define appropriately athletes as brands and subsequently present the Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum (ABRS). The ABRS illustrates the various relationships that athlete brands have within sport-brand architecture.

What Is an Athlete Brand?

Research has suggested that, due to their celebrity status, athletes have the ability to influence consumers' perceptions towards a product, service, or organization (e.g., Boyd & Shank, 2004; Jowdy & McDonald, 2002; Ohanian, 1991; Till, 2001). Athletes have an integral role in helping organizations increase awareness and create positive associations for their products and services, all the while building their own personal brand (Erdogan, 1999). For example, Tiger Woods' (professional golfer) ability to differentiate himself from other competitors through his name, appearance, personality, and performance has allowed him to become a coveted endorser for a myriad of companies and one of the strongest brands in sport (Ozanian, 2014). Despite Woods's performance decline, Ozanian (2014) estimated Woods's brand equity to be valued at $36 million. While the types of brand relationships and the brand value athletes hold may vary, it is important to understand that all professional athletes are brands and should be examined according to their role in the brand architecture structure of their teams, leagues and corporate partners.

Defining Athlete Brand

Athlete refers to a trained or talented individual who is fit to compete in a physically demanding sport (Kent, 2006). While athlete brands are prevalent, researchers have yet to clearly define this concept. However, we attempt to provide a clear definition of an athlete brand in order to understanding how athlete brands are built, managed, and evaluated. While Thomson (2006) defined human brand as "any well-known persona who is the subject of marketing and communication efforts," this definition is too abstract and narrow. The narrow subject (i.e., "well-known persona") is not appropriate for athlete brands, as athlete brand are dynamic in nature (Ross, 2006). The definition of athlete brand should open its subject to any athlete, regardless of current fame (see also Arai et al., 2013).

According to the American Marketing Association's definition (AMA, 2015), a brand is "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers." Thus, we should consider athletes as brands – that is, an individual with a unique name, appearance, and other characteristics (e.g., personality, image) that identifies and distinguishes her or him from other competitors in the market. Arguably, this definition may be too marketer-oriented as it excludes other key features of a brand such as consumer benefits and added value (Aaker, 1996b; Wood, 2000).

Consumers are fundamental to building a strong brand, and a brand cannot exist without them. Thus, a brand should deliver various benefits or values to its consumers (Aaker, 1996b; Arai et al., 2013; Ji, 2008; Keller, 1993, 1998). Because fans are the core consumer for professional sports teams and individual athletes, the definition of an athlete brand reflects customer brand perspectives. Accordingly, De Chernatony, McDonald, and Wallace (2011) defined brand as "a cluster of functional and emotional values that enables organizations to make a promise about a unique and welcomed experience" (p. 31). We adopt this definition to define the athlete brand for various reasons. First, the definition clearly describes the relationship between athletes and consumers. Second, this definition includes a functional and emotional benefit. Both are unique features of sport (Clemes, Brush, & Collins, 2011; Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 1993) and the primary drivers behind sport-brand equity (Gladden et al., 1998). Further,

the definition highlights the consumer experience, which is as an important factor in building a strong sport brand (Ross, 2006).

Finally, we merged the previous brand definitions (Aria et al., 2013; De Chernatony et al., 2011; Thompson, 2006; Williams, Rhenwrick, & Walsh, 2015). We define the athlete brand as a set of associations (e.g., name, personality) of any particular athlete who identifies and distinguishes themselves in the marketplace, and promises a functional and emotional experience to consumers. Our definition recognizes three key features of an athlete brand (i.e., the unique identifier, the set of associations consumers hold in their minds, and the value creator). For individual athletes, it is important for them to distinguish themselves within their team, league, and marketplace with a favorable and unique image. Doing so will allow them to succeed in person while bringing additional value to their consumers and organizations (Martin, 2009).

Athlete Brand in Brand Architecture

Understanding the structural relationships between sport brands (e.g., athlete and team) is a fundamental step for better understanding the athlete as a brand because it can implicitly show the roles and values of athlete brands in varying statuses that are a continuum (Aaker, 2004; Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Additionally, it can depict how athlete brands in different stages create and leverage value through relationships with other brands. In sport-branding literature, however, researchers have yet to explore the relationship between athletes and the organization to which they connect. In sport, athlete brands do not exist in a single, independent form. For example, in regard to the professional basketball, fans have historically associated Michael Jordan with the Chicago Bulls brand, but now they associate him with the Charlotte Hornets brand. He is still one of the major value drivers for the Chicago Bulls. However, Jordan does not serve as a major driver for his current brand relationship as owner of the Charlotte Hornets. By comparison, Jordan's brand is significantly different today as an NBA owner from in the past as an NBA athlete. The two relationships are not the same in terms of the roles and added value. According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) framework, Jordan's brand was in a sub-brand relationship, meaning his brand was partially dependent on his relationship with master brand (Chicago Bulls), but possessed the ability to augment consumer perceptions (i.e., value) of the master brand. With the Charlotte Bobcats, however, Jordan serves as an endorsed-brand. This means that his brand has a lesser influence in the overall image of the Charlotte Hornets. However, Jordan's brand architecture role is just one example. Every athlete is diverse and complex in terms of their roles and relationships in the brand hierarchy.

Conceptual Background: Brand Relationship Spectrum (BRS)

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) conceptualized and organized the concept of brand architecture: "the brand portfolio that specifies brand roles and the nature of relationships between brands" (p. 8). According to their conceptualization, we categorized brand relationships into four dimensions: house-of-brands, endorsed-brands, sub-brands, and branded-house. We categorized the dimensions based on the degree to which the brand drives the purchase decision or brand equity (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) divided the four relationship dimensions into nine brand relationships, which they differentiated by driver role and the relevance between brands

(i.e., house-of-brands into not connected and shadow endorser; endorsed-brands into token endorser, linked name, and strong engagement; sub-brands into co-driver and master brand as driver; branded-house into different identity and same identity). Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) arranged the brand relationship from house-of-brands, endorsed-brands, and sub-brands to branded-house in the order of the driver role that the master brand has in the relationship. For example, the house-of-brands dimension has the least impact of all brand dimensions on its sub-brands. In contrast, the branded-house has the most impact on its sub-brands.

The BRS is a framework intended to help brand managers understand and analyze their complex brand structure for strategic brand management. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) suggested, the following key questions, which they used to determine if strategic movement or adjustment is appropriate for managing the brand:

- Does the master brand contribute to the offering by adding" associations, credibility, visibility, and communication efficiency?
- Can we strengthen the master brand?
- Is there a compelling need for a separate brand; will it enhance positive associations (or avoid negatives), new offerings (or avoid conflict), and customers?
- Will the business support a new brand name? (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, p. 17)

They suggested that positive answers for the first two questions imply the aptness of strategic movement downward (i.e., toward a branded-house) and upward movement (i.e., toward a house-of-brands) when the answers are positive for the last two questions.

Conceptual Framework: Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum (ABRS)

The authors of the BRS developed the model for managing product-driven organizations, the brand architecture concept may aid sport marketing scholars and practitioners in understanding varying relationships athletes have with their respective teams, leagues, and corporate sponsors. Therefore, we present the Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum, which details the role of athlete brands with regard to the nature of brand relationships. We used the term "master brand" in reference to teams, leagues, and tournaments, as opposed to relegating athletes to the role of sub-brand in all brand relationships (see Figure 1).
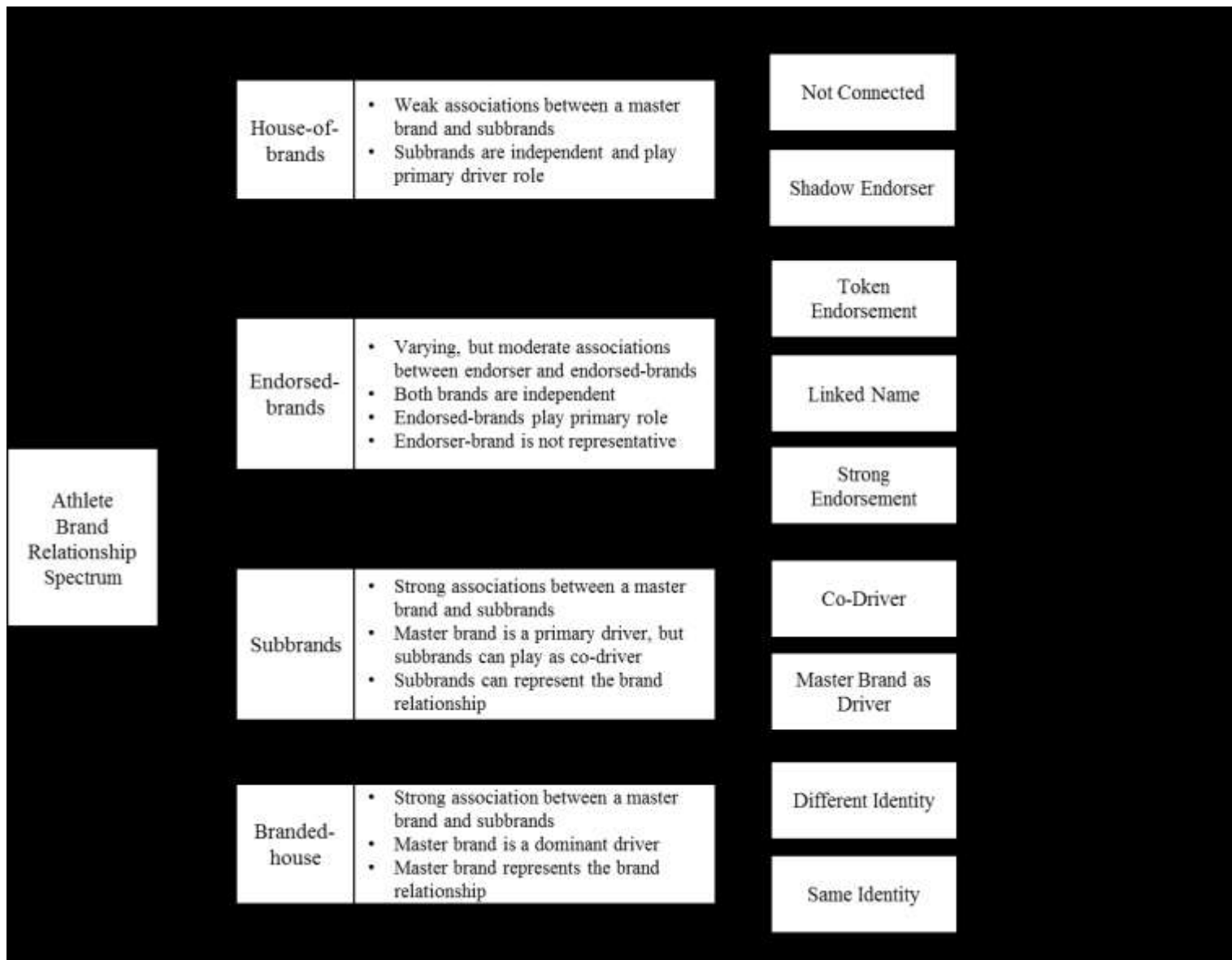
| House-of-brands | • Weak associations between a master brand and subbrands
• Subbrands are independent and play primary driver role | Not Connected |
| | | Shadow Endorser |

Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum

Endorsed-brands	• Varying, but moderate associations between endorser and endorsed-brands • Both brands are independent • Endorsed-brands play primary role • Endorser-brand is not representative	Token Endorsement
		Linked Name
		Strong Endorsement

| Subbrands | • Strong associations between a master brand and subbrands
• Master brand is a primary driver, but subbrands can play as co-driver
• Subbrands can represent the brand relationship | Co-Driver |
| | | Master Brand as Driver |

| Branded-house | • Strong association between a master brand and subbrands
• Master brand is a dominant driver
• Master brand represents the brand relationship | Different Identity |
| | | Same Identity |

Figure 1. Athlete Brand Relationship Spectrum (ABRS)

House-of-brands

A house-of-brands is at an extreme of brand architecture for both business and sport. House-of-brands is a brand that involves an independent set of stand-alone brands under a master brand name. This brand relationship implies that a weak link exists between the master brand and sub-brand in consumers' minds due to the perception that the two are not connected. In this case, the relationship between brands has a marginal impact on purchase decisions and brand equity. In sport, this relationship is found when the association consumers hold for an athlete do not connect to or are not congruent with that of the team, league, or corporate partner. For example, foreign ambassadors (i.e., star players who have millions of fans in their home countries; Kerr & Gladden, 2008) and star players on a team, league, or conference that are less-established, may serves as drivers for consumer perceptions of the master brand. This relationship would bring unbalanced and short-term benefits to the brands. For example, this is indicative of a consumer who stops supporting a team because his or her favorite athlete is no longer a member of that team. For instance, the loyalty of National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) fans typically lies with the stock car driver. While the stock car team and sponsoring brands may accrue the benefits from the relationships with the stock car driver, their value is based on the relationship with the stock car driver.

Endorsed-brands

Endorsed-brands are the type commonly found in sports and involve an endorser-brand and an endorsed-brand. In this case, athlete brands are endorser-brands and the sport organization (e.g., team, league) is the endorsed-brands. In this category, the endorser-brand (i.e., athlete brand) is different from the sub-brand in the other ABRS dimensions, in which it is a master brand The degree of link between the athlete brand and, for instance, the athlete's team will vary depending on their shared attributes and perceived fit in the minds' of consumers. While the sport organization can benefit from the athlete's well-established image (e.g., credibility, reputation), endorsements also provide additional associations for the athlete's brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Till, 2001). In this case, endorser-brand is typically a high-profile athlete who lends their name, image, and likeness to a corporate entity in order to promote or sell a product or service (Till, 2001). For example, Roger Federer (a professional tennis player) and Derrick Rose (a professional basketball player) are strong endorser-brands for Nike Tennis and Adidas Basketball, respectively. Athletes' extending their brand in to other businesses is another type of endorsed-brand relationship, which entails the athlete endorsing his or her own product or service.

Subbrands

The sub-brand dimension refers to the relationship between the master brand and the sub-brand to which it connects. The relationship is based on brand image transfer, or the ability of the athlete brand (i.e., sub-brand) to transfer his or her image onto the image of the sport organization (i.e., master brand). In the sub-brand dimension, however, the athlete brand is somewhat dependent on the master brand, and their relationship is closer than those of endorsed-brands. Due to the closeness, a sub-brand has the potential to impact the master

brand's image in a positive or negative way. For example, people view Tiger Woods as a sub-brand of NIKE Golf due to his impact on the associations consumers have for Nike Golf. Woods' on- and off-field reputation may directly and significantly impact the associations consumers have for NIKE Golf, people regard this relationship as a sub-brand (i.e., a co-driver). According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), in some cases, we cannot generalize relationships because each situation has a different context. In our conceptualization, we delineate the difference between an endorsed-brand and a sub-brand by adding the representativeness of the sub-brands as a guideline. While an endorsed-brand relationship may include closeness and a considerable effect of the endorser-brand on the associations with the master brand, they may not actually represent the master brand in the relationship, whereas, in fact, a sub-brand does. Therefore, we introduce the degree of representativeness as a guideline that clarifies the differences between endorsed-brands and sub-brands to boost our understanding of athlete-brand relationships. Due to the potential impact on both brands derived from closeness and representativeness, this relationship requires promising roles for both master brands and sub-brands as co-drivers (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Branded-house

The branded-house dimension is where a master brand plays a dominant role as the brand-equity driver, while sub-brands merely play a descriptive role as dependents. Put another way, in the branded house dimension consumers give their loyalty to the master-brand and the sub-brand benefits from its relationship with the master brand. We note the impact that sub-brands have on the master brand in the branded-house relationship is much weaker than their impact in the sub-brand relationship. In the branded-house relationship, although sub-brands are necessities for the master brand to produce its products and services, they have little impact on the image of master brand. For instance, athletes who have yet to gain notoriety in the marketplace, and have no equity fit in this dimension of the ABRS. Figure 1 depicts the structure and relationships in sport-brand architecture.

Implications and Limitations

ABRS is the first known attempt at conceptualizing the role of athletes in sport brand architecture. It explains the types of roles athlete brands have in sport-related organizations. Through this conceptualization, we attempt to provide evidential foundation for athletes as brands.

Throughout the ABRS framework, we recognize the unique relationships existing in sport-brand architecture. First, the relationships between athlete brands and other brands are more dynamic than brand architecture relationships in other industries. In sport, the changes in the brand's relationships (e.g., a new endorsement contract, continuation or termination of sponsorship) may vary on the basis of internal and external factors outside of the control of the athlete or the organization. Second, while athlete brands are sub-brands in most cases, they ultimately have more control over their role in the brand architecture spectrum. This is, however, not the case for product driven brands. For product driven brands the control typically lies with the master brand. Therefore, athletes and their constituents must understand how to manage the athlete as a brand and should have knowledge of their brand relationships within the

sport brand architecture. Further, ABRS also provides another critical implication for sport stakeholders. That is, the value of an athlete brand is not only the asset of the athlete but also an asset to all of his or her stakeholders.

ABRS helps our understanding of why we should view athletes as brands. However, it only provides a broad picture of sport brands and their relationships, and it does not provide a strategic approach for practitioners. Additionally, since we took the sub-relationships under the four major relationships directly from the BRS (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000), similar to previous findings (Ross, 2006), we are not sure how applicable ABRS may be to some unique relationships in sport. Therefore, we encourage further research in the area of sub-relationships. In addition to the unique nature of sport, because of the complexity of sport-brand architecture, more investigations should occur. This is because one brand can have multiple relationships with other brands simultaneously, and the boundaries between relationships are not definite. Thus, more research focusing on this complex area of inquiry is necessary.

We also believe future research should examine athlete-brand associations for different types of brand relationships (e.g., house-of-brands, sub-brands). Research in the area would allow scholars to identify the type of brand associations (e.g., attributes, benefits) that are attributable to development of athlete-brand equity. Furthermore, examining the salient brand associations consumers hold for athletes in different brand relationship dimensions would provide managerial guidelines for athletes, their agencies, and affiliate organizations. Finally, future research should also examine how an athlete's role with one brand affects his or her role with other brands.

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Kwame J. A. Agyemang, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University. He has published and presented a number of papers discussing managerial and social issues in the sport industry. His current research centers elite sport social actors and their linkages to social issues. Specifically, he studies how high-profile athletes use their platforms to improve society. He is particularly interested in matters concerning racial inequality, health and fitness, and community development.

Tywan G. Martin, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Sciences at the University of Miami. Martin's primary research focus is on the influence and impact of media messages on consumer behavior across various platforms. His second strand

of research examines brand perception and how attributes of a brand are utilized to influence fan behavior.

Discussion Questions

1. This article discussed the degrees of relevance and representativeness as the factors that distinguish sub-brand relationships and endorsed-brand relationships. From athlete brand perspective, how can practitioners use these two brand relationships in order to increase brand equity?

2. From a sport organization's perspective, which of the four relationship dimensions (i.e., house of brand, endorsed brand, sub-brand, and branded house) would be most desirable? Would it be different across sports?

3. The authors mentioned that the value of an athlete brand is an asset not only to the athlete but also to organizations affiliated with the athlete as well. What strategies can marketers use to maximize the value they can obtain from an athlete's brand?

To Cite this Article

Williams, A. S., Kim, D., Agyemang, K., & Martin, T. G. (2015, Fall). All brands are not created equal: Understanding the role of athletes in sport-brand architecture. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 7*(3), 75-86.

Book Review

Book Details

Roach, J., & Dominguez, G. (2015). *Expressing theology: A guide to writing theology that readers want to read.* Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 167 pages, $21, paperback, ISBN: 978-1-4982-0870-3.

Reviewer

Diane N. Capitani, Ph.D.

Synopsis and Evaluation

These two authors, one a practical theologian (Dr. Jonathan Roach) and one an academic librarian (Gricel Domínguez), took a chance on writing together in order "to spark a revolution" (p. 1), even though Domínguez had no theological background at all. The revolution they hope this small volume will spark is one that will light a fire under students of theology, a fire to read and write theology well, not just grammatically correct theology, but theology that is interesting, exciting, thought-provoking, and informative.

One of the most valuable words of advice the authors give the student of theology comes at the very beginning of the book: *Write.* And then write some more. Keep a journal, write poetry, reflect, and ask yourself what theology really is, or create your own definition. At the end of each chapter, there are questions for reflection, a valuable tool not only for students of theology but also for their professors, for pastors, or for any of us who have been in the theological field for years.

There is a focus on reflection all through this volume that is important as well as a stress on "doing theology." One of my disappointments, however, is the lack of truly concrete examples with many of their very good suggestions, like this one: It is one thing to tell the student reader to "share your insights with the people around you" (p. 19) but quite another to suggest ways in which they can really *do* it. Students, in particular, can be timid creatures when they begin their theological journeys, and experience may tell us that they need some gentle or not-so-gentle coaxing to get them to share their thoughts with others. The authors' first chapters dwell on defining theology, engaging it by coming to the realization that one really *is* a theologian, then spending time reading sources—the Bible, tradition, and research materials—and exploring ways to engage one's audience.

It is not until Chapter 5 that the authors get a little more specific with grammar and writing techniques. Here, they begin with a good quote from writer Anne Lamott about first

drafts. In fact, they quote many good writers and theologians in this book, perhaps a few too many for this reviewer's taste, but they have done their research. The authors certainly stress the importance of doing many drafts of essays, and I heartily concur. They also discuss the importance of prewriting, but don't fuss over it; rather, they seem to feel that if the writer can't get started in the prewriting stage, he or she needs to find another idea.

Chapter 5 is their strongest and most specifically useful one, the most helpful for the beginning writer of theology, and a good one for those who have been in the field awhile and need a jump-start for new ways to bring excitement to their work. They take the reader and writer from prewriting to controlling ideas to planning to first draft and on and on until the final draft stage that many students fight against, and which may take many rewrites. The authors tell us *why* rewrites are so important, using quotes from well-known and popular authors like Stephen King, among others. They stress the importance of varying and adding to vocabulary to "energize" and make writing "snappier," and even give some grammar lessons on proper usage of pronouns.

In Chapter 6, their list "Revising and Rewriting in Ten Easy Steps" is succinct and well done. I hope that in a revised edition, they would include a few good student papers as examples of good writing—the writing is a little dense and specific example papers would break it up and make the points more forcefully. But in all, this is a good addition to a market that is sadly lacking resources that will interest students of theology and help them, with humor, presented through an interesting perspective.

In the Author's Own Words

"Before you begin to break the rules, I encourage you to learn them first. Master the English sentence. Study writing: creative writing, business writing, non-fiction, composition, poetry. Study all forms and techniques of writing. Listen and ask. Get feedback and re-write. Avoid anyone who wants you to write as they write" (p. 17).

"My second piece of advice is to read. Read economics, read biology, read old novels, read postmodern thrillers, read poetry, read the Bible. Always keep a book with you, whether print or digital. I feel what novelist Stephen King argues is very true: 'The more you read, the less apt you are to make a fool of yourself with your pen or word processor'" (p. 17).

Reviewer's Details

Diane N. Capitani, Ph.D., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Northwestern University (d-capitani@garrett.edu), holds four master's degrees and a Ph.D.; in French language and literature, English literature, comparative literature, and theological and historical studies; from Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary at Northwestern University. She is Director of the Writing Center at the Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, where she also teaches theological research and writing as an affiliate faculty member, and is a lecturer in English literature, comparative literature, and religion at Northwestern University. She is a lecturer in the United States and Canada on Jane Austen, a frequently published scholar of Austen and Iris Murdoch in the United Kingdom and the United States, and the author of two books, *Research and Writing in the*

Seminary: Practical Strategies and Tools, published with Melanie Baffes in 2013, and *Truthful Pictures: Slavery Defended.*

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"September Song"
2012
Oil on canvas, 36 x 24 in.
by Helen M. Weinstein

Book Review

Book Details

Wilson, D., & Adams, J. (Eds.). (2015). *Press start to play*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 528 pages, $15.95, paperback, ISBN 9781101873304.

Reviewer

Anastasia Salter, D.C.D.

Synopsis and Evaluation

This edited collection of 26 stories takes video games, from classic text-adventures to imagined immersive worlds of virtual reality, as a starting point for an examination of our relationship to game narratives. The contributors are remarkably diverse, with stories from game designers and writers as well as science fiction and fantasy authors. Together, these stories begin to answer the question of what games have to offer us as part of the narrative context with which we shape our understanding of identity and society.

While the concept of narrative inspired by gaming is far from new, the constantly changing technical landscape offers an unending source of inspiration that many of these works draw upon. This collection serves as a strong entry point into the current state of both the fiction genre surrounding gaming and into gaming culture itself. Standout stories can provide powerful starting points for conversations on current debates in gaming and indeed in technology. For instance, David Barr Kirtley's "Save Me Plz" offers a disturbing portrait of a young man obsessed with video games to the point where he believes reality is but a flawed experience that game design can fix: "It's the world as it should be, full of wonder and adventure. To privilege reality simply because it is reality just represents a kind of mental parochialism" (p. 206). Other stories take familiar games as their starting point but with unnerving twists, such as Robin Wasserman's "All of the People in Your Party Have Died," which takes the classic edutainment game Oregon Trail and uses it as a metaphor to explore life choices. Other stories, such as Jessica Barber's "*Coma* Kings," look away from existing games to technologies on the horizon that might bring the interfaces and experiences of gaming more directly into our brains. While some of the stories take a very strong stance on gaming (such as Chris Kluwe's "Please Continue," a stark look at the message of gaming through the lens of the NFL), many others have a clearly ambivalent relationship with video games as medium. As the readers move from story to story, the potential of video games to save and transform lives is explored nearly as often as the power of games to addict or destroy.

Many of the stories included in this collection will be difficult to follow for readers unfamiliar with some of the tropes and conventions of video games. However, for the reader who has played some games from major genres (particularly interactive fiction or text adventures and role-playing games) the intertextuality and references throughout the narratives can make for strong connections. I would particularly recommend this volume to researchers from interdisciplinary backgrounds looking for insight or a tool to inspire classroom discussion of the cultural influence and status of video games as a medium.

In the Editor's Own Words

"The humble, pixelated games of the '70s and '80s have evolved into the vivid, realistic, and immersive form of entertainment that now rivals all other forms of media for dominance in the consumer marketplace. For many, video games have become *the* cultural icons around which the entire entertainment industry revolves.

So if exploring video games has become one of the primary ways we create and experience narratives, I thought: Why not create some narratives that explore the way we create and experience video games?" (p. xviii).

Reviewer's Details

Anastasia Salter, D.C.D. (anastasia@ucf.edu), is an Assistant Professor in Digital Media at the University of Central Florida. She is the author of *What is Your Quest? From Adventure Games to Interactive Books* (University of Iowa Press 2014) and co-author of *Flash: Building the Interactive Web* (MIT Press 2014). Her research focuses on the emergence of new platforms for narrative and interactive experiences. She is a member of the editorial team for the *Electronic Literature Collection* Vol. 3.

To Cite this Review

Salter, A. (2015, Fall). Review of *Press start to play,* by D. Wilson, & J. Adams. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 7*(3), 91-92.

Editors' Choice
Recent Books of Interest – Fall 2015

1. Bar-Zohar, M., & Mishal, N. (2012). *Mossad: The greatest missions of the Israeli Secret Service.* New York, NY: HarperCollins, 400 pages, hardcover, $22.82, ISBN-13: 978-0062123404.
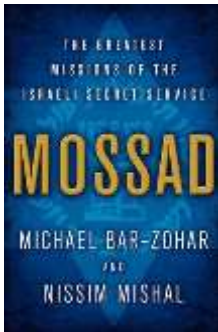
    Based on extensive research and exclusive interviews, historian and novelist Michael Bar-Zohar and Israeli TV personality Nissim Mishal offer readers an inside view of Israel's intelligence service, the Mossad, with riveting retellings of the agency's secret missions, from the capture of Nazi secret serviceman Adolph Eichmann, an instrumental figure in the Holocaust, to the bombing of a Syrian nuclear facility.

2. Durant, W. (2014). *Fallen leaves: Last words on life, love, war, and God.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 208 pages, hardcover, $19.00, ISBN-13: 978-1476771540.
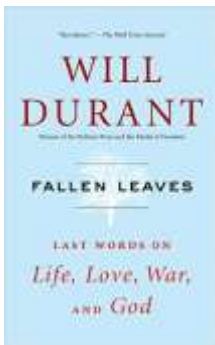
    United States writer, historian, and philosopher Will Durant spent his 60-year career researching the philosophies, religions, arts, sciences, and civilizations of the world and writing about them, but it was not until 32 years after his death that his last work was discovered. In *Fallen Leaves: Last Words on Love, War, and God*, Durant offers his opinions and insights on a range of topics, including religion, morality, race, women, youth, sex, war, capitalism, art, science, and education, spanning 21 short chapters.

3.   Gallo, C. (2016). *The storyteller's secret: From TED speakers to business legends, why some ideas catch on and others don't.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 288 pages, hardcover, $17.94, ISBN-13: 978-1250071552.
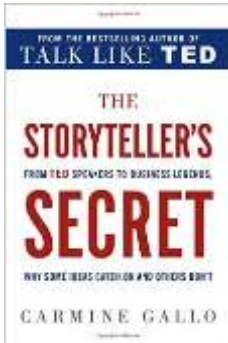
Keynote speaker, bestselling author, and former reporter and anchor for CNN and CBS, Carmine Gallo explains the science behind what makes stories work so the reader can craft compelling narratives. The book is organized into five main sections covering 50 icons, business leaders of famous brands, and entrepreneurs who ignite fires in others, educate, simplify, motivate, and start movements – all through storytelling.

4.   Jones, G. (2015). *Hive mind: How your nation's IQ matters so much more than your own.* Stanford, CA; Stanford University Press, 224 pages, hardcover, $18.50, ISBN-13: 978-0804785969.
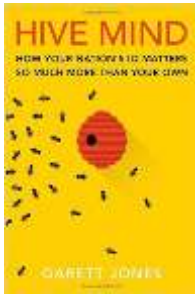
Garett Jones is a macroeconomist, associate professor at George Mason University (GMU), and BB&T Professor for the Study of Capitalism at GMU's Mercatus Center, a free-market-oriented research, education, and outreach think tank. In *Hive Mind*, Jones explores how differences in national IQ explain inequalities between and among countries. Building his argument upon research in the fields of psychology, economics, management, and political science, he explains how intelligence and cognitive skill at the individual level are associated with more patience, better memory, and greater cooperation, qualities that positively impact the entire hive. Garett uses this argument to inform policy recommendations aimed at raising IQ.

5.   Kasparov, G. (2015). *Winter is coming: Why Vladimir Putin and the enemies of the free world must be stopped.* New York, NY: PublicAffairs, 320 pages, hardcover, $16.06, ISBN-13: 978-1610396202.

Garry Kasparov, a Russian pro-democracy leader, global human-rights activist, business speaker, author, and former world chess champion, examines the threats facing the free world through parallel stories that point to the coming of a long, hard winter of global proportions, including Vladimir Putin's re-establishment of the KGB dictatorship and Western complacency to Putin's dictatorship.

6. Koppel, T. (2015). *Lights out: A cyberattack, a nation unprepared, surviving the aftermath*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing, 288 pages, hardcover, $15.60, ISBN-13: 978-0553419962.
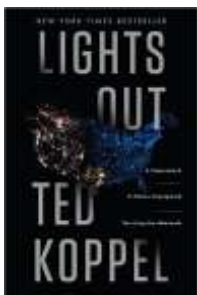
 Former United States broadcast journalist Ted Koppel exposes the nation's vulnerability to a cyberattack on the nation's power grid, the scope of the devastation were the catastrophe to occur, the federal government's preparedness for such an attack, and what steps we might take now to prepare for survival during the aftermath, with Koppel taking his cues from the swelling population of end-of-world "preppers."

7. Strout, E. (2016). *My name is Lucy Barton: A novel*. New York, NY: Random House, 208 pages, hardcover, $15.91, ISBN-13: 978-1400067695.
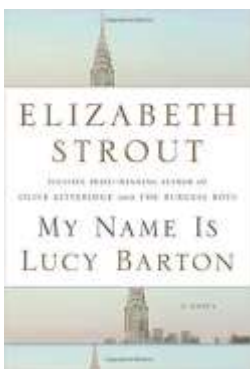
 Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for the bestseller *Olive Kitteridge* in 2009, Elizabeth Strout's latest *New York Times* Bestseller, *My Name is Lucy Barton*, deftly navigates the relationship of an estranged mother and daughter. When Lucy, a woman in her 30s, is in the hospital recovering from what was expected to be a minor operation, when her mother, whom she had not spoken with for many years, visits her. Undercurrents of loss and longing ripple across their conversations and their lives.

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"Meditation"
2012
Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in.
by Helen M. Weinstein

Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

Index to Volume 7 (2015)

Compiled by Raúl Fernández-Calienes

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