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# EXTENDED MODEL OF SPORT SPECTATOR GOAL-DIRECTED BEHAVIOR: THE ROLE OF EVENT PRESTIGE IN NONMAJOR SPORT EVENTS

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Although the importance of destinations' image has been explored in the extant literature, little is known about the influence of event prestige on spectators' intention to attend recurring sport events, especially in the case of nonmajor international events. Given the situation, the current study incorporated spectators' perception of event prestige on the basis of the Model of Goal-directed Behavior (MGB) as a research framework to investigate their behavioral intention to attend nonmajor sport events. An on-site survey was conducted for spectators ($N = 371$) who attended the 2016 William Jones Cup Tournament held in Taipei, Taiwan. The results revealed that attitude, subjective norm, positive anticipated emotion, negative anticipated emotion, and perceived behavioral control played significant roles in influencing spectators' desire to attend sport events. Moreover, event prestige and desire have significant influences on spectators' intention. Theoretical and practical implications of the study results were discussed.

**Key words: Event prestige; Goal-directed behavior; Recurring events; Spectator sport; Nonmajor sport events**

## Introduction

The topic of prestige has been widely investigated in the field of organizational behavior, stating members' beliefs regarding how outsiders view their organization (Smidts, Pruyn, & Van Riel, 2001). There are many issues with regard to the effect of perceived external prestige on employee-related outcomes, such as organizational identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), satisfaction (Kamasak, 2011), performance (Carmeli, 2004), and intentions to leave or join the organization (Ciftcioglu, 2010). In the marketing and hospitality literature, the concept of prestige has also been also investigated in the form of brand prestige in regard to its impact on consumer behavior, especially with luxurious brands and upscale services (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010). Similarly, the tourism literature has explored

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the role that destination image plays relating to perceived prestige of tourists' destination (Funk, Toohey, & Bruun, 2007). However, the main focus of the destination image studies is on the destination as a brand, as opposed to the prestige of the (sport) events being held in a destination.

Consistent with the important roles of perception of prestige on those stakeholders, the perceived prestige of an event has also been identified as a significant factor affecting the event participants' intention and behavior. In the context of participation-based events or event volunteerism, the concept of event's prestige has also been applied by scholars of sport-related event management to investigate its influences on participants' behavioral intention, including: participants' willingness to donate to a charity sport event (Bennett, Mousley, Kitchin, & Ali-Choudhury, 2007), intentions to participate in marathon events (S. Kim, Liu, & Love, 2015, 2016), active sport tourists' participation (Getz & McConnell, 2011), and volunteers' satisfaction, commitment, and intention to return (Bang, Lee, & Swart, 2014).

In the context of spectator sport events, it has been also argued that sports spectators may be especially attracted to and associated with a "hallmark" sport event due to its well-known prestige (Bennett et al., 2007). Attendees (i.e., spectators) may feel pride simply through attending a high-status event because the prestige of the event can be transferred psychologically to an individual's self-esteem and self-identity (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). For example, the FIFA World Cup, one of the world's most highly publicized sport events, could attract more individuals to attend the event due to its prestigious status. They would also feel proud of being part of the reputed event, as being associated with the event as spectators strengthens their feelings of self-worth to "basking in reflected glory (BIRGing)" (Smidts et al., 2001).

Although the effect of event prestige has been investigated in the context of sport and event management, it should be noted that event prestige has not been investigated with regard to smaller scale international sport events. Unlike major sport events, people have varying levels of perceived prestige in the event depending on their personal preferences. In comparison to major events, hosting a nonmajor event may be a better way to generate more sustainable outcomes for the host cities (Djaballah, Hautbois, & Desbordes, 2015). Moreover, the effect of nonmajor events on a recurring basis might be even greater due to their sustainable potential to the local communities and marketability to the target and niche markets (Giampiccoli, Lee, & Nauright, 2015). Compared to major sport events, nonmajor events are more cost-effective for the host communities to offer tourist attractions due to its annual basis (Agha & Taks, 2015). Therefore, the annual-based nonmajor sport event should work more closely with tourism agencies to actively promote the event and offer more information about the destination to attract potential sport fans and tourists.

Therefore, to understand how an event's prestige affects spectators' attendance to a recurring nonmajor sport event, the present research incorporated spectators' perception of event prestige based on the model of goal-directed behavior (MGB) to attain a better understanding of spectators' decision-making process. In investigating the individual intention, the application of the MGB could be especially meaningful, as the MGB simultaneously takes not only volitional and nonvolitional processes but also motivational, affective, and habitual processes, providing more precise predictions of human decisions and behavior (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001, 2004). From the theoretical perspective, the findings of this study could enhance the understanding of spectators' intention to attend a nonmajor international sport event by extending the MGB. From a practical perspective, the results of the study provide event managers with effective marketing strategies to attract more event spectators and better satisfy their needs.

Accordingly, the current study incorporated spectators' perception of event prestige on the basis of MGB as a research framework to investigate their behavioral intention to attend nonmajor sport events. To achieve the research purpose, this article is structured as follows. The next section deals with literature review and hypotheses development. Then the research method is presented, with full details of participants and procedure in the research, and of the survey instrument and data analyses used. Results are then presented, with thorough assessments of the measurement and structural model. Finally, results are discussed, and implications are drawn.

## Literature Review and Hypotheses

### *Model of Goal-Related Behavior*

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) and the theory of reasoned action (TRA) are representative social-psychological theories extensively employed to predict an individual's intention/behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Y-J. Lee, Won, & Bang, 2014). The TRA is an attitude theory assuming that an individual's decision to engage in a particular rational behavior is formed through a volitional process (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). More specifically, the TRA suggests that an individual's volitional behavior is predicted by his/her intention to perform the behavior, and this intention is determined by his/her attitude toward the behavior and subjective norm (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). However, the TRA did not consider an individual's nonvolitional situations, including time, money, and opportunity that limit actual behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). To address the limitation of TRA, the TPB was proposed by adding a nonvolitional variable "perceived behavioral control" to increase the predictive power of TRA. The TPB emphasized that individuals' actual behavior is determined by not only attitude and subjective norm (i.e., social pressure) but also the perception of behavioral control. Therefore, the TPB is widely recognized as more appropriate to understanding complex human behavior in comparison with the TRA (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002).

However, it has been argued that the TPB did not capture people's past behavior as well as motivational and affective components of human behavior (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001, 2004). Thus, Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) proposed the MGB to address the limitation of TPB and argued that habitual, motivational, and affective processes should be taken into consideration in the social psychological model to better comprehend human behavior. Consequently, the MGB adds motivational (desire), affective (positive and negative anticipated emotion), and habitual process (past behavior) into the TPB. The MGB suggests that the intention to perform a particular behavior is primarily motivated by the desire to perform the behavior. Individuals' desire is determined by attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and anticipated emotions. Moreover, past behavior or habits are assumed to be a significant predictor of desire, intention, and actual behavior as individuals are likely to form favorable desires and intentions about behaviors they have frequently performed in the past (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). More specifically, desire mediates the influence of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and anticipated emotions on the behavioral intention in the MGB.

The MGB has been reported to explain significantly greater amounts of variance in individuals' intention and behavior compared to the TPB (Esposito, van Bavel, Baranowski, & Duch-Brown, 2016). Accordingly, the MGB has been recently used as a base theory to explain individuals' behavioral intention in the various domains, such as tourist behavior (Meng & Han, 2016; Park, Lee, & Peters, 2017; Song, Lee, Reisinger, & Xu, 2016; Song, You, Reisinger, Lee, & Lee, 2014), online shopping behavior (Chiu, Kim, & Won, 2018), mobile usage (M. J. Kim & Preis, 2016), health behavior (Hingle et al., 2012), golfers' behavioral intention (Han & Hwang, 2014), and physical activity intentions (Esposito et al., 2016). Although sporadic studies applied TPB to investigate event spectators' participation in sport events (Cheng, Chen, Chen, & Lu, 2012; Cunningham & Kwon, 2003), it is surprising that the MGB has not been used to examine event spectators' behavior so far.

Moreover, MGB may be a more appropriate framework for explaining spectators' behavior as MGB incorporates emotional factors (i.e., positive and negative emotions). Spectators' attendance to a sporting event involves various emotional reactions. For example, spectators may have positive emotions, such as happiness, satisfaction, and pleasure, increased following a difficult win. On the other hand, they may also feel negative emotions, such as feeling anger, sadness, discouragement, and irritability, increased following a close loss (Wann, Dolan, MeGeorge, & Allison, 1994). Therefore, these positive and negative emotions play a significant role in influencing their intention to attend a sport event (Foroughi, Nikbin, Hyun, & Iranmanesh, 2016). Applying MGB can address the emotional factors in spectators' decision-making process, which are often overlooked by previous studies (Cheng et al., 2012; Cunningham & Kwon, 2003). Given the MGB's advantage of predicting human behavior and the gap in the literature, this study adopted the

MGB to investigate event spectators' attendance to a nonmajor sport event.

### *Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavior Control, and Desire*

Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control have been verified as important factors influencing individuals' decision-making formation (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Conner & Armitage, 1998; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). Particularly, an attitude toward a behavior refers to the degree to which an individual has a favorable/unfavorable evaluation of performing a certain behavior. Individuals tend to have a positive attitude when the outcomes of a certain behavior are positively evaluated and therefore have a stronger attitude to perform this behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). Subjective norm is the social pressure perceived by significant others when engaging in a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). Studies revealed that people are likely to consider and comply with the opinions of other people (e.g., peers, family, and colleagues) when performing a certain behavior. Also, perceived behavioral control is a nonvolitional factor that reflects an individual's ability and confidence to perform a behavior. An individual's ability and confidence are determined by whether he or she has sufficient opportunities (e.g., time) or resources (e.g., money) to perform that behavior. According to TPB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are primary predictors of an individual's intention (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). In MGB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control affect behavioral intention indirectly through desire toward a certain behavior (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). More specifically, the desire, the antecedent state of intention, was added in MGB in order to strengthen the predictive power in explaining intention (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). Also, desire serves as a significant predictor of intention and mediates the effects of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and anticipated emotions on behavioral intention, representing the most critical role in MGB.

Studies applying MGB across various domains also revealed that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control were significant factors in the formation of desire (Choi & Park, 2017; Esposito et al., 2016; Han & Ryu, 2012; Meng & Han, 2016). For instance, Choi and Park (2017) found that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are the most significant factors influencing duty-free shop users' desire to purchase duty-free products. Moreover, Han and Ryu (2012) found that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control played a critical role in the formation of repatronage intention through desire in the context of restaurant services. Hence, based on the literature review, this study proposed the following hypotheses in the context of spectator sports.

**H1:** Attitude will have a positive influence on desire.
**H2:** Subjective norms will have a positive influence on their desire.
**H3:** Perceived behavioral control will have a positive influence on desire.

### *Relationships Between Anticipated Emotions and Desire*

Individuals' behavior is usually influenced by anticipated emotional consequences (Bagozzi, Baumgartner, & Pieters, 1998). Anticipated emotion is defined as "predictions of outcome's emotional consequences or belief about one's own emotional responses to future outcomes" (Bagozzi, Belanche, Casaló, & Flavián, 2016, p. 630). There are two types of emotions: positive and negative anticipated emotions. For example, individuals perceive positive emotions when they have a high level of the expected psychological benefits experienced by performing a specific behavior. On the other hand, individuals feel negative emotions when they have a high level of expected psychological damages derived from not performing the behavior. These two anticipated emotional expectations have influences on individuals' decision-making process (Bagozzi et al., 1998). In the decision-making process, anticipated emotions play the role of the hedonic motive in promoting positive outcomes and avoiding negative outcomes (Leone, Perugini, & Ercolani, 2004), Moreover, anticipated emotions are critical predictors of desire and intention (Bagozzi et al., 1998; Bagozzi et al., 2016; Leone et al., 2004; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001).

Empirical studies revealed that two anticipated emotions are critical to forming an individual's desire to perform a behavior (Bagozzi & Dholakia,

2006; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). In particular, individuals' anticipated emotions are important especially for certain behaviors linked to hedonic experiences, such as overseas travel or participation in festivals. For example, S. Lee, Song, Lee, and Petrick (2018) found that both positive and negative anticipated emotions have significant influences on K-pop culture fans' desire to visit Korea. Also, Song et al. (2014) found that visitors' anticipated emotions significantly affects their desire to attend an Oriental medicine festival. Accordingly, anticipated emotions for a target behavior are hypothesized to significantly influence the individuals' desire-related behavior of attending a nonmajor sport event.

**H4:** Positive anticipated emotion will have a positive influence on desire.
**H5:** Negative anticipated emotion will have a negative influence on desire.

### *Frequency of Past Behavior, Desire, and Intention*

The frequency of past behavior has been known as a critical factor that can influence an individual's decision-making process. Also, frequency of past behavior is usually considered to be a proxy of habit. If an individual frequently and habitually performs a certain behavior, it will enhance his/her desire and behavioral intentions (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). Individuals with a higher frequency of past behavior might have a higher level of familiarity than those who have no or limited past behavior (Marks & Olson, 1981). Additionally, desires are thought to be very important in the first step of human actions and argued to lead to intentions to perform a behavior (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001, 2004). According to Perugini and Bagozzi (2004), desires are distinct from intentions and serve as personal motivation, which is the proximal element leading to intention formation.

The relationships between these three variables can be found in many studies using MGB (e.g., M. J. Kim & Preis, 2016; Meng & Han, 2016; Park et al., 2017). For instance, Park et al. (2017) found that tourists' past behavior of visiting a nature-based tourism destination has a significant impact on their desires and intentions to revisit. Also, a study by Meng and Han (2016) showed that past experience of bike traveling was a powerful predictor of bicycle travelers' desire and behavioral intention. As such, this study posited the following hypotheses:

**H6:** Frequency of past behavior will have a positive influence on desire.
**H7:** Frequency of past behavior will have a positive influence on intention.
**H8:** Desire will have a positive influence on intention.

### *Event Prestige*

An event's prestige, as mentioned above, refers to the status of an event that is consequent to its history, objectives, and preexisting public image and prestige in the relevant sport (S. Kim et al., 2015). According to the mere exposure effect proposed by Zajonc (1968), individuals are more likely to prefer well-known organizations in the community as the heightened exposure enhances individuals' attitude toward the organizations. The higher reputed events usually have more media exposure than lower reputed events. Based on the mere exposure effect, an individual's familiarity with the higher reputed events and its prominent history and tradition may positively affect his/her desire for participation in the event. Therefore, sport events with a higher level of reputation may have an advantage in attracting spectators compared to other sport events (S. Kim et al., 2015). Specifically, the status of a sport event was positively associated with individuals' attitudes and intentions to not only participate in but also spectate the event (Bennett et al., 2007).

The impact of event prestige can also be explained by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which proposed that individuals tend to classify themselves and others into various categories, such as membership or affiliation. People's perception of how outsiders view their category should influence their self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In the context of spectator sports, spectators tend to reveal their membership in a particular social category by associating with a sport team, thereby reinforcing a desired social identity (Carlson, Donavan, & Cumiskey, 2009). Therefore, individuals may be especially attracted to a certain sport event with

high prestige as they want to form a notable identity by attending the sport event (Bang et al., 2014).

According to Bennett et al.'s (2007) model of sports participation motivation, the status of a sport event would affect individuals' participation decisions. Therefore, it can be argued that the event's prestige can stimulate spectators' desire and intention to attend a sport event as they are likely to increase their own feelings of self-worth and self-esteem through the experience of attending a prestigious event (Bennett et al., 2007; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003; Smidts et al., 2001). Aligning with the model of Bennett et al. (2007), empirical evidence from many studies suggested the positive influence of event prestige on individuals' participation decisions (S. Kim et al., 2015, 2016). Hence, it can be inferred that the sporting event with high prestige may influence spectators' desire and intention to attend the event. In this context, the following hypotheses were proposed (see Fig. 1):

**H9:** Event prestige has a positive influence on desire.

**H10:** Event prestige has a positive influence on behavioral intention.

## Method

### *Participants and Procedure*

The participants were collected from the William Jones Cup, an international basketball tournament held annually since 1977 in Taipei, Taiwan. This event was named in honor of a basketball promoter Renato William Jones, one of the founders of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). It is one of the most reputed and popular sport events held in Taiwan annually. Moreover, due to the impediments from Mainland China, Taiwan has been suffering several failures of major event bids since 1990, such as Asian Games and Universiade (Chu, 2017). Thus, Taiwan endeavors to attract and hold small-scale international sport events (e.g., William Jones Cup) to increase revenue, spirit, and tourist awareness of the local community. An on-site survey was conducted for spectators who attended the men's or women's tournament of the 2016 William Jones Cup held in Xinzhuang Gymnasium, New Taipei City throughout the period between July 23 and August 7, 2016. A total of 400 respondents were invited to fill out the questionnaire. After the refinement processes, 29 invalid

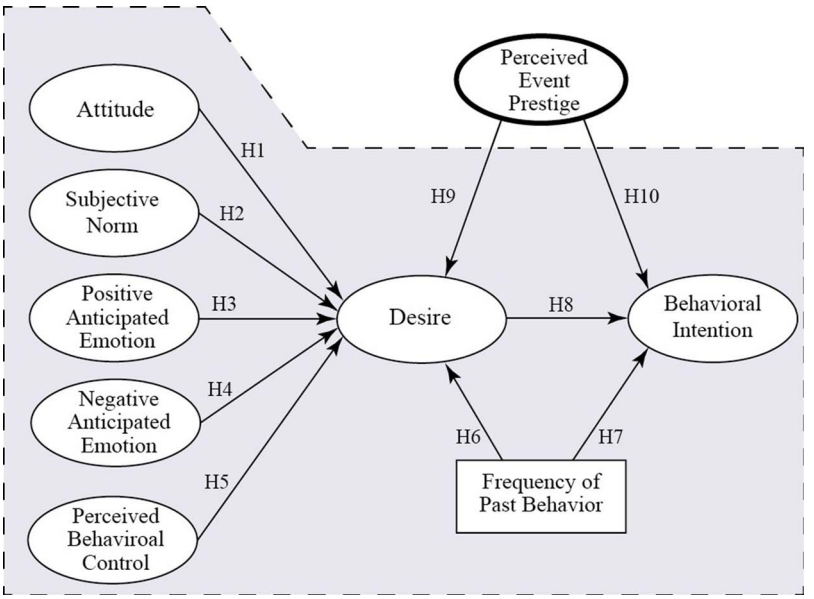


*Figure 1.* Conceptual model (the variables in the shaded area correspond to the basic components of the MGB and the bold oval is the additional construct of perceived event prestige).

questionnaires were eliminated due to incomplete responses. Eventually, 371 questionnaires were used for further analysis. Among the 371 respondents, most of them were male respondents (65.2%, $n = 242$) between the ages of 21 to 30 years (48.5%, $n = 180$). Table 1 provides a detailed demographic profile of the participants.

### *Measures*

The survey items were generated based on an extensive review of the literature concerning MGB and event prestige. Moreover, all constructs were adapted to fit the context of the William Jones Cup basketball tournament setting. The MGB-specific constructs were modified and adopted from early studies (Meng & Han, 2016; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Song et al., 2016): attitude (six items), subjective norm (four items), perceived behavioral control (four items), positive anticipated emotion (four items), negative anticipated emotion (four items), desire (four items), and behavioral intention (five items).

In particular, it should be noted that the scale of negative anticipated emotion included reversed items beginning with "If I can't reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be . . ." In addition, event prestige was measured by four items proposed by S. Kim et al. (2015). Finally, the frequency of past behavior was asked with a single item (i.e., "How many times have you attended William Jones Cup tournament?"). These items were translated into Chinese using the usual method of translation and back translation (Brislin, 1970). The Chinese version instrument was also carefully reviewed by four sport management experts and a small group of college students to ensure its face validity. All items except the frequency of past behavior were assessed on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). Specifically, reverse coding was conducted for the scale items of negative anticipated emotion. Lastly, the frequency of past behavior was coded as a continuous variable.

Table 1
Demographic Information of Respondents

| Characteristics | *n* (%) |
|---|---|
| Gender | |
| Male | 242 (65.2) |
| Female | 129 (34.8) |
| Age | |
| ≤20 | 72 (19.4) |
| 21–30 | 180 (48.5) |
| 31–40 | 77 (10.8) |
| ≥41 | 42 (11.3) |
| Past experience of attending William Jones Cup | |
| First time | 115 (31.0) |
| 2 times | 84 (22.6) |
| 3 times | 74 (19.9) |
| 4 times | 32 (8.6) |
| >5 times | 66 (17.9) |

### *Data Analysis*

A preliminary test was initially conducted using SPSS 20.0. Descriptive statistics were carried out to scrutinize the normality assumption of the data. Then the data analysis proceeded in two stages as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first stage, reliability and validity of the measures were tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). In the second stage, a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was employed to test the proposed hypotheses. With the structural model analysis, this study utilized the standard factor loading and *t*-value of the path coefficient to determine the path strengths and significance levels of the latent variables. The analyses of CFA and SEM were conducted using Amos 20.0.

## Results

### *Preliminary Test*

The results of the descriptive statistics revealed no missing value, outliers, or invalid value. The normality of the data was examined using skewness and kurtosis statistics to test the violation of the assumption required in SEM. Skewness statistics of all items ranged within the ±1.00 cut-off suggested by Kline (2010). Kurtosis values of all items were smaller than the 3 criterion suggested by Byrne (2010). The results of skewness and kurtosis statistics of all items supported the normality for SEM analysis.

*Measurement Model*

The psychometric properties of the measurement model were examined using a CFA. The results revealed that the measurement model fit the data well: $\chi^2(566) = 1{,}517.13$, $\chi^2/df = 2.68$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.07 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999). As a next step, the reliability of measures was evaluated by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients and composite reliability (CR). As reported in Table 2, the results showed that the scale possessed good reliability as the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of all constructs were acceptably high, varying from 0.90 to 0.97 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), and the values of CR ranged from 0.91 to 0.97, which

Table 2
Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

| Constructs/Items | Factor Loading |
|---|---|
| **Attitude** (AVE = 0.96, CR = 0.82, α = 0.96) | |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is good. | 0.873 |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is pleasant. | 0.924 |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is joyful. | 0.953 |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is exciting | 0.872 |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is attractive | 0.869 |
| I think that attending the William Jones Cup is enjoyable. | 0.923 |
| **Subjective norm** (AVE = 0.92, CR = 0.75, α = 0.91) | |
| Most people who are important to me agree with that I attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.894 |
| Most people who are important to me support that I attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.953 |
| Most people who are important to me understand that I attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.903 |
| Most people who are important to me recommend that I attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.699 |
| **Positive anticipated emotion** (AVE = 0.97, CR = 0.90, α = 0.97) | |
| If I reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be excited. | 0.952 |
| If I reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be glad. | 0.928 |
| If I reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be satisfied. | 0.953 |
| If I reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be happy. | 0.953 |
| **Negative anticipated emotion** (AVE = 0.95, CR = 0.81, α = 0.95) | |
| If I can't reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be disappointed. | 0.888 |
| If I can't reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be worried. | 0.897 |
| If I can't reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be sad. | 0.950 |
| If I can't reattend the William Jones Cup, I will be angry. | 0.867 |
| **Perceived behavioral control** (AVE = 0.91, CR = 0.65, α = 0.90) | |
| Whether or not I attend the William Jones Cup is completely up to me. | 0.789 |
| If I want I can attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.868 |
| I am capable of attending the William Jones Cup. | 0.926 |
| I have enough resource (money) to attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.885 |
| I have enough time/opportunities to attend the William Jones Cup. | 0.596 |
| **Desire** (AVE = 0.93, CR = 0.76, α = 0.92) | |
| I want to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.924 |
| I desire to re-attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.920 |
| I hope to reattend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.962 |
| I want to have an unforgettable memory when attending the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.643 |
| **Behavioral intention** (AVE = 0.94, CR = 0.77, α = 0.94) | |
| I am planning to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.930 |
| I intend to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.924 |
| I will make an effort to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.837 |
| I will certainly spend time and money to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.836 |
| I am willing to attend the William Jones Cup in the future. | 0.823 |
| **Perceived event prestige** (AVE = 0.93, CR = 0.77, α = 0.93) | |
| The William Jones Cup was highly ranked by people who follow basketball. | 0.815 |
| The William Jones Cup was a highly prestigious event. | 0.932 |
| The William Jones Cup has a good reputation among people who follow basketball. | 0.907 |
| The William Jones Cup has a good reputation in my community. | 0.840 |

fulfilled the criterion (0.70) suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988).

Furthermore, the construct validity of measures was examined calculating convergent and discriminant validity. All factor loadings of the measures were highly significant ($p < 0.01$), ranging from 0.60 to 0.95. The AVE values were all greater than 0.50, fulfilling the criterion suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Thus, convergent validity was supported. Also, discriminant validity is established when the AVE square roots are greater than interconstruct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As reported in Table 3, the intercorrelation coefficients (from 0.19 to 0.79) were less than the AVE square roots for individual variables (ranging from 0.82 to 0.95), supporting the discriminant validity. Overall, the measurement model exhibited good psychometric properties.

### *Comparison of MGB and Extended MGB*

The original MGB and extended MGB were compared using the explanatory power of each model (Table 4). When compared to the original MGB, the extended MGB improved $R^2$ on desire from 0.753 to 0.756 and $R^2$ on desire from 0.806 to 0.816 by including event prestige. Chi-square tests indicated that there was a significant difference between the two models: $\Delta\chi^2(132) = 353.453$, $p < 0.001$. Therefore, the extended MGB including event prestige performed better than the MGB in explaining spectators' desire and behavioral intentions.

### *Hypothesis Testing*

As presented in Figure 2, the proposed structural model fit the data well: $\chi^2(610) = 1{,}737.97$, $\chi^2/df = 2.85$, CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.07 (Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999). In the MGB, attitude ($\beta_{ATT\rightarrow DE} = 0.27$, $t = 4.57$, $p < 0.001$), subjective norm ($\beta_{SN\rightarrow DE} = 0.18$, $t = 3.84$, $p < 0.001$), positive anticipated emotion ($\beta_{PAE\rightarrow DE} = 0.34$, $t = 6.64$, $p < 0.001$), negative anticipated emotion ($\beta_{NAE\rightarrow DE} = -0.12$, $t = -2.69$, $p < 0.01$), and perceived behavioral control ($\beta_{PBC\rightarrow DE} = 0.19$, $t = 4.57$, $p < 0.001$) have significant influences on desire, supporting H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5. Moreover, desire ($\beta_{DE\rightarrow BI} = 0.89$, $t = 18.82$, $p < 0.001$) and frequency of past behavior ($\beta_{FPB\rightarrow BI} = 0.09$, $t = 2.42$, $p < 0.05$) have significant influences on behavioral intention, supporting H7 and H8. However, the path from the frequency of past behavior to desire is statistically insignificant ($\beta_{FPB\rightarrow DES} = 0.02$, $t = 1.51$, $p = 0.132$), and thus H7 was not supported. In addition, event prestige has positive influences on behavioral intention ($\beta_{EP\rightarrow BI} = 0.13$, $t = 3.19$, $p < 0.01$) but not on desire ($\beta_{EP\rightarrow DES} = 0.00$, $t = 0.12$, $p = 0.906$). Hence, H10 was supported, but H9 was not supported.

### *Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects on Behavioral Intention*

According to Kline (2010), estimating the total effect, the sum of direct and indirect effects among constructs, is a critical procedure to interpret all changes, including mediating effects, from an

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, and Discriminant Validity

| Constructs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. ATT | **0.903** | | | | | | | |
| 2. SN | 0.716 | **0.868** | | | | | | |
| 3. PCB | 0.641 | 0.577 | **0.821** | | | | | |
| 4. PAE | 0.779 | 0.638 | 0.530 | **0.947** | | | | |
| 5. NAE | −0.286 | −0.331 | −0.192 | −0.350 | **0.901** | | | |
| 6. DES | 0.791 | 0.707 | 0.644 | 0.776 | −0.364 | **0.872** | | |
| 7. BI | 0.744 | 0.733 | 0.643 | 0.728 | −0.401 | 0.794 | **0.878** | |
| 8. EP | 0.488 | 0.446 | 0.344 | 0.494 | −0.326 | 0.462 | 0.490 | **0.875** |
| Mean | 5.948 | 5.411 | 5.979 | 5.841 | 2.865 | 5.898 | 5.661 | 4.769 |
| *SD* | 1.021 | 1.153 | 0.986 | 1.062 | 1.474 | 1.057 | 1.138 | 1.173 |

*Note*: ATT = Attitude; SN = Subjective norm; PCB = Perceived behavioral control; PAE = Positive anticipated emotion; NAE: Negative anticipated emotion; DES: Desire; BI: Behavioral intention; EP: Event prestige. Bold diagonal elements are square root of AVE and off-diagonal elements are interconstruct correlations.

Table 4
Comparison of the MGB and Extended MGB

| | $\chi^2$ | *df* | CMIN/*df* | NFI | CFI | RMSEA | $R^2$ for Desire | $R^2$ for Intention |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MGB | 1384.519 | 478 | 2.896 | 0.930 | 0.937 | 0.072 | 0.753 | 0.806 |
| Extended MGB | 1737.972 | 610 | 2.849 | 0.922 | 0.929 | 0.072 | 0.756 | 0.816 |
| Suggested value | | | <3.0 | >0.90 | >0.90 | <0.08 | | |

independent variable to a dependent variable. Thus, the total effect of the study's variables on behavioral intention was examined. As presented in Table 5, desire was found to be the most important factor, with the strongest total impact (0.89) on behavioral intention, followed by positive anticipated emotion (0.30), attitude (0.24), perceived behavioral control (0.17), subjective norm (0.16), event prestige (0.14), frequency of past behavior (0.11), and negative anticipated emotion (−0.11).

## Discussion

Extant literature has paid little attention to the role of event prestige in event spectators' decision-making process in the context of recurring nonmajor sport events. To address the gap in the literature, the primary purpose of this study was to examine the role of event prestige in spectators' intention to attend sport events by applying the MGB, a theoretically more advanced model than TRA and TPB. The results of this study demonstrated that attitude, subjective norm, positive anticipated emotion, negative anticipated emotion, and perceived behavioral control play significant roles in influencing spectators' desire to attend sport events. Moreover, event prestige and desire have significant influences on spectators' intention to attend sport events. The findings of this study have theoretical and practical implications in several ways. The details and implications of these findings are discussed below.

### *Theoretical Implication*

First, the extended MGB incorporated with event prestige contributed to explaining more variance

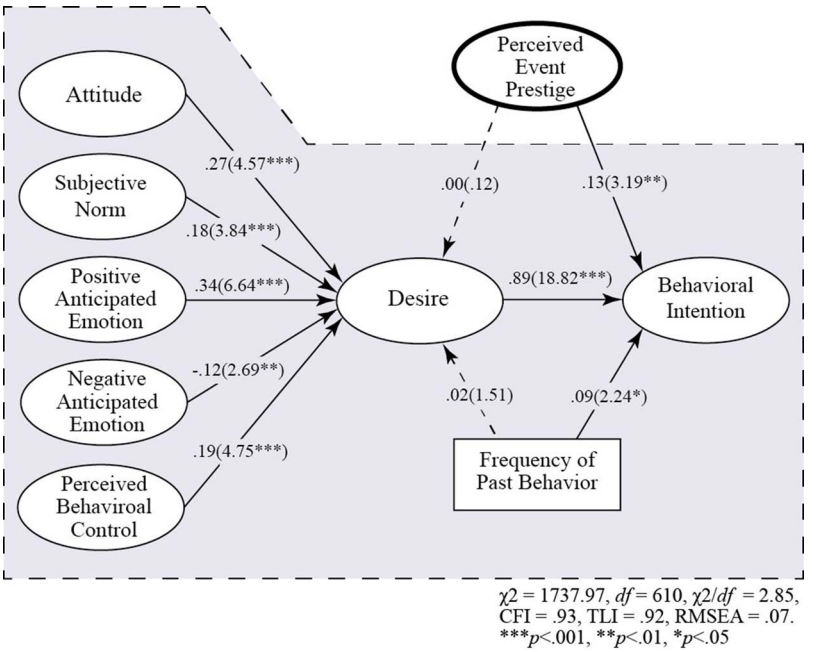


*Figure 2.* Conceptual model with path coefficients.

Table 5
Results of Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects on Behavioral Intention

| | Direct Effects: BI | Indirect Effects: BI | Total Effects: BI |
|---|---|---|---|
| ATT | – | 0.24** | 0.24** |
| SN | – | 0.16** | 0.16** |
| PAE | – | 0.30*** | 0.30*** |
| NAE | – | −0.11* | −0.11* |
| PBC | – | 0.17** | 0.17*** |
| DE | 0.89*** | – | 0.89*** |
| FPB | 0.09* | 0.02 | 0.11** |
| EP | 0.13** | 0.01 | 0.14** |

*Note*: BI: Behavioral Intention; ATT = Attitude; SN = Subjective norm; PAE = Positive anticipated emotion; NAE: = Negative anticipated emotion; PCB = Perceived behavioral control; DE: Desire; FPB = Frequency of past behavior; EP: Event prestige.
*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$

($R^2 = 0.816$) in spectators' intention of game attendance than did the original MGB, indicating the importance of event prestige in spectators' decision-making, even in the nonmajor sport event context. To better understand behavioral intention, some scholars have suggested the necessity for a revision or extension of the existing sociopsychological theories (e.g., TPB or MGB) by adding additional constructs (e.g., event prestige) in specific contexts (Ajzen, 1991; Conner & Armitage, 1998; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). By doing so, it broadens and deepens a theory, which can improve the predictive power of human behavior in specific contexts. For example, Song et al. (2016) examined Chinese tourists' travel intention by adding a variable visa exemption in the MGB. Their findings support the position that adding an additional variable in the MGB can help researchers to comprehend tourists' behavior. In a similar vein, this finding provided empirical evidence to support the incorporation of the additional variable—event prestige—in the MGB.

Second, although the linkage between the event prestige and spectators' desire was not found, it revealed that event prestige was a significant predictor of spectators' intention to attend prestigious sport events. This is in accord with the results of previous studies, which tested the relationship between event prestige and individuals' intentions of volunteering and participating in sport events (Bang et al., 2014; Bennett et al., 2007; S. Kim et al., 2015, 2016). This finding also emphasizes the role of event prestige in spectators' decision-making process. According to Bennett et al. (2007), event prestige is the sport-related motive that individuals psychologically identify themselves with a high-status sport event. Thus, spectators have a higher level of preference for attending prestigious sport events, confirming Zajonc's (1968) exposure–attitude hypothesis. However, it should be noted that event prestige has no significant influence on desire. It may be attributed to the distinct role of desire in the decision-making process. Desire is considered a state of mind that serves as a personal motivation less connected to action (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). Therefore, desire acts as a predictor of behavioral intention like event prestige (Bennett et al., 2007). Moreover, the link between event prestige and behavioral intention indicates that the prestige of an event is a predictor more connected to action (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004).

Third, among the antecedents of desires, positive anticipated emotion was the most significant determinant of desire, which was the most powerful predictor of reattending intention at the same time. Also, positive anticipated emotion has significant total impact on spectators' behavioral intention (0.30). These findings are consistent with most of the previous studies in the domain of tourism (e.g., Meng & Han, 2016; Song et al., 2016), stressing the significant role of positive anticipated emotion in influencing sport event attendance (Foroughi et al., 2016). The importance of positive anticipated emotion for spectators indicates that their desire to attend a sport event is mainly due to emotional rather than cognitive factors (Bagozzi et al., 1998).

Because watching a sport event is generally a highly emotional activity, spectators are more likely to be motivated by a high expectation of experiencing the excitement during the sport event, which reflects their emotional decision-making (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014). It is worth noting that these findings would not have been unraveled if the TPB, which consists of only cognitive factors influencing individual behavior, had been employed. Previous studies using the TPB might be insufficient for explaining spectators' intention to attend a sport event (e.g., Cheng et al., 2012; Cunningham & Kwon, 2003). Thus, this study using the MGB provides a better way to predict the intricate human behavior and deepen the understanding of spectators' attendance behavior to sport events.

Fourth, event spectators' attitude is another significant factor determining the desire to attend the event, consistent with the previous studies investigating tourists' behavior of attending annual festival events (Song et al., 2014). A positive attitude can be considered a trigger for an actual behavior (Leone, Perugini, & Ercolani, 1999). More specifically, an attitude toward a certain behavior reflects the extent to which an individual has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of engaging in the actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, an individual would have a strong desire to engage in a specific behavior when he/she positively evaluates the expected outcomes of that behavior (Leone et al., 1999). In this study, spectators have a positive attitude toward the sport event because they feel pleasantness and excitement. This attitude can lead to a desire to attend the sporting event, which consequently influences behavioral intention.

### *Practical Implications*

In addition, the findings of this study provide several practical implications expounding how to manage sport events successfully. First, because spectators' desire to attend a sport event significantly affects their intention and positive anticipated emotion is the most predictive antecedent of their desire, the management, and implementation of a sport event need to arouse the emotion and passion of spectators. In order to do this, event organizers need to invite highly competitive teams from different nations to provide exciting matches and offer various entertaining activates for attendees to participate in the stadium during the break time between quarters. Second, the event organizers should make continuous efforts to develop a sense of prestige toward the event in the community by focusing on its history, goals, success, and contribution to the sport. In addition, the event organizer should also foster awareness of the event in the community through effective marketing strategies by producing reviewing videos of past events or introducing each team's background or star player's story. In this way, the people who are not familiar with this event will gain more awareness of it and thus have a higher chance of attending the event.

### *Limitation and Future Research*

Although this study provides several insightful implications, some limitations should be addressed in future studies. First, because this study was conducted to test spectators' behavior of attending the annual sport event, the results may not be generalized to other sport events such as professional sports events or college sports events. Second, William Jones Cup tournament was selected as the study context to explore the influence of event prestige. Although the William Jones Cup tournament is a good example of a recurring nonmajor international sport event, future studies should test the applicability of the MGB model and event prestige in other sport and cultural contexts. Third, as the additional variable (i.e., event prestige) incorporated in the MGB successfully explain spectators' behavior, future studies may consider other important variables not considered in the proposed model, such as identification or perceived value. Hence, future studies can incorporate additional critical constructs in order to understand more comprehensively spectators' decision-making process. Finally, the current study did not examine the influence of event prestige on spectators' intention in terms of the type of spectators (e.g., fan identification or sports involvement). It is also worth noting that environmental factors (e.g., the prestige of event) are likely to have more impacts on people in developing certain attitudes toward certain activities at the early stages of sports involvement (Funk & James, 2001). For example, S. Kim et al. (2016) found that the intention to return for a future event

was influenced by the prestige of the event only for less committed participants. Therefore, future studies could be done based on the type of spectators, so marketing managers could prepare marketing strategies based on target segments.

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