



Authenticity in horizontal marketing partnerships: A better measure of brand compatibility

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ABSTRACT

Given the marketplace prominence of sponsorship, celebrity endorsement, co-branding and similar arrangements involving the pairing of brands in communications, valid methods to evaluate their effectiveness are of importance to both managers and researchers. While these relationships have traditionally been judged based on comparisons of the attributes of each brand (e.g. fit, congruity, similarity), we argue for the importance of evaluating the perceived authenticity of the relationship itself. To this end, this research adapts a perceived brand authenticity scale developed by Morhart et al. (2015) to a measure of horizontal marketing partnership authenticity (HMP-Authenticity). In three studies, the reliability, validity and nomological network of the adapted scale is shown. In a fourth study, diagnosticity of individual dimensions is explored. In a fifth study, a brief, 4-item scale is introduced and shown to give predictions consistent with those of the full scale.

“It has gotten to the point that there is a need for authenticity,” says Peter Kahn, President of Hardwired Marketing Group. “Look, maybe Peyton Manning drives a Buick, watches DirectTV, drinks Gatorade, eats Papa Johns and wears Nike. I don’t know, but what I do know is that in an era where athletes are endorsing everything under the sun, it would be nice to know that there was a way to match up athletes with products they truly love and—more importantly—would love to endorse. The authenticity and true organic nature of the endorsement would shine through.”

(Schotthey, 2016)

1. Introduction

Corporations, nonprofits, and governmental agencies routinely engage in horizontal marketing partnerships with celebrities, social influencers, sports teams, music and entertainment events (Woisetschläger, Backhaus, & Cornwell, 2017). While these partnerships may occur in various contexts (see Appendix A for a table of horizontal marketing partnership types), there is enough commonality across these communication strategies to warrant an integrative approach to their study (Cornwell, Howard-Grenville, & Hampel, 2018). From a consumer perspective, when two brands are jointly presented, the information typically available to the consumer is about (1) how well partners appear to fit together based on their respective attributes, and (2) the apparent quality of their relationship. This is true across

contexts and communication strategies and helps explain why parallel tracks of research have separately investigated perceptions of fit between brands in cause-related marketing (e.g., Nan & Heo, 2007), co-branding (e.g., Thompson & Strutton, 2012), spokesperson marketing (e.g. Kamins & Gupta, 1994), and sports sponsorship (e.g. Olson & Thjøømøe, 2011).

On the other hand, relatively little research has examined consumer perceptions of relationship quality. This is an oversight given that relationship quality could potentially increase positive affect toward each party more than assessments of fit based on attribute similarity or compatibility. We propose that consumers evaluate the quality of horizontal marketing partnerships in terms of how authentic they appear to be. We define horizontal marketing partnership authenticity (HMP-Authenticity) as the extent to which the relationship between two or more brands is perceived by consumers to be “real, true, and genuine” (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010, 853). Each brand in the partnership could be human (e.g. a celebrity, marketing influencer) or non-human (e.g. a firm or product brand, event, activity). In related work on sponsoring, researchers have considered the effects of sincerity (Smith, 2004; Speed & Thompson, 2000; Woisetschläger, Eiting, Haselhoff, & Michaelis, 2010) and genuineness (d’Astous & Bitz, 1995), but a comprehensive examination of authenticity in horizontal marketing partnerships has not been undertaken. Given that global sponsorship spending rose to over 62 billion dollars in 2017 (IEG, 2017) and that expenditures on both influencer marketing and cobranding are also on the rise

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(Auriemma Consulting Group, 2017; Geysler, 2017), there is a clear need for effective measures of the compatibility of these types of relationships. To contribute in this space, this work:

- Critically examines dimensions of the perceived brand authenticity scale (Morhart, Malär, Guèvremont, Girardin, and Grohmann (2015)) for application to horizontal marketing partnerships and adapts the scale from measurement of a single brand to use in evaluating the authenticity of a horizontal marketing partnership;
- Presents evidence from three studies establishing the validity and reliability of this adapted scale. Importantly, in Study 2, we utilize latent variable hierarchical regression to test whether our adapted scale provides additional predictive power beyond what can be explained by fit. We also show that authenticity behaves as predicted within its nomological network, appropriately reacting to its hypothesized antecedents, and contributing to hypothesized outcomes;
- Establishes the generalizability of the new scale, in the context of sponsoring, cobranding, and influencer marketing;
- Provides a practitioner friendly short four-item scale with good measurement properties and demonstrates the diagnostic ability of the measure;
- Contributes to the well-established tracks of research on fit in sponsorship (Olson & Thjømmøe, 2011; Speed & Thompson, 2000), cause-related marketing (Nan & Heo, 2007; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006), and celebrity endorsement (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins & Gupta, 1994) by offering a complementary measure important to research and practice.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows: First, we conceptualize HMP-Authenticity, and distinguish it from fit, a related construct. Next, we develop our hypotheses and present empirical evidence showing the efficacy of the adapted scale. Study 1 provides an initial test of both the internal reliability and validity of the adapted scale. Study 2 replicates Study 1's findings with a new sample population and study context, and differentiates HMP-Authenticity from fit, an oft-used measure of relationship compatibility. Study 3 uses a new context, co-branding, to explore the relationship between HMP-Authenticity and brand authenticity, its antecedent. In Study 4, we experimentally manipulate the attributes of a hypothetical horizontal marketing partnership in order to provide an initial test of the usefulness of the four dimensions of HMP-Authenticity. A brief 4-item version of the HMP-Authenticity scale is tested in Study 5 to show that it may provide similar predictions to the full scale (see Table 1 for a full profile of the studies). We purposefully utilize a variety of contexts and horizontal partnerships to demonstrate the general utility of the measure. Lastly, we close with a theoretical and practical discussion of these findings.

Table 1
Overview of studies and constructs used as they relate to HMP-Authenticity.

	Study context	Constructs (hypotheses; relationship to HMP-Authenticity)
Scale adaptation		
Study 1: scale validation	Naming rights: Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl	Context relevance, attitude toward relationship (outcome), attitude toward brand (outcome)
Study 2: replication and differentiation from fit	Naming rights: Providence Park	Fit (distinguishable), attitude toward relationship (H1a; outcome), attitude toward brand (H1b; outcome), ad skepticism (H2; antecedent)
Study 3: relationship to brand authenticity	Co-branding: Chase-Disney credit card	Brand authenticity (H3; antecedent)
Further application		
Study 4: evaluation of diagnosticity	Naming rights: Mile High Stadium	Sponsoring brand location: local vs. distant, name type: deferential vs non-deferential, sense of community belongingness, attitude toward relationship (outcome)
Study 5: introduction and testing of brief scale	Celebrity endorsement: Dior and Jennifer Lawrence	Brief HMP-authenticity scale, attitude toward brand (outcome), attitude toward relationship (outcome)

2. Conceptual development

Research has shown horizontal marketing partnerships to be beneficial to brands. First, horizontal marketing partnerships generally increase exposure for brands involved. Mere repeated exposure to a brand name can improve consumer attitudes toward it (Zajonc, 1968) because familiar brands are processed more fluently, thus leading to positive affect that results in positive evaluations (Fang, Singh, & Ahluwalia, 2007). Second, in areas such as sponsorship, brands may be seen as benevolent through their support of a favorite team or cause, which can lead to increased goodwill among fans or patrons (Barone, Miyazaki, & Taylor, 2000; Meenaghan, 2001). Third, a brand may benefit from image transfer when positive associations a consumer has with a sponsored brand are inherited by the sponsor (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Fourth, consumers may, consciously or unconsciously, see endorsement of a brand, as by a celebrity, to be evidence of the endorsed brand's desirability (Kahle & Homer, 1985). It should also be noted that horizontal partnerships come with risks, for example, when brands are mired in sport scandals (Chien, Kelly, & Weeks, 2016) or when celebrities misbehave (Fong & Wyer, 2012; Knittel & Stango, 2013). In short, horizontal partnerships with their advantages and disadvantages are part and parcel of modern marketing.

2.1. Perceived authenticity of horizontal marketing partnerships

Due to a proliferation of insincere marketing appeals and outright scams (Jakobsson, 2016), consumers have become increasingly wary of commercial appeals (Obermiller, Spangenberg, & MacLachlan, 2005; Steenkamp & Maydeu-Olivares, 2014), and have come to view the world in terms of what is authentic, and what is fake (Gilmore & Pine, 2007, p. 1). Thus, consumers prefer consumption experiences that are authentic, meaning real, true or genuine (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Leigh, Peters, & Shelton, 2006). Horizontal marketing partnerships across the various types already discussed are sought out when authentic and rejected (or criticized) when not. For example, sponsorship relationships may have historically been received in a “halo of goodwill” (Meenaghan, 2001), but the commercialization previously mentioned has resulted in a more skeptical view of these horizontal partnerships. Just as in personal relationships (Gable & Impett, 2012), in horizontal relationships between a brand and an entity important to them, individuals seek to approach incentives and avoid threats associated with these commercial “friends of friends.”

The individual quest for authenticity extends to human (celebrity) brands, and as personas who are the subject of marketing (Thomson, 2006), they constitute important horizontal partners. Thomson (2006, p. 116) argues that “authenticity is best developed slowly and deliberately, thus signaling a long term view, and by avoiding perceived opportunism by the human brand, which can signal that the human brand has ‘sold out.’” Thus, authenticity, when celebrity endorsers

behave according to their true self (Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015), can support positive perceptions for themselves and for the brands they endorse. As for other horizontal partnerships, nowhere is authenticity more important than in cause-related marketing where brands support causes via donation or sponsoring. Partnering with a non-profit is clearly a situation in which supporting brands must “convey authenticity and genuine regard for the social issue, otherwise it is perceived as hype” (Berglind & Nakata, 2005, 453).

In horizontal marketing partnerships, potential threats to authenticity are elevated as organizations and brands enter into relationships with entities in the individual's social milieu. Importantly, this is not a marketing appeal directly from a brand (as in consumer-company relationships, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003), but rather a marketing appeal indirectly through their favorite sport team, social influencer or charitable organization. Thus, horizontal marketing relationships are relationships between two entities to which the consumer responds.

Here we turn to the concept of consumer vulnerability to understand the theoretical need for the relationship authenticity construct. Consumer vulnerability is defined by Baker, Gentry and Rittenburg (2005, p. 134) as:

A state of powerlessness that arises from an imbalance in marketplace interactions or from the consumption of marketing messages and products. It occurs when control is not in an individual's hands, creating a dependence on external factors (e.g., marketers) to create fairness in the marketplace. The actual vulnerability arises from the interaction of individual states, individual characteristics, and external conditions within a context where consumption goals may be hindered and the experience affects personal and social perceptions of self.

Vulnerability neatly describes the situation when a fan, feeling a loss of control related to an identity object, reacts negatively to their home team's stadium being renamed for a sponsor (Woisetschläger et al., 2017) or the sense of frustration when a favorite charity or museum takes tobacco money support in what has been termed “transactional” corporate social responsibility (Palazzo & Richter, 2005). Importantly, horizontal marketing partnerships, for individuals attached to either or both partners, are decisions made largely by others and are for this reason categorically different than simple brand loyalty, or team allegiance decisions.

Because authenticity has become an important aspect of the consumption experience, it logically follows that horizontal marketing partnerships that are seen to be more authentic will be more effective. Although research on horizontal marketing partnerships has acknowledged the importance of authenticity (Farrelly & Quester, 2005a; Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011; McKechnie & Zhou, 2003; Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014), empirical research on authenticity has been mainly limited to evaluating the authenticity of single objects (e.g., Grayson & Martinec, 2004) such as a brand. The prevailing construct utilized to assess horizontal partner compatibility is perceived fit. Although tools have been developed to measure brand extension authenticity (Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012) and corporate social responsibility authenticity (Joo, Miller, & Fink, 2019), there continues to be a need for a more general measure of horizontal marketing partnership authenticity. Such a measure will support research by (1) reducing the need for researchers to create new tools for every context (e.g., sponsorship, celebrity endorsement, and brand placement) and (2) ensuring that the authenticity of various kinds of partnerships, including those not yet conceived by modern marketing practitioners, will be measurable and comparable in evaluations.

2.2. Authenticity measurement as an alternative to fit measurement

To measure authenticity of a horizontal marketing partnership is to capture an evaluation of the qualities of the relationship between partners. As will be discussed in detail shortly, this includes the

continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism of the relationship. In contrast, traditional evaluations more commonly rely on comparisons of the respective attributes of each brand in the partnership. Fit, a prominent example of this attribute comparison approach, attempts to capture how well two entities go together based on subjective assessment of similarity, congruence or compatibility (Mazodier & Merunka, 2011; Olson & Thjøme, 2011; Speed & Thompson, 2000). A local marathon, for example, might find a fitting partner for sponsorship in a running shoe retailer, but not in a bank. If, however, the running shoe retailer had a horrible reputation in the community, they might fit but not be perceived as authentic.

Research has repeatedly found that fit has valuable downstream consequences for partners including positive attitudes and behavioral intentions (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005; Kim, Lee, Magnussen, & Kim, 2015; Mazodier & Merunka, 2011; Woisetschläger et al., 2010). Fit is also discussed as a requirement for celebrity endorser success (see Erdogan, 1999 for a review; Misra & Beatty, 1990) and is important in brand placement (Nagar, 2016). Fit is discussed in some depth here because it is one of the central constructs utilized in research on horizontal marketing partnerships. Fit has several weaknesses as a measure of brand compatibility and these give further impetus to the need for the construct of horizontal marketing partnership authenticity.

The first weakness of the fit construct is ambiguity of meaning. Because respondents are given substantial leeway in determining which factors make brands fit together, it is unclear what is actually meant by fit (Pappu & Cornwell, 2014). Consumers may base their evaluations of fit on dimensions of compatibility or similarity between the grouped brands (Mazodier & Merunka, 2011; Speed & Thompson, 2000) or on specific dimensions such as image or functionality (Gwinner, 1997; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Indeed, the fit construct may be defined too broadly to be helpful.

Second, it remains unclear whether higher fit is always good, and if not, then what kind of fit is most desirable? For example, most athletic apparel brands would fit well with an athletic competition, but if consumer recall is the goal, high fit may actually contribute to confusion since all direct competitors are also high fit brands and likely sponsor similar events (Cornwell & Humphreys, 2013; Weeks, Humphreys, & Cornwell, 2018). Moderate incongruity is generally considered to be more effective in marketing because it increases consumer elaboration, making an experience more memorable (Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989).

Third, consumer socialization to sponsoring and other horizontal partnerships as a marketing platform may be decreasing the usefulness of the fit construct. Measurement instruments have been known drift over time due to changes in language and culture, thus requiring modernization. In what is known as the Flynn effect, intelligence scores in many countries massively increased during the 1960s and 1970s with little evidence of actual improvement of intelligence of the population (Flynn, 1987). The change in scores was rather attributed to changes in abstract reasoning. Having seen every imaginable type of horizontal marketing partnership, modern consumers may have come to regard previously poor-fitting alliances, such as bank-sport alliances as normal and expected. Moreover, having gained a measure of persuasion knowledge in this context (Friestad & Wright, 1994), they may be led to regard a partnership to be a good fit because they know that the sponsored entity (e.g., a team they love) stands to benefit financially.

Importantly, as discussed, commercialization in horizontal marketing partnerships highlights the need for alternative measures of brand compatibility. As marketing actions such as sponsoring, endorsing, and brand placement have expanded, consumers face increasing commercialization of charities, arts, athletes, actors and sports (e.g., Ciomaga & Kent, 2015). To know that brands fit together does not presuppose that their relationship will be accepted. Authenticity, in the evolved context of marketing, is essential to acceptance.

2.3. Scale conceptualization

Morhart et al. (2015) engaged in a multiphase scale development process to determine the measurement, antecedents, consequences and boundary conditions of consumer-perceived brand authenticity (PBA). We found no other better measure offering a detailed (but yet not context specific) measure of brand authenticity. Morhart et al. (2015) defines PBA “as the extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be faithful toward itself (continuity), true to its consumers (credibility), motivated by caring and responsibility (integrity), and able to support consumers in being true to themselves (symbolism).” These four dimensions mentioned in the definition (continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism) were developed from previous literature to measure the experience of authenticity. In theory and in practice, those characteristics important to brand success are foundational to brand relationship success. Morhart et al. (2015) provide extensive conceptual and empirical support for their brand authenticity dimensions. These four dimensions are reviewed here and their relevance for brands in partnerships is discussed.

2.3.1. Continuity

Continuity is described by Morhart et al. (2015, p. 202) as a “brand’s timelessness, historicity and its ability to transcend trends.” Continuity is important to horizontal partnerships because longer-term relationships support branding and relationship recall. Walraven, Bijmolt, and Koning (2014) demonstrated, with data from 25,000 customers across five countries, that awareness of the major sponsor of the European Football Association increased over the multi-year measurement period. In influencer marketing, continuity is also seen as foundational to endorsers and brand ambassadors. Consider the following example where race car driver Dale Earnhardt, Jr. is discussed as an authentic influencer for Nationwide Insurance and is contracted to continue working with the brand into retirement:

‘Dale has been a Nationwide member since he was 16 and owns several Nationwide products including auto, home, commercial and pet insurance, making our relationship with him one of the more authentic partnerships in sports,’ said Jim McCoy, Nationwide’s associate vice president of Sports Marketing. ‘When he told us he would be stepping away from racing full-time, we immediately began developing the partnership to continue that relationship outside of the car.’

(Nationwide, 2018)

Clearly, continuity as conceptualized by Morhart et al. (2015) is as important to brand relationships as it is to the constituent brands.

2.3.2. Credibility

Credibility of a brand is centrally concerned with delivering on promises. Morhart et al. (2015, p.202) conceptualize credibility as “the brand’s transparency and honesty toward the consumer, as well as its willingness and ability to fulfill its claims.” Credibility, per se is not widely discussed in sponsoring, however, it has been recognized in cause marketing as important when considering the relationship between partnership congruence and resulting sponsor attitudes (Rifon, Choi, Trimble, & Li, 2004). While the term “credibility” is not utilized in horizontal marketing, honesty and transparency of horizontal marketing partnerships are foundational to success. For example, Farrelly and Quester (2005b) utilized in-depth interviews with Australian Football League managers to identify quality constructs important to sponsorship relationships. Their findings emphasized trust as the key antecedent to both economic and non-economic success. While their findings are oriented to the partnership viewed from within the firm, research finds that individuals attend to and make motivational attributions about managerial level decisions in sponsorship (Woisetschläger et al., 2017). These authors suggest that audiences for sponsorship hold expectations about what it means to be a sponsor and

what it means to be the sponsored entity. Because partnering is a volitional act, individuals respond to what is deemed appropriate or inappropriate behavior in the role. Thus, individuals make judgements about how a partnership delivers to audiences on their role-based promises.

In the influencer literature, credibility is a construct of interest and is often conceptualized as stemming from the credibility of the endorser and the credibility of the corporation in tandem (e.g., Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Newell, 2002). Goldsmith, Lafferty, and Newell (2000) explain, “credibility refers to the extent to which the source is perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the topic” (p. 43). Thus, while the characteristics of attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise (Ohanian, 1991) are central to an individual endorser, the construct of credibility is derived from these characteristics in combination with each other and in combination with the firm utilizing the endorser. In sum, both parties contribute to the credibility of the horizontal marketing partnership.

2.3.3. Integrity

Integrity signals the moral purity and responsibility of the brand to adhere to good values. (Morhart et al., 2015, p. 203). Research on integrity in sponsoring and influencer marketing has largely focused on the failure of the sponsored property (Chien et al., 2016) or celebrity (Louie, Kulik, & Jacobson, 2001; Miller & Laczniak, 2011) to hold values that are in keeping with the brand, however, partnership integrity is a knife that cuts both ways. Although the preponderance of research and popular attention is on the misbehaving athlete, team or league in sport, the failure of either entity damages authenticity of both. Integrity, or the failure of it, can also be observed when brands are seen to exploit their partner (Pappu & Cornwell, 2014). Based on the theoretical category of *altruistic values driven motives* versus *exploitive self-gain motives* (Ellen, Web, & Mohr, 2006), Pappu and Cornwell asked participants the reasons for fast-food companies to sponsor sport. Qualitative responses questioned the integrity of the brand. For example, in response to the pairing of KFC and Red Cross Blood Service, one respondent noted “I think it’s a bit counter intuitive KFC sells fatty fast food and now they’re trying to project this image that they are for helping people stay healthy and improve wellbeing.” (p. 495). Moreover, integrity is used as a selection criterion in partner evaluation when relationships are first established. Consider the following discussion of Konica Minolta’s partnership with Hockey Canada:

‘Konica Minolta has a history of supporting athletes and athletic associations around the world. Therefore, it’s fitting that we have signed on to support the sole governing body for amateur hockey in Canada,’ says Chris Dewart, President and CEO, Konica Minolta Business Solutions (Canada) Ltd. ‘We are proud to be associated with Hockey Canada for many reasons including our shared values of honesty, integrity, determination, and the pursuit of excellence,’ he adds.

(Konica Minolta, 2018)

While practitioners regularly note the importance of shared or overlapping values, there is little in the way of empirical work on the role of values in horizontal marketing. Nonetheless, individuals seem able to assess integrity in horizontal marketing partnerships and make decisions based on their perceptions.

2.3.4. Symbolism

Symbolism is conceptualized as a brand’s “potential to serve as a resource for identity construction by providing self-referential cues representing values, roles and relationships” (p. 203). The celebrity endorser as discussed by McCracken (1989) is a bundle of symbolic properties, with which a brand would like to be aligned. This conceptualization of influencer-based horizontal partnerships, as based in symbolism, could be argued to be even more important today as human

brands (Thomson, 2006) are empowered by social media (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2011). Symbolism, as McCracken (1986) argues, is essential in a theoretical account of how meaning moves from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods and services. In sponsoring, brands are paired with sports, the arts, entertainment and charity in the hopes of borrowing valued associations (Cornwell, 2008). For instance, Close, Krishen, and Latour (2009) in the context of fashion shows, found that sponsors benefit when individuals felt self-congruent with the event (e.g., feeling “this is event is me”).

Sponsoring also seeks to become one with existing feelings of identification that individuals hold for the sponsored property or context. For example, participants in a charity run, Race for the Cure, were more committed to buying the sponsoring brand's products when they strongly identified with the charity (Cornwell & Coote, 2005). These horizontal marketing partnerships borrow and build symbolism through their relationship with the sponsored entity, thus, making symbolism a dimension of horizontal marketing partnerships.

In conclusion, the dimensions of perceived brand authenticity (continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism) also underlie horizontal marketing partnerships. While particular items could be created for each area of horizontal partnership (e.g. geographic distance could be important to sponsoring authenticity but might be less important in celebrity endorsement) the goal was to retain the flexibility and general usefulness of the original scale.

2.4. Scale adaptation

To measure consumer perceptions of HMP-Authenticity, we adapted the four-dimension, 15-item perceived brand authenticity measure from Morhart et al. (2015) from its focus on the evaluation of a single brand (e.g. “a brand with history”) to a context where two or more brands are grouped together (e.g., “the partnership between X and Y is a relationship with history”). The new scale maintains the meaning and four-dimensional structure of the original PBA scale with only minor adjustments to make the language appropriate for the new context.

Additionally, we added one new scale item in order to achieve a consistent count of four items per dimension. Consistency of item counts is preferable when possible because it allows for equal weighting and importance of dimensions when the mean or sum of all items is used by researchers to represent the full scale (Loevinger, 1957). We added the new item, “the partnership between X and Y is believable,” to the credibility dimension which previously had only three items. This item paraphrases the definition of credibility from the original Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualization as closely as possible: “transparency and honesty toward the consumer.” The new item meets Clark and Watson (1995) criteria of appropriate language use, simplicity and avoidance of phrasing that could potentially tap into individual differences unrelated to the construct under study. The newly added item loads significantly with the credibility dimension as expected, yet is sufficiently different from the other credibility items to warrant its addition. See Table 2 for a side-by-side comparison of the newly adapted measure and the original brand authenticity scale.

3. Study 1: scale validation

Study 1 provided an initial test of the reliability and validity of the adapted scale in its new context. The purpose of the study was to confirm the four-dimensional structure of the HMPA-Authenticity scale, adapted from the Morhart et al. (2015) perceived brand authenticity scale, and to establish its convergent, discriminant, and nomological validity. In addition to the 16-item HMP-Authenticity scale, we also measured important horizontal marketing partnership outcomes: respondent attitudes toward the sponsor, the sponsored property and the relationship between the sponsor and the sponsored property. The horizontal marketing partnership examined in this study was the relationship between the quick service restaurant Chick-fil-A and the

annual college football game known as the Peach Bowl.

3.1. Sample and procedure

For Study 1, 200 adult participants (49.0% female; mean age = 36.6) from the U.S. southern census region were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (AMT) and paid \$0.60 to participate. After signing the consent form and reading a brief introduction to the study, each participant was asked to rate how much they agree with the statement, “I am a fan of college football,” using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “Strongly disagree,” 7 = “Strongly agree”). This item is subsequently utilized in a robustness check. To ensure honesty, participants were assured that they would not be disqualified based on their answer to this question. For a minimum of 45 s, each participant then viewed the same stimulus, consisting of a Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl logo and brief descriptions of both Chick-fil-A, (from Hoover's Inc. 2016), and Peach Bowl's partnership with Chick-fil-A (from Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, 2016 website). See Study stimuli in Appendix B. Next, participants used a 3-item, 7-point bipolar scale (“good/bad,” “dislike/like,” “unfavorable/favorable”; Kempf & Smith, 1998) to rate their attitudes toward the sponsor, the sponsored property and the relationship between the sponsor and the sponsored. Next, they were asked to rate their agreement with each item of the 16-item HMP-Authenticity scale as it related to the relationship between Chick-fil-A and the Peach Bowl (1 = “Strongly disagree,” 2 = “Strongly agree”). Lastly, respondents were asked for basic demographics and debriefed.

3.2. Data analysis and results

First, we estimated a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using maximum likelihood with the Lavaan R package for latent variable analysis (Rosseel, 2012). We compared five models: the null model, a one-factor model in which all 16 items were loaded on a single factor, a model with four uncorrelated factors to represent the four dimensions (continuity, credibility, integrity, symbolism), a model in which these four factors are correlated, and a model with four correlated factors and one higher order factor to represent the overall authenticity evaluation. Statistical analyses of these models (see Table 3) showed differences in fit among all four models. Although both the four-factor correlated model, $\chi^2(98) = 273.58$, $p < .05$; RMSEA = 0.095, SRMR = 0.056, CFI = 0.94, and the four-factor correlated second order model $\chi^2(100) = 282.71$, $p < .05$ both had relatively good fit, a chi square difference test showed a better fit for the four-factor correlated model, $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 9.13$, $p = .010$ as expected based on findings from the original Morhart et al. (2015) scale development process.

3.3. Internal scale reliability

Internal consistency was measured by coefficient alpha (α) (Cronbach, 1951) and an alternative covariance structure analysis procedure (Raykov, 2001), which has been termed coefficient omega (ω_1) (semTools contributors, 2016). The following coefficients were derived from the data: Continuity (CONT) $\alpha = 0.832$, $\omega_1 = 0.838$; Credibility (CRED) $\alpha = 0.864$, $\omega_1 = 0.872$, Integrity (INTEG) $\alpha = 0.954$, $\omega_1 = 0.956$, Symbolism (SYMB) $\alpha = 0.951$, $\omega_1 = 0.952$. Since reliability coefficients of 0.70 or greater are generally considered acceptable, these scores indicate good internal consistency.

3.4. Convergent and discriminant validity

We tested for convergent validity according to Anderson and Gerbing (1988). Loading of each item on its corresponding factor was significant and greater than twice its standard error, showing convergent validity (see Table 4). In order to differentiate the four dimensions of HMP-Authenticity from each other, we applied the

Table 2
Comparison of HMP Authenticity final adapted items (left) to original (right).

Horizontal marketing partnership authenticity ^a	Perceived brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015)
Continuity	Continuity
1. Is a relationship with history.	1. A brand with history
2. Is timeless.	2. A timeless brand
3. Is stable.	3. A brand that survives times
4. Survives trends.	4. A brand that survives trends
Credibility	Credibility ^b
5. Will not betray you.	5. A brand that will not betray you
6. Accomplishes its value proposition	6. A brand that accomplishes its value promise
7. Is an honest combination.	7. An honest brand
8. Is believable.	
Integrity	Integrity
9. Gives back to its people.	8. A brand that gives back to its consumers
10. Has moral principles.	9. A brand with moral principles
11. Is true to a set of moral values.	10. A brand true to a set of moral values
12. Is considerate of people.	11. A brand that cares about its consumers
Symbolism	Symbolism
13. Adds meaning to people's lives.	12. A brand that adds meaning to people's lives
14. Reflects important values people care about.	13. A brand that reflects important values people care about
15. Connects people with their real selves.	14. A brand that connects people with their real selves
16. Connects people with what is really important.	15. A brand that connects people with what is really important

^a Each item on the right was preceded with the phrase, “The relationship between [Brand] and [Entity].”

^b Credibility dimension of the original scale has only three items.

heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) method of testing for discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014), using the semTools R package (semTools contributors, 2016). HTMT as a test of discriminant validity has been shown to offer the best balance of high detection and low false positive rates relative to the three most common tests of discriminant validity (Voorhees, Brady, Calantone, & Ramirez, 2015). This method of testing for discriminant validity assesses whether the ratio between the average correlation among indicators across constructs and the average correlation among indicators within the same construct falls below some cut-off score. Thus, we calculated the HTMT ratio between each HMP-Authenticity dimension. HMP-Authenticity ratios were 0.811 (CONT-CRED), 0.774 (CONT-INTEG), 0.700 (CONT-SYMB), 0.846 (CRED-INTEG), 0.716 (CRED-SYMB), 0.804 (INTEG-SYMB). All HTMT scores fell below the suggested cutoff score of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2014; Voorhees et al., 2015), supporting discriminant validity across all HMP-Authenticity dimensions.

3.5. Nomological validity

To test the HMP-Authenticity scale for nomological validity, we compared the correlations between all possible pairwise combinations of latent variables (see Table 5). As predicted, each dimension of HMP-Authenticity is correlated with the other HMP-Authenticity dimensions. Additionally, the outcomes of interest, attitude toward the sponsored property ($\alpha = 0.98$), attitude toward the sponsor ($\alpha = 0.99$), and attitude toward the relationship ($\alpha = 0.98$) were all positively correlated with each dimension of HMP-Authenticity.

Table 3
Study 1 horizontal marketing partnership authenticity confirmatory factor analysis model comparison.

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	RMSEA ^a	SRMR ^b	CFI ^c	TLI ^d
Null	3263.60	120						
One-factor	826.33	104	2437.27	16	0.186	0.081	0.77	0.74
Four-factor (uncorrelated)	782.67	104	43.66	0	0.181	0.469	0.78	0.75
Four-factor second-order	282.71	100	499.96	4	0.096	0.057	0.94	0.93
Four-factor	273.58	98	9.13	2	0.095	0.056	0.94	0.93

^a RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

^b SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

^c CFI = Comparative Fit Index.

^d TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index.

3.6. Robustness check

Lastly, we tested whether the influence of authenticity on attitude toward the relationship was dependent on the closeness of the participant to the context under study. We thus regressed mean scores of the three items of attitude toward relationship on a mean-centered score from the 16-item HMP-Authenticity scale, the centered item that we used to measure context relevance (“I am a fan of college football”) and the interaction of HMP-Authenticity and context relevance. We found that the full model was predictive of attitudes toward relationships, $F(3,196) = 83.11, p < .001$. Although both HMP-Authenticity ($B = 1.01, t = 13.81, p < .001$) and context relevance ($B = 0.10, t = 2.36, p = .019$) had an effect on the outcome of interest, their interaction was not significant ($B = -0.03, t = -1.00, p = .320$), indicating that authenticity is a determinant of attitude toward the relationship for both fans and non-fans.

3.7. Discussion

Study 1 provides substantial evidence that the PBA scale (Morhart et al., 2015) can be meaningfully adapted for use in examining horizontal marketing partnerships. The scale preserves the dimensionality and meaning of the original scale with minor adjustments to make it appropriate in this new context. We also show convergent, discriminant and predictive validity of the adapted scale.

Table 4
Scales summary (standardized factor loadings).

Horizontal marketing partnership authenticity	Study 1			Study 2		
	Factor loadings ^a	α	AVE	Factor loadings ^a	α	AVE
Continuity		0.83	0.57		0.85	0.57
1. Is a relationship with history.	0.74			0.62		
2. Is timeless.	0.71			0.68		
3. Is stable.	0.78			0.84		
4. Survives trends.	0.83			0.88		
Credibility		0.86	0.63		0.85	0.61
5x. ^b Will not betray you or each other.	0.63					
5. Will not betray you.				0.56		
6. Accomplishes its value proposition	0.82			0.77		
7. Is an honest combination.	0.94			0.91		
8. Is believable.	0.78			0.86		
Integrity		0.95	0.85		0.93	0.76
9. Gives back to its people.	0.84			0.82		
10. Has moral principles.	0.94			0.92		
11. Is true to a set of moral values.	0.95			0.92		
12. Is considerate of people.	0.93			0.82		
Symbolism		0.95	0.83		0.91	0.72
13. Adds meaning to people's lives.	0.90			0.76		
14. Reflects important values people care about.	0.90			0.82		
15. Connects people with their real selves.	0.91			0.89		
16. Connects people with what is really important.	0.93			0.90		

Each item above was preceded with the phrase, “The relationship between [Brand] and [Entity].”

^a Factor loadings are standardized.

^b Item was replaced due to its double-barreled nature.

4. Study 2: differentiation from fit

In order for a measure to be useful, it should be distinct from existing measures and help explain important outcomes that are not fully explained by the existing measures (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). Thus, we argue below that authenticity is not only different than fit, but also adds predictive power. While an examination of fit requires one to compare the attributes of each brand for signs of compatibility, an examination of authenticity focuses more on the relationship itself. Two partners need not fit in order to be authentic. For example, a telecom provider may appear to have low fit with a professional sports league, however, T-Mobile's sponsorship of Major League Baseball has been very successful. This success is likely due to the authenticity of T-Mobile's relationship with baseball, engagement with fans, and associated charitable giving (Brown, 2017). Furthermore, two constructs closely associated to authenticity, perceived sponsor credibility and altruism, have been shown to moderate the effect of fit (Rifon et al., 2004). Thus, we argue that HMP-Authenticity contributes to consumer evaluations of the grouping beyond what can be explained by perceived fit. A similar claim regarding superiority of authenticity over fit was made and supported in research on brand extensions (Spiggle et al., 2012). Their measure of brand extension authenticity was able to capture consumer perceptions of brand extension legitimacy and cultural contiguity.

Table 5
Study 1 latent variable correlations.

Variables	Mean	SD	2	3	4	5	7	8	9
1. Continuity	4.89	1.1	0.84						
2. Credibility	4.99	1.1	0.78***	0.87					
3. Integrity	4.88	1.40	0.76***	0.83***	0.96				
4. Symbolism	4.18	1.6	0.68***	0.69***	0.80***	0.95			
5. Attitude toward sponsored property	5.23	1.4	0.42***	0.49***	0.48***	0.49***	0.98		
6. Attitude toward sponsor	5.56	1.8	0.58***	0.65***	0.72***	0.63***	0.45***	0.99	
7. Attitude toward relationship	5.37	1.7	0.62***	0.71***	0.73***	0.66***	0.60***	0.87***	0.99

Items 1–4 are dimensions of horizontal marketing partnership authenticity.

The bolded figures in the diagonal represent composite reliabilities for each measure.

***p < .001, all two-sided.

H1a. HMP-Authenticity has a positive influence on the consumer's attitude toward the horizontal marketing partnership above what can be explained by fit.

H1b. HMP-Authenticity has a positive influence on the consumer's attitude toward each of the partner brands above what can be explained by fit.

Although horizontal marketing partnerships are common, many consumers remain skeptical of the motives behind them. This is particularly true when the sponsored brand is a charitable cause (Kim & Lee, 2009). While consumers may have positive feelings toward sponsorship due to the soundness of the business strategy, or due to the benefits bestowed on their favorite team or cause, other consumers will see it as more calculative in nature (Woisetschläger et al., 2017). A consumer's tendency to be more skeptical of corporate advertising (Obermiller et al., 2005; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998) differs on an individual basis and would likely affect subjective assessments of the authenticity of a horizontal marketing partnership. Moreover, on a single brand basis, ad skepticism has been shown to be a negative predictor of the integrity dimension of perceived brand authenticity (PBA) (Morhart et al., 2015). Thus, the following hypothesis:

H2. Consumers who are more skeptical in nature will tend to rate HMP-Authenticity lower.

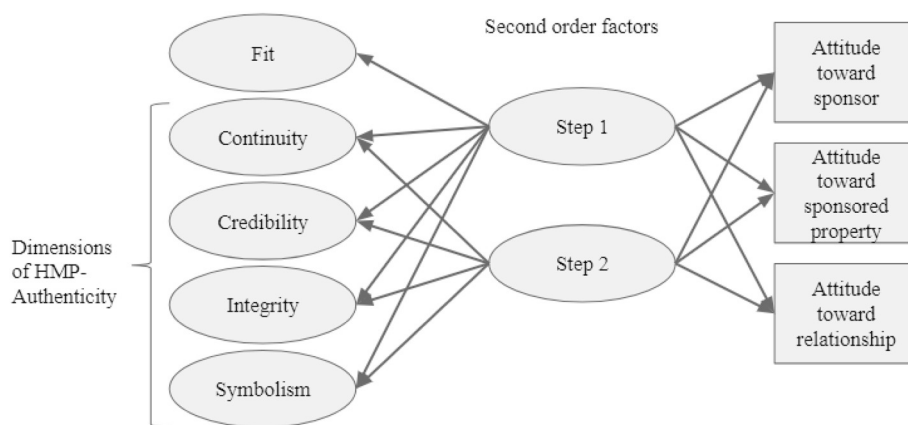


Fig. 1. Latent variable hierarchical regression with fit (step 1) and HMP-Authenticity (step 2) as predictors.

The purpose of Study 2 is to distinguish HMP-Authenticity from the related construct of fit, and to further establish nomological validity by testing whether consumer skepticism negatively affects HMP-Authenticity as expected. Using a latent variable hierarchical regression model (de Jong, 1999), we test whether HMP-Authenticity provides additional predictive power beyond what can be explained by fit when used to predict attitude toward sponsor, attitude toward sponsorship relationship and attitude toward sponsored property. Lastly, we further develop and test the nomological framework by examining whether people who are more skeptical of advertising will give a lower evaluation of HMP-Authenticity dimensions. This study also tests HMP-Authenticity with a different pool of participants, undergraduate students, and a new context, naming rights of a Major League Soccer stadium.

4.1. Sample and procedure

Two-hundred sixty-five undergraduate students from a subject pool at a large state school in the Pacific Northwestern US participated in Study 2 for class credit (median age = 22, 49.4% female). Prior to participating, respondents completed a psychographics questionnaire that included ad skepticism (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998; see Appendix C). Respondents were first asked to read and agree to the consent form. Following a brief introduction, participants spent at least 30 s viewing the stimulus, consisting of the logo of Providence Park, a Major League Soccer stadium in the U.S., and short descriptions of both Providence Park and the park's sponsor, Providence Health & Services (see study stimuli in Appendix B). Given the narrowness, lack of ambiguity, and extremely high alpha scores ($\alpha = 0.98/0.99$) observed in the 3-item, unidimensional attitudes scales used in Study 1, we switched to single-item attitude measures for Studies 2 through 5, consistent with the recommendations of Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007). Thus, we had participants rate how favorable their view was of Providence Health & Services, Providence Park and the partnership between them on a single item, 7-point scale (Very unfavorable/Very favorable). Each respondent was then asked to rate their agreement with the five items from the Speed & Thompson (2000; see measure in Appendix C) fit measure and the 16 items of the HMP-Authenticity scale using 7-point scales (Strongly disagree/Strongly agree). Note that Speed and Thompson (2000) is one of several approaches to measuring fit and it is commonly employed in the realm of sponsorship. Lastly, participants were asked if they found any part of the study confusing or frustrating, thanked for their time and the study ended.

4.2. Data analysis and results

First, we conducted a CFA on the four-dimension HMP-Authenticity measure ($\chi^2(98) = 481.08, p < .001, RMSEA = 0.121, SRMR = 0.076,$

$CFI = 0.883, TLI = 0.857$), which showed acceptable fit. Next, we further tested the psychometric properties of the HMP-Authenticity scale using procedures described in Study 1 and found good support for the reliability of the HMP-Authenticity dimensions (ranging from 0.84 to 0.93). All standardized factor loadings were larger than 0.55 and significant. We again established discriminant validity through the HTMT test. All HTMT values between pairs of HMP-Authenticity dimensions and between HMP-Authenticity dimensions and fit were below the 0.85 cutoff (Henseler et al., 2014; Voorhees et al., 2015). We established nomological validity by observing that all dimensions of HMP-Authenticity positively correlate with each other, negatively with ad skepticism (H2) and positively with fit as expected.

Next, we sought to establish incremental predictive validity of HMP-Authenticity using latent variable hierarchical regression. We used the Lavaan R package for latent variable modeling (Rosseel, 2012) to conduct the Cholesky decomposition technique (de Jong, 1999). This approach required us to estimate a statistical model that included latent variables for fit (5 items) and all four dimensions of HMP-Authenticity (4 items each) as predictors. Outcome variables in the model were the manifest variables for favorability toward the sponsor, the sponsored property and the relationship between sponsor and sponsored property. We also created two higher order factors to represent the two steps in the hierarchical regression. On one factor, we loaded fit, and all dimensions of HMP-Authenticity. On the second factor, we loaded only the dimensions of HMP-Authenticity (see Fig. 1). Variance of first order factors (fit and all four dimensions of HMP-Authenticity) and covariance between the two higher order factors was fixed at zero. Lastly, the three outcome variables were regressed on the two higher order factors. In this model, the HMP-Authenticity second order factor only measures the incremental R^2 beyond what is already explained by fit (see R code in Appendix D). The analysis showed that HMP-Authenticity did in fact significantly ($p < .05$) explain the variance in the three outcomes beyond what could be explained by fit alone thus supporting H1a and H1b (see Table 6 for details of this analysis).

Lastly, we evaluated nomological validity by testing whether trait skepticism negatively affected each dimension of HMP-Authenticity as expected. For this test, we separately regressed each aggregated dimension of HMP-Authenticity (CONT, CRED, INTEG, SYMBOL) on an aggregated measure of ad skepticism. Ad skepticism had a negative effect on each dimension of HMP-Authenticity as expected: CONT, $F(1,260) = 17.78, p < .001$, CRED, $F(1,260) = 8.77, p = .003$, INTEG, $F(1,260) = 5.49, p = .02$, and SYMB, $F(1,260) = 5.08, p = .03$. Thus, supporting H2, skeptical consumers do rate all HMP-Authenticity dimensions lower.

4.3. Discussion

Study 2 utilizes a different pool of participants (undergraduate

Table 6
Study 2 incremental variance explained (ΔR^2) by the latent variable hierarchical regression.

Step	Predictors	Outcome: attitude toward...		
		Sponsored property	Sponsor	Relationship
1	Fit	0.17***	0.03*	0.25***
2	Dimensions of horizontal marketing partnership authenticity (continuity, credibility, integrity, symbolism)	0.04*	0.07**	0.03*

Each step includes predictors from previous step.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

students), and a different set of stimuli to further establish the reliability and validity of the HMP-Authenticity scale. Results show that HMP-Authenticity is distinct from fit and it affects consumer attitudes toward sponsor, sponsored property and the relationship beyond what can be explained by fit. Moreover, we show that consumer skepticism leads to lower evaluations of each dimension of HMP-Authenticity as expected, providing further nomological validity for the HMP-Authenticity scale.

5. Study 3: brand authenticity as a predictor of HMP-authenticity

Theoretical research has suggested that members of a partnership should consider the starting state associations for each partner as a base for communication (Cornwell, 2008). This, as well as the work in sponsorship image transfer (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999) suggests that brands and properties enter relationships with some level of brand perception (assuming brand awareness). In short, perceptions of a relationship stem logically from each individual to the partnership and from the combination in partnering. Consumers may have, for example, strongly or weakly held view of each individual partner and also strong or weak response to the combining.

In Study 3 we consider the authenticity of a partnership as additional to the authenticity of individual members to the partnership. Relationship aspects that are not captured in consumer perceptions of each individual brand would influence any perceived authenticity of the relationship and differentiate it from the level of authenticity bestowed on each brand. Moreover, authenticity may actually be more important in a relationship context than in a stand-alone brand context since the public nature of the partnership may communicate motives, goals and intent.

H3. Horizontal marketing partnership authenticity, as measured by the HMP-Authenticity scale, is partially predicted by the perceived brand authenticity (PBA) of individual brands in the partnership.

The purpose of Study 3 is to further establish the nomological network of HMP-Authenticity by examining how the PBA of each brand involved can act as an antecedent of HMP-Authenticity. Moreover, because HMP-Authenticity is derived from the PBA scale, it is necessary to rule out the possibility that the measure simply captures what is already measured by PBA. In order to evaluate the relationship between PBA and HMP-Authenticity, we administered the PBA scale for each brand in a partnership and we administered HMP-Authenticity, our measure of perceived authenticity relating to the partnership. We then used regression techniques and tests of discriminant validity to evaluate the nature of the relationship between HMP-Authenticity and PBA. Study 3, also uses a new context, co-branding.

5.1. Sample and procedure

Undergraduate business students ($N = 300$, median age = 21, 48.3% female) received class credit for participating in Study 3. Fifty-seven participants were excluded from analyses for failing an attention check (discussed subsequently), leaving 243 participants. Respondents filled out the questionnaire online, at their convenience, from a location of their choice. After consenting to participate, individuals were given a brief introduction to the study.

Materials for the study utilized a real co-branding campaign relevant to a student audience. Participants were asked to rate both Chase (financial services) and Disney (entertainment) using the 15-item PBA scale (Morhart et al., 2015). Each brand was presented individually in random order. The brand stimuli consisted of the brand's official logo and a brief company summary (from Hoover's database, 2016; see study stimuli in Appendix B). Below the stimuli, on the same screen, participants were asked to rate the brand based on agreement with the 15 PBA items on a 7-point scale (1 = "Strongly disagree," 7 = "Strongly agree"). Next, as a filler task, we asked respondents to spend 5 min completing an interesting study on political ideology. The purpose of the filler task was to mitigate effects of participant fatigue that may be brought on by the sequential completion of three very related scales: Chase PBA, Disney PBA, Chase-Disney HMP-Authenticity. When they were again rerouted to the present study, we showed them a co-branding stimulus that consisted of Chase's actual press release announcing the launch of their new "Disney's Visa Debit Card," along with four accompanying images of different versions of the credit card. On the same screen, participants completed the HMP-Authenticity scale using the same procedure as previous studies. An attention check was inserted into the middle of the HMP-Authenticity scale: "select 'Agree' to show that you are reading carefully." Lastly, students were asked if any part of the survey proved to be confusing or frustrating. Basic demographics were collected in a separate questionnaire.

5.2. Data analysis and results

First, we calculated composite averages of the PBA of Chase (4.34 out of 7) and Disney (5.57 out of 7), and the Chase-Disney HMP-Authenticity (4.58 out of 7). We again used the HTMT method of testing for discriminant validity to determine whether HMP-Authenticity was simply determined by the perceived authenticity of each brand. In order to apply the HTMT test, we used structural equation modeling to create three latent variables to represent the perceived authenticity of Chase, Disney, and the Chase-Disney grouping with each variable's corresponding observed variables loaded onto them. Next, we measured the HTMT ratios between all possible pairs of these three latent variables. All HTMT scores fell below the suggested cutoff score of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2014; Voorhees et al., 2015), however, the HTMT ratio between the perceived authenticity of Chase and the Chase-Disney grouping was fairly high (0.73). This provides evidence that HMP-Authenticity is differentiable from PBA, thus supporting H3, with the caution that HMP-Authenticity may largely be determined by the PBA of the least authentic brand. Next, we tested the extent to which PBA affected HMP-Authenticity by regressing mean-aggregated scores for HMP-Authenticity on mean-aggregated scores for Chase PBA and Disney PBA. Both Chase PBA ($B = 0.57$, $t = 11.16$, $p < .001$) and Disney PBA ($B = 0.28$, $t = 4.67$, $p < .001$) positively predicted HMP-Authenticity, $F(2,237) = 117.8$, $p < .001$.

5.3. Discussion

In showing that HMP-Authenticity is both distinct from the PBA of either brand involved, but also predicted by the PBA of each brand, we provide further support for our nomological framework. HMP-Authenticity is distinct from a related construct, PBA, but affected by it in expected ways. Study 3 also demonstrates the usefulness of the HMP-

Authenticity scale in the context of co-branding. Study 4, considers how the scale can be used diagnostically and adds to the generalizability of the measure by looking at the context of stadium naming rights.

6. Study 4: examination of HMP-authenticity dimensions

When brands come together in a horizontal marketing partnership, this joining typically takes place in a community or influences one or more groups of people. In stadium naming rights, when a stadium or arena gains a financial backer they often take the name of the venue (e.g., MetLife Stadium in New York). This commercially oriented practice has met with considerable consumer resentment at times, with fans of the resident team being particularly outspoken (Reysen, Snider, & Branscombe, 2012; Woisetschläger, Haselhoff, & Backhaus, 2014).

There have been instances of deference toward original names, especially those names with strong brand equity. For example, the Collegiate Bowl Game played in Pasadena California, originally titled the Rose Bowl, has, since the advent of sponsoring, been cautious in relinquishing their heritage through a complete name change. Therefore, sponsoring, such as that by the current insurance company take a combined title, the Rose Bowl Game presented by Northwestern Mutual. Theoretically, one would expect those with a sense of community tied to the location or the venue to more harshly judge a name that does not show deference to history. Further, research on consumer attributions regarding sponsor motives suggests that geographic distance of the sponsor from the venue should also be important to those with a strong sense of community regarding the place or venue. For example, Woisetschläger et al. (2017) found that distant sponsors were associated with calculative motives for sponsoring.

The purpose of Study 4 is to evaluate whether the dimensions of HMP-Authenticity can be used individually and diagnostically. The HMP-Authenticity scale will be a more useful tool if its dimensions can be used to diagnose sources of authenticity within horizontal marketing partnerships. This study also extends the HMP-Authenticity scale to consider another type of horizontal marketing partnership, stadium naming rights.

6.1. Sample and procedure

For Study 4, 398 adult AMT workers recruited from the Western United States (48.5% female; mean age = 35.8) received \$0.60 to participate. We used a 2 (sponsoring brand location: local (Western Union) or distant (PayPal)) × 2 (name type: deferential (sponsor name) or non-deferential (sponsor name at Mile High)) experimental design with random assignment of participants to conditions. After the consent form and introduction, each participant was shown an image and brief naming rights history of Mile High Stadium (then known as Sports Authority Field at Mile High). Within the same stimulus, we also displayed a then-current image of the Sports Authority Field at Mile High logo. We explained that Sports Authority was going through a bankruptcy process, and the naming rights would ultimately need to be transferred to another party due to missed payments. After 30 s they were allowed to proceed. Participants were then directed to a screen that told them “As you know, the Denver Bronco’s Sports Authority Field at Mile High is in search of a new sponsor. With [PayPal/Western Union] as the sponsor, the name could change to [PayPal/Western Union][at Mile High/Stadium].” Participants then saw a mocked-up logo to go with the new sponsorship statement to reinforce the manipulation with visual imagery. Study stimuli are included in Appendix B. Participants then rated how favorable their view was of the partnership between the stadium and the new sponsor using a 7-point Likert scale (very unfavorable/very favorable). We measured HMP-Authenticity as we have in the other studies. Next, we measured individual sense of community with a measure adapted from Shamai (1991) by asking participants to rate their sense of community belongingness on a scale of 1 (no particular feelings) to 4 (commitment) regarding the state of

Colorado, the city of Denver, Colorado and Mile High Stadium. Lastly, we collected demographics and debriefed participants.

6.2. Data analysis and results

An ANOVA was used to test whether appeal (deferential vs non-deferential), sponsor (location: Western Union vs distant: PayPal), and their interaction had an effect on attitudes toward the relationship. A non-significant result ($F(3,402) = 1.422, p = .236$) provided no evidence that appeal type, sponsor type or their interaction influenced consumer attitudes toward the relationship between these brands. This absence of effects shows that respondents generally evaluated all of the proposed stadium names in the same way. While there is anecdotal evidence that fans find some stadium name changes to be more egregious than others (e.g. Conn, 2011) – this similar response to the various proposed stadium names in this case allowed us to collapse across conditions, providing more statistical power and greater generalizability for subsequent tests of scale diagnosticity.

Next, to better understand the contribution of individual dimensions of HMP-Authenticity, we tested a model in which the mean-aggregated scores of the four dimensions of HMP-Authenticity predicted attitude toward the relationship between the proposed sponsor and Mile High Stadium. Ordinary least squares regression indicated that the model was predictive, $R^2 = 0.523, F(6,398) = 74.7, p < .001$. We included type of appeal, and our summed measure of sense of community as control variables in this analysis (see Table 7). The credibility dimension stood out with its ability to predict consumer attitudes toward the relationship ($B = 0.505, t = 1.27, p < .001$). We next conducted a hierarchical regression to compare a model with credibility as a predictor and a model without credibility. The model with credibility included explained an additional 7.8% of the variance, $F(1,398) = 66.44, p < .001$ (see Table 7).

6.3. Discussion

This examination of diagnosticity demonstrates the usefulness of dimensions of the HMP-Authenticity in explaining consumer attitudes toward a sponsorship relationship. We varied both the sponsor type (Western Union, a locally-based sponsor, and PayPal, a global sponsor based several states away) and the appeal type, such that half of the respondents saw a partnership deferential to history ([Sponsor] Field at Mile High), and half of the respondents saw a commercially motivated sponsor-oriented appeal ([Sponsor] Stadium) that drops the iconic Mile High name in favor of the sponsor’s name. We found that the credibility dimension of HMP-Authenticity, which taps betrayal, was the strongest predictor of consumer attitudes toward the relationship and that removing the credibility dimensions significantly diminished the model’s ability to predict attitudes toward the relationship. This signifies that in this context, the credibility of the relationship is the most important

Table 7
Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis (DV = attitude toward relationship).

Predictors	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	t-Value	B	SE B	t-value
Sponsor (Western Union)	−0.144	0.111	−1.30	−0.122	0.103	−1.18
Appeal (Sponsor-friendly)	−0.189	0.111	−1.69	−0.171	0.103	−1.66
Community	−0.048	0.019	−2.42*	−0.035	0.018	−1.93
Continuity	0.392	0.060	6.50***	0.171	0.062	2.74**
Integrity	0.366	0.063	5.80***	0.086	0.068	1.27
Symbolism	0.068	0.070	0.966	0.149	0.066	2.26*
Credibility				0.505	0.062	8.15***
R ²	0.445			0.523		

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

element in determining how favorably a partnership is viewed by audiences. This analysis provides support for a multi-dimensional scale that can be used to increase diagnostic capabilities not inherent in a uni-dimensional scale such as the [Speed and Thompson \(2000\)](#) fit scale.

7. Study 5: introduction of a brief scale

The purpose of Study 5 is to introduce a brief HMP-Authenticity scale that can be used in situations where a shorter scale is preferable and the dimensions of the full scale are not needed. This study tests the full scale and the brief scale in a new context, celebrity endorsement. Study 5 uses the endorsement relationship between actress, Jennifer Lawrence and the Dior fashion brand as the study context.

7.1. Sample and procedure

In Study 5, we randomly assigned 273 undergraduate students from the same university subject pool, who were participating in a computer lab for class credit to one of two conditions: full scale vs brief scale. All participants were presented with the same stimulus, an article from [DailyMail.com](#) discussing Jennifer Lawrence's endorsement of Dior's luxury handbags (see [Appendix B](#)). After viewing the stimulus for a minimum of 30 s, participants were asked to rate how favorable their view was of Jennifer Lawrence, Dior, and the relationship between the two on a 7-point scale (1 = Very unfavorable; 7 = Very favorable). Next, each participant was asked to complete either the 16-item HMP-Authenticity scale, or a brief 4-item version of the scale (see [Appendix C](#) for scale items). The four items in the brief scale were selected by testing the correlation between the mean of the full 16-item scale and the mean of all possible permutations of 4-item subsets from Studies 1–3. The 4-item subset with the highest average correlation to the full scale was selected. Its correlation to the full scale was higher than 0.90 for all three studies. Lastly, participants were thanked for their participation and debriefed.

7.2. Data analysis and results

We examined descriptive statistics by aggregating all authenticity items into a single authenticity score by taking the mean for each individual across all items (either 4 or 16 items). HMP-Authenticity scores were very similar between those who completed the full 16-item scale ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.93$, $n = 135$), and those who completed the 4-item HMP-Authenticity scale ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.09$, $n = 138$; $\alpha = 0.80$). Next, we conducted a four-factor CFA on the HMP-Authenticity scale for those 135 participants who completed the full scale. Results indicated acceptable fit ($\chi^2(98) = 273.58$, $p < .001$, $RMSEA = 0.113$, $SRMR = 0.072$, $CFI = 0.898$, $TLI = 0.875$). To further analyze this data, we separately regressed each of our three dependent variables – attitude toward Jennifer Lawrence, attitude toward Dior and attitude toward the relationship – on a single, aggregate score for the 16-item scale. Next, we conducted the same series of three regressions on the aggregated 4-item scale. For both the brief scale and the full scale, respondent perceptions of HMP-Authenticity positively affected attitudes toward Dior and the relationship, but did not significantly affect attitudes toward the endorser, Jennifer Lawrence (see [Table 8](#)).

Lastly, we compared average completion times in minutes for the entire survey for those that saw the full scale ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.80$) and those who saw the brief scale ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 0.67$). Based on differences in total completion times, we estimate that the full scale took approximately 43 s to complete and the brief scale took approximately 11 s to complete on average.

7.3. Discussion

Comparison between the full scale and the partial scale used as predictors of important endorsement outcomes provided very consistent results throughout the series of three regressions tested. This supports the use of the brief, 4-item HMP-Authenticity scale in place of the full 16-item scale in cases where dimensionality is not important and a shorter scale is preferred in order to shorten the survey instrument by approximately 32 s. The 4-item scale performs as well as the full scale in predicting outcomes. Moreover, this study provides evidence that HMP-Authenticity can be used in celebrity endorsement contexts thus, further justifying its usefulness as a measure of horizontal marketing partnerships generally.

8. General discussion

The present research makes several contributions to our understanding of how consumers perceive horizontal marketing partnerships. First, while studies of consumer perceptions of horizontal marketing partnerships have largely focused on fit between partners, we have explored how perceptions of the relationship itself might impact consumer evaluations. In doing so, we have found correlations between the perceived authenticity of the relationship and attitudes toward each partner in the relationship. Second, given the strategic uses of horizontal marketing partnerships in bringing entities together in communication and branding it is surprising that there is not more research that unites these disparate fields of inquiry. The present research provides an important contribution in integrating parallel tracks of research on consumer perceptions of relationships in sponsorship, co-branding, celebrity endorsement, and other horizontal marketing partnerships. Third, the present research develops both a long-form, multidimensional scale and a 4-item scale that can be used to assess various aspects of the authenticity of horizontal marketing partnerships.

In this series of studies, we've adapted the perceived brand authenticity (PBA) scale ([Morhart et al., 2015](#)) to a horizontal marketing partnerships context and examined what attributes of a horizontal marketing partnership can make it appear to be authentic or inauthentic to consumers. We started by adapting the wording of the PBA scale to make it more appropriate for a context where two or more brands are grouped together, horizontal marketing partnership authenticity (HMP-Authenticity). We then tested the reliability and validity of HMP-Authenticity. Our replication extended the nomological framework by showing that HMP-Authenticity can predict important outcomes beyond fit, a related variable. Moreover, we showed that skepticism negatively predicts each dimension of HMP-Authenticity as expected. In Study 3, we evaluated the relationship between HMP-Authenticity and PBA, and find that HMP-Authenticity is distinct from PBA of each brand, but related in that PBA is an antecedent. In Study 4, we examined the relationship between individual dimensions of HMP-Authenticity and favorability toward the relationship, finding that credibility was the strongest predictor of relationship favorability. Lastly, in Study 5, we derived and tested a brief, 4-item scale for use in instances where dimensions are not important, and scale brevity is preferred. Given the broad nature of HMP-Authenticity, we tested the scale in a variety of contexts (sports naming rights, co-branding and celebrity endorsement) with both student samples and online participants. This research demonstrates that a measurement tool can be derived to serve all of these areas equally well.

8.1. Implications for researchers

HMP-Authenticity, as a scale of perceived authenticity found in horizontal marketing partnerships, is important to researchers in that it

Table 8
Comparison of predictive power of brief (4-item) scale and the full HMP-Authenticity scale.

Scale version	DV: favorability of endorser		DV: favorability of endorsed brand		DV: favorability of relationship	
	Full	Brief	Full	Brief	Full	Brief
Intercept	4.790***	4.702***	3.063***	2.881***	2.836***	2.768***
Coefficient (mean HMP-Authenticity score)	0.172	0.189	0.384***	0.440***	0.499***	0.519***
R ²	0.018	0.028	0.084***	0.184***	0.181***	0.267***

Note. Six separate regressions were conducted with the mean of either the full HMP-Authenticity scale or the brief scale as the sole predictor, and favorability of endorser, endorsed brand and the relationship between endorser and endorsed brand as the three outcome variables; full HMP-Authenticity scale has 16 items; brief scale $n = 138$, full scale $n = 135$.

*** $p < .001$.

can be used to better understand consumer preferences and predict managerially desirable outcomes (Beverland, Lindgreen, & Vink, 2008; Gilmore & Pine, 2007). Although authenticity in marketing has traditionally been applied to objects such as brands, experiences and products (e.g., Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2014) rather than to relationships, authenticity can be used to better understand horizontal marketing partnerships in their various manifestations.

Importantly, the HMP-authenticity scale provides an alternative to popular fit scales as a measure of brand compatibility. This multi-dimensional scale measures perceptions of the relationship between entities rather than the perception of attributes shared by entities. This provides a different conceptual contribution to investigations involving horizontal marketing partnerships. The construct of relationship authenticity is clearly useful in future research that seeks to understand commercialization in partnerships, audience feelings of vulnerability and partnerships related to corporate social responsibility. A limitation of the present research, however, is the inclusion of only the Speed and Thompson (2000) fit scale.

As a research instrument, even the long version of the scale is not overly burdensome. University students and Mturk workers are arguably more skilled test takers but even so, the range of completion times suggests that the short scale can easily be completed in under 1 min and the long version of the scale typically within 2 mins. The short scale offers researchers conducting field studies the possibility to measure authenticity and still not suffer respondent fatigue.

The decision to adapt an existing scale rather than develop a scale from scratch could be viewed as a shortcoming or an advantage of the work. For example, items particular to sponsoring authenticity, such as geographical distance between the sponsor and sponsee (Woisetschläger et al., 2017) are not as relevant to co-branding or influencer marketing. It must be admitted that a highly particular sponsorship authenticity, or co-branding authenticity scale could have been developed. Adaptation of an existing scale can be defended on three grounds. First, the extensive theoretical development and rigorous empirical testing of Morhart et al. (2015) provided confidence that the original scale was well-developed and useful. Second, the original scale, its items, constructs and dimensions fit very well with the new context with minimal adjustment. Third, the preceding five studies showed good reliability and validity of the scale in its new context.

8.2. Managerial implications

Authenticity in horizontal marketing partnerships is much talked about, and highly desirable characteristic but is essentially never measured. Faced with increasing commercialization and reactance on the part of audiences, brands on both sides of the partnership need to understand their compatibility in a detailed way. The long and in

particular the short scale developed here make measurement of authenticity in marketing partnerships possible.

A scale useful across all forms of horizontal marketing partnerships allows comparison in strategy development. Most brands engaged in sponsoring are also engaged in other types of horizontal marketing partnerships such as celebrity endorsement. To be able to use a single scale across a portfolio of strategic investments in partnerships is to move closer to the evaluation that each of these areas seek.

As annual investment in sponsorship and related horizontal marketing partnership continues to increase, it becomes more important for managers to use proper measures to determine the financial soundness of a potential investment. By establishing the importance of HMP-Authenticity and adapting a scale to measure it, this research provides valuable tools to both researchers and managers that can be used both to evaluate a potential investment and to test research hypotheses. It would be beneficial for managers to consider it as they implement new sponsorship deals, and when they consider whether to invest in a given sponsorship opportunity. Knowing the scale items that predict sponsorship authenticity can also help managers to know where to invest more effort to improve so that they can expect to receive greater benefits from their sponsorship relationships.

8.3. Limitations and future research

First, despite our efforts to generalize the scale to various types of horizontal marketing partnerships by applying it to sponsorship, co-branding and celebrity endorsement, this work is by no means exhaustive in this regard. Given the differences between the various forms of horizontal marketing partnerships that now exist, or may exist in the future, further studies are needed to further establish generalizability. Second, additional studies should be done to establish the relationship between HMP-Authenticity and other existing measures, across the various types of horizontal marketing partnerships. In particular, the present research makes an effort to broadly conceptualize fit, but certainly is not a complete integration of all uses of the fit construct across all horizontal marketing partnerships. Furthermore, our exclusive use of Speed and Thompson (2000) fit measure is in itself a limitation, since fit has been measured in various ways.

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Appendix A. Types of horizontal partnerships in marketing communications

Term	Synonyms	Definition	Citations
Cause-related marketing (CRM)	Cause-brand alliance	A form of corporate philanthropy based on the rationale of profit-motivated giving that can be viewed as a manifestation of the alignment of corporate philanthropy and enlightened business.	Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Hult, 2004; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988
Celebrity endorsement	Brand endorsement	Use of celebrities as part of marketing communications strategy.	Erdogan, 1999
Co-branding	Composite branding	The use of two distinct brand names on one product.	Levin, Davis, & Levin, 1996
Cross-marketing	Cross-promotion	The use of one product or brand to promote another.	
Joint sales promotion	Joint promotion, joint branding	Two or more distinct brand entities from different companies pool their promotional resources.	Varadarajan, 1985
Product placement	Brand placement	A paid product message aimed at influencing movie (or television) audiences via the planned and unobtrusive entry of a branded product into a movie (or television program).	Balasubramanian, 1994
Sponsorship	Partnerships Sponsorship-linked marketing	Provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives.	Meenaghan, 1983 Cornwell, 1995

It should also be noted that some vertical marketing partnerships such as ingredient or component branding (e.g., Ocean Spray cranberries inside cookies, or Intel chips inside computers) are also consumer facing and function similarly to these horizontal partnerships.

Appendix B. Study stimuli

Study 1: naming rights stimuli

Please read the following description of Chick-fil-A and its partnership with the Peach Bowl. You will be allowed to advance in 45 seconds.

About Chick-fil-A

You might say this company helps people get their fill of chicken sandwiches. Chick-fil-A operates the second largest fast-food chain that specializes in chicken menu items, with some 1,700 restaurants in about 40 states. The chain is popular for its breaded chicken sandwiches and waffle fries, as well as other menu items such as chicken salads, chicken strips, and chicken nuggets. Most of its outlets are freestanding units that offer drive-through service as well as dine-in seating. The company also has a significant number of mall-based stores.



Peach Bowl's partnership with Chick-fil-A (1996-present)

The Peach Bowl entered a new age when it signed Chick-fil-A as its first-ever title sponsor in 1996, and nearly a decade later, the game became the Chick-fil-A Bowl. Since then, the Bowl has eclipsed the \$100 million mark in team payout, achieved 17 straight sellouts, distributed 17.3 million in charity and scholarship, and now holds the number-one and number-two most-viewed non-BCS games in ESPN history. Chick-fil-A Bowl games now also make up three of the top 10 and eight of the top-

30 most-viewed non-BCS games on the network.

Study 2: naming rights stimuli

Providence Park | Home of the Portland Timbers



Providence Park is a premier athletics venue with a rich history as a Portland landmark nestled in the heart of downtown. It is the home of the Portland Timbers MLS soccer team, Portland Thorns FC of the National Women's Soccer League and the Portland State University Vikings football team. The name of the stadium was changed to "Providence Park" in 2014 when Providence Health & Services took over naming rights from Jeld-Wen.

About Providence Health & Services

Sponsored by two congregations of nuns -- the Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary -- Providence Health & Services operates more than 30 hospitals and 400 clinics in five states in the western US. Its hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics are located in Alaska, California, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. All together, the system has more than 5,500 acute care beds and some 2,000 long-term care beds. The organization also provides health insurance through Providence Health Plans and offers subsidized housing for the low-income elderly and disabled.

Study 3: cobranding stimuli (individual brands)



Boasting some \$2.5 trillion in assets, JPMorgan Chase is the largest bank holding company in the US. With more than 5,350 branches in about two dozen states (and counting), it is also among the nation's top mortgage lenders and credit card issuers (it holds some \$126 billion in credit card loans). Active in 60 countries, the bank also boasts formidable investment banking and asset management operations through its prestigious JPMorgan Private Bank and institutional investment manager JPMorgan Asset Management (with \$2.4 trillion in assets under supervision) subsidiaries, respectively.



The monarch of this magic kingdom is no man but a mouse: Mickey Mouse. The Walt Disney Company is the world's largest media conglomerate, with assets encompassing movies, television, publishing, and theme parks. Its Disney/ABC Television Group includes the ABC television network and 10 broadcast stations, as well as a portfolio of cable networks including ABC Family, Disney Channel, and ESPN (80%-owned). Walt Disney Studios produces films through imprints Walt Disney Pictures, Disney Animation, and Pixar. It also owns Marvel Entertainment and Lucasfilm, two extremely successful film producers. In addition, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts runs its popular theme parks including Walt Disney World and Disneyland.

Study 4: cobranding stimuli (relationship)

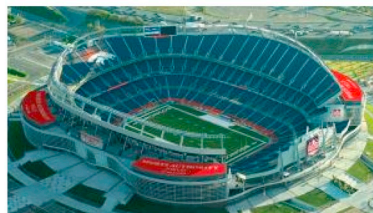
Chase Adds New Rewards Cards for Walt Disney World and Disneyland Customers

Chase announced today the launch of the new Disney's Visa® Debit Card. The new card gives customers access to special Cardmember perks when visiting Walt Disney World® and the Disneyland® Resorts and when shopping at DisneyStore.com and Disney Store locations. Disney's Visa® Debit Card is available now and has no annual fee.



Study 4: naming rights stimuli (current)

Mile High Stadium has been a Denver landmark since the original stadium was built in 1948. More recently, it was demolished to clear space for a new Mile High Stadium. In 2001, the newly completed Mile High Stadium opened with Invesco as the title sponsor. The stadium name then became Invesco Field at Mile High.



Many fans opposed a corporate name and wished to retain the previous venue's name, "Mile High Stadium." *The Denver Post* initially refused to use the Invesco label and referred to it as Mile High stadium for several years before changing its policy and adding Invesco to articles.




On August 16, 2011, The Metropolitan Stadium District announced Invesco would immediately transfer the naming rights to Englewood, Colorado-based Sports Authority in a 25-year agreement worth \$6 million per year. After Sports Authority missed two quarterly payments as a result of its March 2016 bankruptcy and pending liquidation, the Broncos organization and the Metropolitan Football Stadium District are seeking to terminate the naming rights contract.





Study 4: naming rights stimuli (new)

Stimulus template

As you may know, the Denver Broncos' **Sports Authority Field at Mile High** is in search of a new sponsor. With _____ as the new sponsor, the name could change to _____.



Variable portion of stimulus

		Name type	
		Non-deferential	Deferential
Location	Local	Western Union Stadium 	Western Union Field at Mile High 
	Distant	PayPal Stadium 	PayPal Field at Mile High 

Study 5: celebrity endorsement stimuli



J'adore J'Law! Jennifer Lawrence stars in TWO new campaigns for Dior, modeling the label's new bags and lip gloss in a series of stunning new images

- The 25-year-old actress models fashion and beauty for two new campaigns
- She has been a brand ambassador at Dior since 2012
- Her handbag campaign also marks the ad debut of the designer's new Diorever bag

By Carly Stern For Dailymail.com

Published: 17:33 EST, 1 March 2016 | Updated: 18:33 EST, 1 March 2016

Jennifer Lawrence is having a good week. First, she didn't trip at the Oscars (she lost Best Actress to Brie Larson, but she definitely didn't fall on camera). And now, she's starring in two new ads for Christian Dior. The 25-year-old has been a brand ambassador for the design house since 2012, and this week they released two new campaigns starring the actress front and center, for handbags and lipstick. 'I've had such a wonderful time working with Dior with couture, and there's such a synergy between the fashion and the beauty,' she said.



Appendix C. Measures

Construct	Cronbach's alpha
Ad skepticism (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998) We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising. Advertising's aim is to inform the consumer. I believe advertising is informative. Advertising is generally truthful. Advertising is a reliable source of information about the quality and performance of products. Advertising is truth well told. In general, advertising presents a true picture of the product being advertised. I feel I've been accurately informed after viewing most advertisements. Most advertising provides consumers with essential information.	$\alpha = 0.92$
Fit (Speed & Thompson, 2000) There is a logical connection between the event and the sponsor. The image of the event and the image of the sponsor are similar. The sponsor and the event fit together well. The company and the event stand for similar things. It makes sense to me that this company sponsors this event.	$\alpha = 0.91$
Horizontal marketing partnership authenticity - brief scale Survives trends Is an honest combination Gives back to its people Connects people with what is really important	$\alpha = 0.80$

All of the above measures were administered on a 7-point scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). All ad skepticism scores were reverse-coded for analysis.

Appendix D. R code for latent variable hierarchical regression

```

library(lavaan)
cholesky_model <- '
# latent variables
CONT =~ cont1 + cont2 + cont3 + cont4
CRED =~ cred1 + cred2 + cred3 + cred4
INTEG =~ Integ1 + Integ2 + Integ3 + Integ4
SYMB =~ Symbol1 + Symbol2 + Symbol3 + Symbol4
FIT =~ fit1 + fit2 + fit3 + fit4 + fit5

# higher order factors
f1 =~ CONT + CRED + INTEG + SYMB + FIT
f2 =~ CONT + CRED + INTEG + SYMB

# Fix covariance of higher order factors to zero
f1 =~ 0*f2

# Fix variance of lower order factors to zero
FIT =~ 0*FIT
CONT =~ 0*CONT
CRED =~ 0*CRED
INTEG =~ 0*INTEG
SYMB =~ 0*SYMB

# regressions
fav_prov_park + fav_prov_health + fav_relationship ~ f1 + f2
'
cholesky <- sem(cholesky_model, data=prov_all)
summary(cholesky,standardized=TRUE, fit.measures=TRUE)

```

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