

“Win in Africa, With Africa”: Social responsibility, event image, and destination benefits. The case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa

Matthew Walker^{a,*}, Kiki Kaplanidou^b, Heather Gibson^b, Brijesh Thapa^b, Sue Geldenhuys^c, Willie Coetzee^c

^aUniversity of Southern Mississippi, USA

^bUniversity of Florida, USA

^cTshwane University of Technology, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Applying image transfer related to sponsorship theory and the cognitive–affective model of consumer behavior, this study explores how the deployment of a socially responsible program by a multinational (non-governmental) sport organization impacts the image of a mega sport event. Using the 2010 FIFA World Cup as the research context, the hypothesized model is tested among a sample of international sport tourists ($N = 6606$) from all nine host cities (ten stadiums) in South Africa during the tournament. The structural model results demonstrate that: (1) tourists' familiarity with the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program, and (2) the perception of FIFA as a socially responsible organization influence event image and one form of consumer patronage.

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1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, nations from around the world have competed to host mega sport events because countries (and increasingly cities) perceive such events as potential re-imaging opportunities (Hiller, 2006; Smith, 2005). Particularly for developing nations, mega-events can be integral to redefining a country's global status and socio-political composition (Cornelissen, 2008). For example, the 19th FIFA World Cup held in June 11–July 11, 2010 was an opportunity for South Africa to not only achieve the domestic goals of social cohesion and economic impact, but also help the African Continent establish higher international prominence (Swart & Bob, 2007). Irrespective of the country's hosting objectives, event owners such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) also associate their organizational plans with the event's image (FIFA, 2010; IOC, 2010). However, there is little empirical support demonstrating if certain organizational strategies (e.g., sustainability, social responsibility, environmentalism, etc.) impact event owner perceptions and whether these perceptions in turn influence the event's image have not been tested.

Scholars have suggested that mega-event hosting decisions should be justified in terms of social, feel-good, and/or image effects

(Maennig & Porsche, 2008; Preuss, 2007; Shoval, 2002), which has bolstered researcher enthusiasm for understanding the intangible legacies of such events. Historically, however, these intangibles have been viewed only as footnotes (Maennig & Porsche, 2008), including the concepts of national pride and host country image. As more attention is focused on the overall image of the event, it is likely that certain ancillary benefits of hosting might include consumer event perceptions, which Chalip (2004) argued are integrally related to both the image of the event and host nation.

In the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the event's image was especially important for FIFA. Since South Africa is a developing nation with significant poverty, health, and safety issues (Allmers & Maennig, 2009), among the most historically troubled, and lowest on the Nation Brand Index of any previous host (NBI, 2009), bolstering the event's image was regarded as a critical success metric. From FIFA's perspective, the way South Africa managed the tournament was an important test case for other developing nations with similar characteristics. Given the international exposure of the World Cup, leveraging the social programs associated with the event was one way of enhancing the perception of FIFA and the event.

The primary social effort used to enhance the World Cup was the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program, established to help the African continent beyond the event (FIFA, 2010). Boasting a \$70 million budget, the program was comprised of three primary objectives: (1) develop the game of football in Africa; (2) use football to touch the

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: matthew.b.walker@usm.edu (M. Walker).

African Continent; and (3) use football to build a better future for Africa. Kott (2005) noted that organizing committees and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) use events such as the World Cup as catalysts to address pressing social issues and demonstrate their commitment to (corporate) social responsibility (SR). The appeal of the World Cup provided FIFA with a global stage to promote a program with both developmental and socially responsible underpinnings, in a country where the prevailing social conditions were present for such interventions.

While SR scholarship is gaining momentum in the sport and tourism literature, limited attention has been devoted to large-scale mega sport events (exceptions include Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Walker, Heere, Parent, & Drane, 2010), and studies of how social program familiarity and perceptions of an event owner can influence event image perceptions have not been conducted. In addition, it is unknown whether efforts by the event owner to bolster the event's image will influence the behavioral intentions of consumers. Given this gap in the literature and the relative infancy of SR research in sport and tourism, the purpose of this study was to test whether familiarity with the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program influenced the perception of FIFA as socially responsible, and subsequently the image of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. We also tested whether a positive event image had a trickledown effect to other areas of consumer behavior exhibited by international visitors to South Africa.

2. Research setting: FIFA World Cup and social responsibility

Hosting the World Cup yields a variety of impacts on both the host region and FIFA as the event owner. For the host destination, tourism, infrastructure, and economic benefits are the most notable (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2008; Kim & Morrison, 2005; Ritchie, 1984), while the social and cultural impacts of the event are also evident (Kim & Petrick, 2005). For FIFA, notwithstanding the direct fiduciary benefits derived from the event, image-related outcomes are particularly salient – especially if the event is to be viewed as operationally successful. In addition, the World Cup is more than just football; it is about social progress, political unity, and cultural understanding (FIFA, 2010). Accordingly, FIFA proclaims a responsibility "... to touch the world using football as a symbol of hope and integration" (FIFA, 2010; para. 3). In their Activity Report (2004, p. 33), FIFA noted that their social responsibility is not simply restricted to 'doing good', but rather:

... to achieve a lasting effect [in social responsibility]. To this end, FIFA has maintained numerous partnerships, in some cases over several years, with various United Nations organizations, as well with various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). In the areas of the rights and protection of children, equality, health and education, FIFA is helping to tackle some of the biggest social challenges"; and "... More than 40 percent of FIFA's income goes directly towards supporting the grassroots of the game, developmental work, and partnerships with relief organizations.

Beyond their global 'Football for Hope' campaign (i.e., a movement using football to achieve social development), the 2010 World Cup was used as a stage to broadcast FIFA's commitment to regional social responsibility (FIFA Activity Report, 2009). For example, the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program was their most promoted and financially supported initiative to provide tools and skills for South Africa (and the African Continent) to continue its own development. Through this program, FIFA greatly improved the conditions for football in all of Africa by providing specialized football turf for 52 African nations prior to the start of the 2010 tournament. In addition, FIFA also created programs that use football for human

and social development, health promotion, and the promotion of peace by supporting local organizations around South Africa and the African Continent. These programs, coupled with FIFA's additional commitments to the African Continent (and world), helped showcase their socially responsible mission that aligns with their core product of football.

The examination of FIFA's social responsibility is important since sport (particularly football) has the capacity to serve as a meaningful vehicle to promote and deliver socially beneficial programs (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). The extant research has shown that embracing SR can stimulate positive image perceptions (e.g., Maignan & Ralston, 2002; Margolis & Walsh, 2003); enhance an organization's reputation (Walker & Kent, 2009); and drive consumer purchase behaviors (e.g., Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Mohr & Webb, 2005). However, while altruistic intentions may guide social program development, the predominant understanding is that most SR activities are responses to demands from consumers who can directly benefit the firm (Siegel, 2009). Porter and Kramer (2002) agreed that while SR can provide a competitive organizational advantage, it will only do so if the cause reciprocally benefits the organization. Therefore, it is not surprising that FIFA would financially support and vigorously promote a program that has direct benefits for both the organization and the image of their marquee product (i.e., the FIFA World Cup). This perspective is particularly germane in a World Cup context because of the significant media attention and public awareness that encompasses the month-long tournament. This attention affords FIFA the opportunity to communicate socially desirable messages to a global audience, which should influence consumer attitudes toward the organization and its mission.

The perception of SR refers to the understanding of how effective an organization meets its societal obligations (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004), and evidence that perceived SR influences the organizational variables of credibility, advocacy, and behavioral intentions has been well-documented. For example, Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, and Hill (2006) demonstrated that SR had a positive effect on organizational credibility. Brown, Dacin, Pratt, and Whetten (2006, p. 105) maintained that the associations consumers assign to organizations on the basis of SR "... serve as the 'reality' of the organization for an individual", and what they believe can ultimately influence other organizational perceptions. Further, Rifon, Choi, Trimble, and Li (2004) identified that consumers perceive an organization as more credible when it supported a cause congruent with its operations. The following theoretical framework supports the proposition that social program familiarity and favorable organizational perceptions can enhance the perceived image of a mega-event.

3. Theoretical framework

The literature is replete with examples of how and why sponsoring events can build product awareness, strengthen brand image, and stimulate association transfer between the event and the sponsor (Gwinner, 1997; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). This transfer of perceptual cues aids to shape consumer (or potential consumers') overall event perceptions (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2006). For information transfer to take place, however, event sponsors and owners must reach consumers at a cognitive level.

Researchers have both theoretically opined and empirically demonstrated that consumer product knowledge and product-related experiences stimulate information processing, product evaluations, and behavioral responses to sponsorship messages (e.g., Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Lacey, Close, & Finney, 2010; Pope, Voges, & Brown, 2009; Tsai, 2007). Researchers have also recognized that both cognitive and affective states can significantly influence responses to organizational messages (Eagly & Chaiken,

1995; Funk, Haugtvedt, & Howard, 2000; Tripodi, Hiron, Bednall, & Sutherland, 2003). Recently, Walker and Heere (2011) demonstrated (i.e., in a professional sport setting) that a sequential cognitive → affective response pattern to SR stimuli molded consumers' evaluative judgments. Russell's (1980) model of affect supports this argument by suggesting that an affective state does not manifest independently but is closely related to cognition in a highly systematic fashion. In other words, there is a cognitive experience that underpins the affective response, which helps to steer consumer behavior. This causal sequence supports the use of the cognitive–affective model in the current study because a cognitive evaluation (i.e., familiarity with the 'Win in Africa' program) followed by an affective appraisal (i.e., perception of FIFA as socially responsible) were regarded as the antecedent conditions to the event visitor's disposition about the 2010 World Cup.

Research on consumers and social responsibility has elaborated on this cognitive processing idea by showing that awareness of social variables can influence consumer attitudes (e.g., Ellen, Mohr, & Webb, 2000; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). This means that consumer knowledge of the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program should result in positive perceptions of FIFA as socially responsible, which should influence event image perceptions. In the sport and tourism literature, there is limited research on consumer associations between a social program and an organization, and whether this association leads to a positive event image has not been tested.

4. Hypothesis development

4.1. Familiarity of social responsibility and FIFA perceptions

SR is part of an organization's discretionary relationships (Waddock, 2004), which seek to maximize long-term beneficial impacts and positive interactions between the organization and society (Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001). Accordingly, SR commitments are applied to areas such as business ethics, sustainable development, and other socially perceived ills (WBCSD, 2004). Pomeroy and Dolcinar (2009) noted that consumers not only expect organizations to behave in a socially responsible manner but also want to be informed about their initiatives. A global marketplace poll reported that a significant percentage of consumers felt that organizations should actively communicate their SR activities (Cone Inc., 2004). If the past several years are indicative of SR progression (e.g., large-scale promotional efforts), consumer knowledge regarding the social policies of an organization is one of the primary ways organizational quality is judged. As a result, consumer familiarity with SR programming plays a key role in forming organizational perceptions. In consumer research, familiarity is recognized as a characteristic that influences decision-making processes including how information is used in forming organizational perceptions (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Based on this, consumer familiarity with SR should determine how consumers perceive FIFA.

Hypothesis 1. *Familiarity with FIFA's 'Win in Africa: With Africa' program will positively influence the perception of FIFA as a socially responsible organization.*

When consumers are familiar with an organization's SR programs, they presumably have developed perceptions about that organization. This means that if visitors to the 2010 World Cup are familiar with FIFA's African SR programs, the organization's messages should carry more personal resonance because familiarity is an "... accumulation of information" (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989, p. 53). And amassing organizational information, especially pro-social information, will aid in shaping consumer perceptions of FIFA and their product (e.g., the World Cup tournament). This, however, requires reaching consumers at a cognitive level.

The World Cup tournament will better equip consumers with information that strengthens their knowledge about FIFA as the event owner. However, World Cup visitors may already possess some knowledge about FIFA prior to attending the event. This prior knowledge can yield a number of perceptions about the event and FIFA, particularly if the information is related to SR program development. For example, Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) maintained that knowledge of an organization's social efforts can enhance consumer perceptions of that organization's products. Klein and Dawar (2004) noted that the economic payback from SR manifests in the positive product evaluations and brand recommendations that consumers display. As well, the literature on SR demonstrates that: (1) social responsibility assumes a key role in consumer behavior above the 'rational' idea of product attributes, and (2) social responsibility carries spillover effects on routine consumer judgments (e.g., new product evaluation). Thus, familiarity with the 'Win in Africa' program, coupled with the socially responsible perceptions of FIFA, is one pathway for consumers to positively perceive the image of the event.

Hypothesis 2. *The perception of FIFA as socially responsible will positively influence the image of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.*

Hypothesis 3. *The perception of FIFA as socially responsible will (at least partially) mediate the relationship between SR familiarity and event image.*

4.2. Event image, revisit intentions, and word-of-mouth

Given the use of mega-events as economic and developmental catalysts, certain organizational and social aspects have been discussed as components of an event's image (Kaplanidou, 2010). These image-related concepts carry important implications for the behavioral intentions of event visitors. For example, Kaplanidou and Gibson (2010) and Kaplanidou (2007) demonstrated that sport tourists' intentions to take part in future events were influenced by their image perceptions toward that event. Research has also suggested that event image perceptions can indirectly influence sport tourists' revisit intentions (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). This idea was also communicated by Shonk and Chelladurai (2008) and Gibson, Qi, and Zhang (2008) who discussed how certain event characteristics relate to event image, the perceived event experience, and revisit intentions. Similarly, Chen and Funk (2010) found that certain event characteristics were important attributes that influenced sport tourists' intentions to revisit a destination.

Hypothesis 4. *Event image will positively influence the 2010 FIFA World Cup visitors' revisit intentions to the host destination.*

Word-of-mouth is a form of interpersonal communication concerning a consumer's experience with an organization, product, or service (Richins, 1984). Mangold, Miller, and Brockway (1999, p. 73) described word-of-mouth as a "... dominant force in the marketplace", while Bendapudi and Berry (1997, p. 30) noted that word-of-mouth is the "... ultimate test of the customer's relationship" and shows "... whether the customer is willing to become an advocate" for a brand.

The importance of word-of-mouth for sport tourism was identified by Thwaites (1999) who underscored the role of a positive experience and perception of a sport tourism product and its impact on word-of-mouth. Thwaites found that sport tourists' overall product perceptions could be associated with the concept of image, as these perceptions help to depict the brand in the consumer's mind. Keller (1998) suggested that such depictions are associations, linked in memory, that contain the brand's meaning and manifest as the image of the brand to the consumer. Therefore, the perceived image of an event should yield word-of-mouth

communications among the visitors to an event. Image has been discussed primarily as an antecedent to word-of-mouth activity and is recognized as an indicator of consumer loyalty (e.g., Andreassen & Lindestad, 1998; Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991; Kim, Han, & Lee, 2001; de Matos & Vargas Rossi, 2008; Petrick, 2004a,b). For example, Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) noted that corporate brand image directly influenced consumer loyalty, which was measured through positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Additionally, Lee, Lee, and Lee (2005) found that affective evaluations of Korea as a World Cup destination positively influenced word-of-mouth. Thus, if the event's image is perceived positively, then word-of-mouth activity should increase (see Fig. 1 for the hypothesized relationships).

Hypothesis 5. *Event image will positively influence the 2010 FIFA World Cup visitors' word-of-mouth intentions.*

5. Method

5.1. Data collection and sample

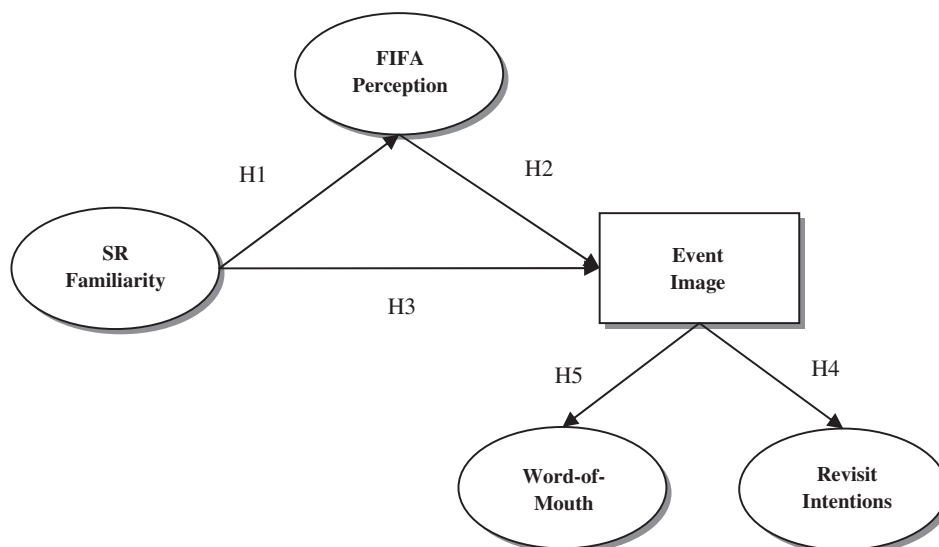
Data were collected using an onsite intercept method during the course of the month-long tournament (see Fig. 3). In order to reach the *a priori* target of $n = 1000$ questionnaires per location, a trained team of 28 fieldworkers (i.e., students from a major South African university who worked in small teams in each host city, see Fig. 4) and two field coordinators administered the questionnaires at several major tourist areas in each city (e.g., match viewing locations, shopping malls, key tourist areas located close to the match sites, etc.). The intercept sites were chosen to approximate a representation of international sport tourists during match-days in each city. If a site had multiple entry and exit points, the fieldworkers rotated to include all possible areas where the visitors congregated and departed the location.

The fieldworkers also employed systematic random sampling procedures at each location – every fifth person (or group) was selected to complete a questionnaire. Only one adult from each party was identified (i.e., alternating between male and female) and

a screening question asked potential respondents if they were a tourist (i.e., “are you an out of town visitor here for the World Cup?”). If the individual answered “yes”, they were asked to complete the questionnaire which took approximately 20 min. If the visitor was not able to read or write, the fieldworker assisted by using an oral interview technique (see Singleton & Straits, 2002). Data collection began in the late morning and continued until late afternoon at each location.

Although an attempt was made to achieve $n = 1000$ completed questionnaires from each site, the target was not achieved due to weather conditions, site access issues, and other logistical constraints. Overall, $N = 8422$ individuals completed questionnaires, but $n = 1816$ were excluded because: (1) the respondent did not provide information about their country of residence, (2) the respondent reported their country of residence as South Africa, or (3) there were significant missing data in a particular observation. Since the missing data accounted for <5% of the sample, we felt confident in using listwise deletion to remove these observations. The analysis was based only on those respondents classified as international visitors to South Africa ($N = 6606$) representing all ten match locations (see Fig. 5) in nine host cities for the 2010 FIFA World Cup (i.e., Tshwane/Pretoria, $n = 787$; Johannesburg, $n = 938$; Nelspruit, $n = 680$; Polokwane, $n = 840$; Rustenburg, $n = 607$; Durban, $n = 673$; Port Elizabeth, $n = 288$; Bloemfontein, $n = 788$; Cape Town $n = 1005$).

The analysis showed that of the 6606 international sport tourists (see Fig. 6) 73.2% ($n = 4715$) were male and 26.8% ($n = 1722$) female, and comprised largely of young and middle aged individuals between 26 and 35 (44.9%) years old followed by 36–45 (29%). In terms of household composition, 41.9% reported four to five household members, 36.5% reported two to three members, and 14% reported six to seven members. Respondents were well-educated as 53.4% had graduated from a university, 22% reported an advanced degree, and 18.6% reported some college education. A diverse array of countries were reported with the United States (8.4%), United Kingdom (6.7%), Argentina (6.7%), Spain (6.1%), and Germany (5.5%) representing the largest groups. Countries of permanent residence were clustered by geographic region with the



Note. The depicted relationships are (at least partially) mediated by FIFA Perception. Program Familiarity has three aspects that comprise a single variable: (1) develop the game of soccer in Africa, (2) use soccer to touch the African Continent, and (3) use soccer to build a better future for Africa.

Fig. 1. Hypothesized model for the antecedents of event image.

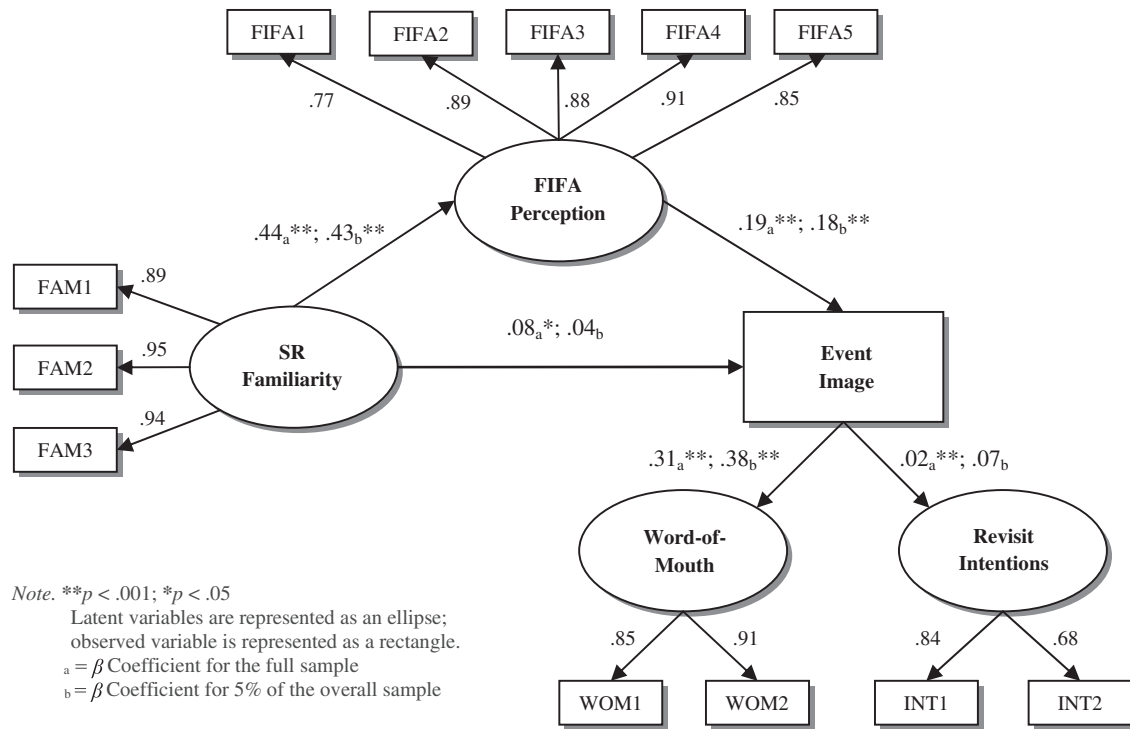


Fig. 2. Structural model results.

majority from Europe (44.1%), followed by the Americas (26.1%), Africa (15.9%), Australia/Oceania (8%), and Asia (5.9%). In addition to these demographics, 86.5% noted that their current visit was their first trip to South Africa, and 72.5% reported the event was their first World Cup attendance.

5.2. Measures

The items for this study comprised one section of a questionnaire that was part of a larger research project. In total, 14 questions based on those used in previous research examined the familiarity with FIFA's SR programs (3 items; $\alpha = .95$) adapted from Sen, Bhattacharya, and Korshun (2006); perceptions of FIFA as a responsible organization (5 items; $\alpha = .93$) adapted from Lacey et al. (2010); event image (1 item) adapted from Baloglu and McCleary (1999); word-of-mouth (2 items; $\alpha = .87$) adapted from Kim et al. (2001), and revisit intentions (2 items; $\alpha = .80$) adapted

from Kaplanidou (2007). The FIFA perception, revisit intentions, and word-of-mouth items were worded as statements asking respondents to agree or disagree on a five point Likert scale that ranged from 1 = "strongly disagree" → 5 = "strongly agree". The familiarity questions were worded as statements asking respondents to state how familiar they were on a five point Likert scale that ranged from 1 = "not very familiar" → 5 = "very familiar". The familiarity questions also contained a sixth anchor (i.e., "never heard of") in case the respondent was completely unfamiliar with any of the 'Win in Africa' programs. The caveat being that when individuals are aware of existing organizational programs and services, they will likely use this information to assess organizational messages. It is, therefore, important to distinguish between actual awareness and perceived awareness because the relationship to consumer attitudes will be linked to the former and not necessarily the latter. In addition, since all "never heard of" responses comprised less than 6% of the responses for a given item,



Fig. 3. Data collection.



Fig. 4. Data collection fieldworkers.



Fig. 5. Stadium Locations. Source: BBC News/BBC sport/bbc.co.uk – © [2010] BBC.

they were removed from the data set for the final analyses. The event image question was worded as a singular 'global' evaluation statement on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "very negative" → 5 = "very positive. This item was adapted from the destination image literature (see Baloglu & McCleary, 1999), under the assumption that mega-events (e.g., the FIFA World Cup) are tourist attractions.

5.3. Analytic technique

In order to confirm the factor structure of the scales, the items and factors were pre-specified and entered into AMOS 18. To assess the fit of the measurement model, a two-step procedure was followed (Hoyle & Panter, 1995). In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to examine the reliability and validity of the measurement model, and the discriminant validity of individual constructs. In the second step, a structural equation model

(SEM) measured the path coefficients. SEM was applicable because it estimates multiple relationships between constructs while accounting for measurement error and maximizing the variance explained in the latent and endogenous variables. To test the overall fit, χ^2 goodness-of-fit, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) were used.

6. Results

6.1. Measurement model test

Using maximum likelihood estimation, the goodness-of-fit indices revealed that the four-factor measurement model fit the data and the chi-square statistic for the model was significant, albeit inflated ($\chi^2 = 1092.45/df = 16.31, p < .001$). Since large sample sizes can produce artificially inflated chi-square results, multiple fit statistics were considered. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), the RMSEA indicated an acceptable fit (.048) and the SRMR (.053) was also acceptable (Kline, 2005). The CFI (.98), NFI (.98), and TLI (.97) values were also acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, item loadings, and average variance extracted (AVE) values. Table 2 shows the covariation between variables.

Next, the model was tested for evidence of convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is derived from (a) the significant size of the factor loadings (average $\beta = .762$), (b) AVE's exceeding .50 for each construct, and (c) none of the squared correlations exceeded the lowest AVE score, which were all confirmed (see Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The *t*-values for all variables ranged from 11.06 to 14.48 at the $p < .001$ significance level. These results suggested that each item significantly contributed to its underlying construct and the phi coefficients (Φ) revealed significant correlations between factors.



Fig. 6. International visitors.

Table 1
Measurement model results.

Factor and items	Mean (SD)	β	AVE
<i>SR familiarity^a</i>			.78
Develop the game of soccer in Africa	3.68 (1.34)	.89	
Use soccer to touch the African continent	3.63 (1.36)	.95	
Use soccer to build a better future for Africa	3.69 (1.37)	.94	
<i>FIFA perceptions</i>			.73
I like FIFA as an organization	3.61 (1.03)	.77	
FIFA is involved with the communities where they sponsor events	3.54 (1.00)	.87	
FIFA is committed to sharing profits to help communities where they sponsor events	3.47 (1.05)	.89	
FIFA's social contributions benefit global soccer events	3.61 (1.01)	.91	
FIFA's genuine desire to touch Africa guided their decision to host in South Africa	3.68 (1.04)	.85	
<i>Event image</i>			–
How would you rate the image of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa	4.27 (.69)	–	
<i>Word-of-mouth</i>			.79
I will encourage friends and relatives to visit South Africa for a vacation	4.35 (.64)	.85	
I will recommend South Africa as a vacation destination to anyone who asks	4.34 (.68)	.90	
<i>Revisit intentions</i>			.80
I will likely revisit South Africa again for a vacation in the next three years	4.19 (.83)	.84	
I will likely plan to visit other countries on the African continent for a vacation	4.20 (.82)	.69	

β = Standardized regression coefficients.

AVE = Average Variance Extracted for each construct.

^a Items were preceded with the question: "How familiar are you with the following FIFA programs?".

6.2. Descriptive results

A summary of means, standard deviations, and correlations are provided in Table 3. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed moderate correlations between constructs, all of which were below $r = .53$ (the highest correlation was Revisit Intentions \leftrightarrow Word-of-Mouth). Respondents were asked about their familiarity with FIFA's 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program. A mean score higher than the scale midpoint was reported for each of the items. Specifically, 54.2% indicated that they were familiar or very familiar with FIFA's program to "develop the game of football in Africa" (5.4% "never heard of"); 51.4% were familiar or very familiar with the program to "build a better future for Africa" (6.2% "never heard of"); and 52.4% were familiar or very familiar with their program to "touch the continent of Africa" (6.7% "never heard of").

Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of FIFA as a socially responsible organization. Attitudes were slightly higher than the scale midpoint (i.e., means higher than 3.0). Specifically, 58.5% agreed or strongly agreed they like FIFA as an organization; 57.6% agreed or strongly agreed that FIFA is involved with the communities where they sponsor events; 56.5% agreed or strongly

Table 2
Covariance matrix.

	FAM	SR	WOM	INT
FAM	–	.016	.011	.011
SR	.450	–	.007	.007
WOM	.036	.078	–	.008
INT	.084	.084	.279	–

Note. Below diagonal = covariance; above diagonal = standard error.

agreed that FIFA's desire to touch the world guided their decision to host the 2010 World Cup in South Africa; 54.2% agreed or strongly agreed that FIFA's contributions benefit global football events, and 52.1% agreed or strongly agreed that FIFA is committed to sharing profits to help communities where they sponsor events. In terms of the image of the 2010 World Cup, respondent answers were higher than the scale midpoint as 94.9% felt the event image was somewhat (45.4%) or very positive (49.5%).

6.3. Structural model test

SEM was used to evaluate the model fit and simultaneously estimate the path coefficients between constructs. The SEM was constructed as a hybrid model (i.e., a combination of observed variables and latent factor) because the dependent variable was observed and two of the latent factors had two items each (Kline, 2005). Determined by the hypotheses, we began the structural test with model specification to create a statement of relationships between the latent and observed variables was conducted (i.e., FAM, SR, IMG, INT, and WOM). The model specified familiarity with FIFA's programs and SR perception as an antecedent of event image; while event image was as an antecedent of revisit intentions and word-of-mouth patronage (see Fig. 2).

The test of this sequence confirmed an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 1192.21/df = 19.870$, $p = .000$, RMSEA = .053, SRMR = .060, CFI = .98, NFI = .98, TLI = .97). Similar to the CFA, the inflated chi-square can be attributed to the large sample size. Therefore, the CFI, NFI, and TLI were used as goodness-of-fit indicators (Klem, 2000). The path coefficients were all significant and the related hypotheses appeared to be supported by the SEM. However, two path coefficients (i.e., FAM \rightarrow IMG and IMG \rightarrow INT) were small and explained little variance on the dependent variable. This presumably is a Type I error issue (i.e., false positive) resulting from the large sample size. To probe this result further, a second structural test using 5% of the overall sample ($n = 380$) was performed. The model test again confirmed an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 129.34/df = 2.15$, $p = .000$, RMSEA = .057, SRMR = .049, CFI = .98, NFI = .96, TLI = .97); this time, with a chi-square in the appropriate range. However, the two path coefficients in question were not statistically significant ($p = .482$ and $p = .135$ respectively). Based on this result, we determined that Type I error resulting from a large sample was indeed the case (see Fig. 2 for the all coefficients). All hypotheses were supported except for H4.

In addition to the structural model tests, a mediation test provides support for the effects shown in Fig. 2. Hypothesis 3 stated that the perception of FIFA would mediate (at least partially) the SR familiarity \rightarrow event image relationship. According to Judd and Kenny (1981) there are three conditions that must be met for mediation to occur: (1) the direct effect of the exogenous variable on the mediating variable must be significant (which was confirmed), (2) the effect of the mediator on the endogenous variable must be significant (which was confirmed), and (3) when controlling for the mediator, the direct effect between the exogenous and endogenous variables will drop close to zero (for partial mediation) or be non-significant (for full mediation). Since the direct effect was non-significant, evidence of full mediation exists because 90% of the effect of FAM on IMG was mediated by perceived SR.

7. Discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of FIFA's 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program on 2010 World Cup visitors' attitudes toward FIFA, the image of the event, revisit intentions, and word-of-mouth intentions. To serve this purpose, image transfer related to sponsorship theory and the cognitive–affective model

Table 3
Means, standard deviations, internal consistencies, and correlations.

Construct	Abbr.	Mean	Standard deviation	α	Correlation matrix					
					FAM	SR	IMG	WOM	INT	
SR familiarity	FAM	3.66	1.30	.95	1.00					
FIFA SR perception	SR	3.58	.912	.93	.419**	1.00				
Event image ^a	IMG	4.27	.691	–	.164**	.228**	1.00			
Word-of-mouth	WOM	4.35	.620	.87	.040**	.149**	.285**	1.00		
Revisit intentions	INT	4.20	.733	.80	.098**	.168**	.225**	.535**	1.00	

Note. ** $p < .001$.

^a Single-item measure.

acted as theoretical guides. In total, five hypotheses were tested. Four were supported and one was rejected. **Hypothesis 1**, which stated that familiarity with FIFA's 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program will influence the perception of FIFA as a socially responsible organization, was supported. **Hypothesis 2**, which stated that the perception of FIFA as socially responsible will positively influence the image of the 2010 World Cup, was supported. **Hypothesis 3**, which stated that the positive disposition toward FIFA as socially responsible mediated the influence of program familiarity on event image, was also supported. **Hypothesis 4**, which stated that event image would influence revisit intentions, was not supported. Finally, **Hypothesis 5**, which stated that a positive event image will influence word-of-mouth intentions, was supported.

Support for **Hypothesis 1** underscores the influence of SR program familiarity on consumer attitudes and aligns with previous research, suggesting that familiarity of social variables can influence consumer attitudes. Although the results show that familiarity did not directly influence event image perceptions, this finding lends support for the cognitive–affective model where a favorable response was contingent on two conditions: (1) the World Cup visitor was familiar with FIFA's African programs (i.e., cognitive), and (2) the World Cup visitor held a positive socially responsible perception of FIFA as the event owner (i.e., affective). In other words, SR familiarity failed to predict a positive event image because this connection was only possible via the cognitive → affective causal link. This result identifies perceived SR as a potential route through which social responsibility is related to event image perceptions. As such, the significant familiarity → perception → event image causal chain suggests that FIFA's social responsibility influenced the perceived event image and is a pathway through which image is realized on the basis of an affective appraisal of a cognitive experience.

A growing body of literature has shown that responses to SR are subject to the attributions (i.e., perceived organizational motives) that consumers ascribe to a socially responsible initiative. This point was evidenced by Walker et al. (2010) whose findings point to the role of SR on visitor attitudes toward the IOC during the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. The authors demonstrated that patronage behaviors were subject to the perceived motives (i.e., values-driven, stakeholder-driven, strategic) of the IOC. Coupled with these findings, the current results show that event owners and sponsors, who wish to derive maximum image-related benefits from SR engagement, should first consider how they are perceived by their consumers.

The results also illustrate that the majority of World Cup visitors were quite familiar with the 'Win in Africa, with Africa' program. Thus, it appears that FIFA effectively communicated their SR message by providing details about how their organization has addressed certain social issues in South Africa. This potentially resulted from the overall popularity of football and the global interest in the event, which could have motivated more fans to access the Internet to learn more about the event and its associated programs. Nevertheless, it appears that when SR messages are

communicated, the reciprocal benefits to the event owner can be valuable, particularly for shaping the overall image of the event.

Since this was the first World Cup hosted by an African nation, the image of the event was associated with many pervasive images that include poverty, health issues, and overall limited national development. Such existing conditions may have been used by FIFA to illustrate how the organization could impart positive social change. It will be interesting to see if similar findings are associated with the 2016 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, another emerging economy with similar economic and social conditions. Certainly it appears that when one of the goals is positive attitude formation among event visitors, efforts to promote SR with the event should be encouraged. Moreover, such efforts are critical because the perception of FIFA as socially responsible influenced the visitor's event image perceptions, supporting **Hypothesis 2**. Perhaps this finding is best understood in terms of the idea that knowledge of an organization's social efforts can enhance consumer perceptions of a product (e.g., the World Cup). Moreover, support for **Hypothesis 3** regarding the mediating effect of FIFA perceptions emphasized the importance of positive attitude formation among event visitors, toward the event owner (in general) and the event (in particular). Furthermore, since sport tourists tend to perceive organizational aspects as part of an event's image (Kaplanidou, 2010), these aspects (if mismanaged) can influence sport tourists' event image perceptions. The latter finding implies that characteristics, programs, or initiatives associated with FIFA could also be considered part of the event and in all likelihood will influence consumer general perceptions of the event.

Another result that pertains to the lack of support for **Hypothesis 4** relates to the lack of influence of overall event image on intentions to revisit the destination. This, however, was not altogether surprising since previous research has noted that event image perceptions of the Olympic Games did not influence intentions to revisit the destination (see Kaplanidou, 2007). A potential explanation for this may not reside on whether the event image was perceived positively, but on the correspondence of the measure to predict a behavioral outcome. In other words, having a positive event image may be a more suitable (corresponding) measure for intentions to attend the next World Cup. However, given more recent evidence of a potential mediation of destination image perceptions influencing intent to revisit the destination (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007), and the influential role of event image on destination image (Kaplanidou, 2009), it is recommended that future research should examine destination image as a mediating variable between event image and revisit intentions for the destination for sport tourists.

Word-of-mouth and revisit intentions are commonly used as measures of loyalty in the tourism literature (Kim et al., 2001; Petrick, 2004a). Word-of-mouth is regarded as a primary source of information for the visitors' friends and relatives and revisit intentions directly signal ones affinity with a certain destination (Fesenmaier & Vogt, 1993). The current results reinforce how word-of-mouth intentions, on the basis of event image, signify both the

appeal of a tourist destination and an outcome of a positive event image. As examples, [Andreassen and Lindestad \(1998\)](#) maintained that image directly influenced word-of-mouth and [Lee et al. \(2005\)](#) found that word-of-mouth was predicted by experiencing a successful mega-event. Since one of the goals of hosting a mega-event is increased tourism after the event, and word-of-mouth is influential in promoting such an increase, the foregoing literature underscores the importance of considering perceptions of both the event and the event owner (i.e., FIFA). This finding carries important implications for the way tourism, sport event owners, and organizing committees should cooperate to leverage event legacies and work toward co-branding the event owner, the actual event, and the destination.

A final theoretical implication relates to the distinction of behavioral outcomes influenced by event image. Although the extant literature has treated word-of-mouth and intention to purchase under the umbrella of post experience evaluations, it is evident that event experience can influence the former and not necessarily the latter. Therefore, a differentiated variable seems to be a more appropriate approach to understand behaviors of sport tourists.

8. Conclusions

8.1. Recommendations

The results lead to a few practical recommendations. First, the level of SR familiarity was a key factor in enhancing visitor attitudes toward FIFA and the event. Therefore, promotional efforts aimed at influencing the attitudes of visitors should be implemented before, during, and after the event. Additionally, benefits from SR programming could assist in the transfer of outcomes that result from increased familiarity. FIFA should provide visitors with electronic platforms such as blogs or specialized Facebook applications to facilitate word-of-mouth activity, and evaluate the impact of this two-way engagement. For event organizers, successful event hosting is important for a positive event image formation. In collaboration with FIFA, it is recommended that future World Cup organizing committees utilize co-branding and co-programming strategies (e.g., teaming event offerings with promotional materials) to elicit or maintain a positive event image.

Second, the implications for revisit intentions should be subject to further examination. Willingness to recommend the destination is an influential concept that should be harnessed by event and destination marketing organizations. However, sport tourists' revisit intentions seem uncertain (i.e., at least in this context). Given the current sample of World Cup fans, perhaps respondents were more interested in attending the event than revisiting the destination, an idea that has been supported in past research ([Kaplanidou, 2007](#)).

It is recommended that future host nations examine the intentions to attend subsequent World Cup tournaments. Perhaps the patterns identified in non-sport tourism research, where revisit intentions seem to be influenced by other factors such as the travel motive novelty (i.e., see and experience something new), may also be relevant in sport tourism contexts. Alternatively, the sport itself may be a more powerful motive that supersedes the attraction of the destination. [Chalip, Green, and Vander Velden \(1998\)](#) suggested that mega sport events may have their own attributes distinct from those of the destination. Unlike the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup possesses one differentiating variable unlike other mega-events. For avid fans, who are possible sport tourists, intention to attend the next World Cup is related to the uncertainty that their team may or may not qualify. Hence, an examination of this 'uncertainty' variable certainly warrants further attention in the tourism literature.

8.2. Limitations and delimitations

Irrespective of the significant findings, this study is not without limitations. First, all the distributed questionnaires were in English, which may have delimited participation by non-English speaking visitors. The data collection across ten match sites was a complex undertaking, and while questionnaires in multiple languages would have been desirable, it was impractical given the geographically disparate host sites during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. While the sample characteristics suggest people from various nations were represented, it is acknowledged that others may have been precluded from the sample. In addition, due to the necessity to minimize questionnaire length to maximize the response rate, some concepts (e.g., event image) could have benefited from using multiple-items. However, a global measure of image is predicted by multi-item scales of cognitive and affective image ([Baloglu & McCleary, 1999](#)). Hence, a single-item measure was employed in this study.

9. Final thoughts

In quite possibly the only empirical study able to capture visitor perceptions of a FIFA World Cup at each host site, this study examined SR, event image, revisit and word-of-mouth intentions associated with hosting a mega sport event. While much of the existing research has focused on the event's impact on destination image, this study examined perceptions and images associated with the event owner and the connection to event image. Based on a comprehensive sampling approach, the findings support the growing importance of SR programs for international, non-governmental sport organizations. Notably, the creation and promotion of a SR program is an important driver of attitudes toward the event owner, and as an antecedent of event image, which significantly influenced word-of-mouth intentions. The importance of word-of-mouth, however, needs to be viewed as separate from revisit intentions. It appears that rather than focusing on the revisit intentions of sport tourists, it is prudent to examine intentions to attend the next event associated with the event owner. This means, for traveling sport fans, attributes associated with the sport itself may be more important than those of the host destination.

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