significance. As some of the benefits from these prosocial initiatives are positive attitudes toward the organization and an enhanced company image (Skudiene & Auruskeviciene, 2006), it follows that these highly regarded attributes are more likely to be incorporated into an employee’s self-concept.

**Hypothesis 2a**: Organization-focused prestige will be positively related to organizational identification for employees in professional sport organizations.

With regard to team-focused prestige, the sporting environment provides a number of ways in which teams are considered highly regarded; the most notable being team success. Criteria such as win-loss records and positions in the standings are readily available for employees to access from a whole host of platforms. As individuals often cognitively identify with a winner, and as team performance has previously been seen to predict team identification among fans, it seems that team success will also be positively related to employee identification with the team. Sports teams provide several prestigious elements for consideration.

**Hypothesis 2b**: Team-focused prestige will be positively related to team identification for employees in professional sport organizations.

**Distinctiveness**. Organizational distinctiveness refers to the degree to which an organization has distinguishing characteristics that set it apart from other comparable entities. Beyond supporting the sport team’s success, organizations also stress a variety of other more distinct elements such as providing superior entertainment value and helping sponsors grow their brands. By way of their philanthropic or charitable arms, many professional sport organizations have also elaborated on their missions to include an emphasis on various causes such as youth development and health and wellness. Sport organizations can also be seen as distinct through identifying symbols, such as emblems, logos, and their brand identity.

**Perceived fit**. Perceived fit refers to the perceived match between the values and norms of an organization and those of an employee. The main argument for perceived fit influencing identification is that individuals who recognize good fit will be more likely to also at least partially define themselves in terms of the organization.

**METHODOLOGY**

The participants for the current study were business operations employees from 107 randomly sampled organizations from Major League Baseball (MLB, 23), Major League Soccer (MLS, 14), the National Basketball Association (NBA, 23), the National Football League (NFL, 24), and the National Hockey League (NHL, 23). The participants in this study worked in departments with names such as accounting, finance, marketing, communications, public relations, sales, facilities, human resources, and information technology. The data were collected via online surveys sent to 10,308 employees. Five organizations from one particular sports market were excluded due to their participation in a concurrent research project. The participants were 66.9% male, 84.7% Caucasian, and had an average age of 36 years. The average organizational tenure was 3.6 years, with 83.3% of respondents being employed by their current organization for 10 years or less. With regard to league representation, 34% of the sample was from MLB, 22.3% from the NHL, 19.6% from the NBA, 18.3% from the NFL, and 5.8% from MLS.

This study used survey items that have been used extensively in the relevant literature and have been shown to be valid and reliable, assessing: prestige; distinctiveness