Psychology & Marketing

WILEY

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Experiential Engagement: A Scale for Experiential Contexts

Adria Mankute[1] | T. Bettina Cornwell[1] | Ravi Pappu[2] | Jiao Zhang[1]

[1]Lundquist College of Business, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, USA | [2]UQ Business School, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Correspondence: T. Bettina Cornwell (tbc@uoregon.edu)

Received: 29 January 2025 | **Revised:** 30 July 2025 | **Accepted:** 30 July 2025

Keywords: brand partnerships | communications | construct validity | engagement | scale development | sponsorship

ABSTRACT

In marketing, engagement has been discussed as context contingent, spurring proliferation of context-specific engagement scales. While experiential contexts (e.g., music, the arts, sports) exhibit differences, they also hold similar characteristics (e.g., behavioral participation, feelings of connectedness, meaningful interaction) that provide the basis for experiential engagement across contexts. A scale that captures experiential engagement is needed due to the growth of embedded marketing strategies such as sponsorship, brand placement, and influencer marketing, where context engagement is relevant to communication success. Following a systematic literature review of 25 engagement scale papers, we conceptualize experiential engagement, then develop and test a six-item measure. In Studies 1–3, we test construct validity, demonstrating the value of experiential engagement in broad contexts of general sport, popular music, as well as more narrowly in track and field. In Study 4, we test experiential engagement against sport involvement and sports fandom self-perception in explaining sport sponsor outcomes. We find experiential engagement has a significant, positive relationship with sponsor brand word of mouth and brand equity and performs better than sport involvement and sports fandom self-perception. In sum, we conceptualize experiential engagement as a broad, general construct, and provide support for the validity of our scale that measures it.

1 | Introduction

Across disciplines, measures of engagement have been developed for sport (Yoshida et al. 2014), music (e.g., Chin and Rickard 2012; Vanstone et al. 2016), the arts (e.g., Kemp 2015), as well as niche contexts such as e-sports (Abbasi et al. 2023). While we acknowledge that differences in contexts abound (e.g., there is a team aspect in sports that is not present in the arts; the nature of promotions to audiences), we argue that experiential contexts (e.g., music, the arts, sports) share characteristics that can be captured with a latent construct of experiential engagement. The similarities central to an experiential context (i.e., behavioral participation, feelings of connectedness, and meaningful interaction) align with our definition of experiential engagement as stemming from an individual's level of behavioral and psychological interaction with an experiential context. This mapping shows how experiential engagement can be a useful measure across experiential contexts, which is important as experiential contexts have become platforms of embedded marketing in sponsorship, brand placement, and influencer marketing.

As an example of how experiential engagement may be utilized, consider how consumers engage with the Olympics by watching TV, attending live events, learning about athlete participants, and sharing knowledge with others. AirBnB, as a sponsor of the Olympic Games, may be interested in knowing if individuals who engage with the Olympics see their brand as authentic in the context or remember their brand as a sponsor. Moreover, if a brand has a portfolio of various sponsoring relationships (e.g., sports and music events), it may want to find out which contexts are the most engaging and assess how the engagement

influences key outcomes (see Cornwell 2025). Furthermore, the International Olympic Committee, given the use of the Games as a marketing platform, may want to have a measure of audience engagement with the Games in communicating with sponsoring partners.

The goal of this study is to develop a measure that can capture experiential engagement across various contexts. Using a systematic literature review of 25 engagement scales, we fail to identify a scale that is generalizable across contexts both in theory and measurement; lack of theoretical consistency across contexts in conceptualizing engagement increases the difficulty of understanding engagement as a cohesive, general construct. We offer a conceptualization of experiential engagement that highlights repeated facets from the literature (behavioral involvement, intimacy, influence) in multiple contexts, develop a short scale for measuring the construct, and test the validity and performance of the scale in four studies.

Across literature reviewed, we identified three themes related to context-oriented scales: (1) measurement (i.e., how engagement is measured), (2) the historically context-dependent nature of engagement (i.e., motivating the need to move beyond objects of engagement), and (3) facets of engagement—namely, behavioral involvement, intimacy, and influence. Despite the range of existing scales, we did not identify a scale of engagement that contains all three facets and is generalizable across contexts. A scale that reflects all three facets is important in capturing the essence of the generally found aspects of experiential engagement. To address this gap, we created a unified conceptualization of experiential engagement that allows for consistent and comparable measures.

The current research makes conceptual and managerial contributions. Conceptually, we provide new theorizing to marketing by explaining the generalizable phenomenon of experiential engagement. Rather than considering engagement as a fractured construct with unique measures needed for each object of engagement or context, we see the latent construct of engagement as emerging from a consumer's life experiences (e.g., Pansari and Kumar 2017; Sprott et al. 2009) and, thus, generalizable across contexts. The *nature* of engagement with an experiential context—not the *content* of that context—drives the broad applicability and the unidimensionality of the new scale. Using the scale, researchers and practitioners can compare the effectiveness of marketing communications across contexts either by examining the contribution of the context explicitly or by controlling for it when examining other aspects of a communication program.

Managerially, brand managers who market products through experiential contexts can better understand the role of context engagement relative to specific brand engagement. For example, Gatorade sports drink has hundreds of sport and event partnerships and could, with a generalizable measure, compare the contribution of experiential context engagement across their portfolio of investments. For sport, music or other experiential properties that have sponsors, a versatile scale of engagement that could be employed by all parties could benefit understanding and strategy. By considering experiential engagement, marketers of experiential properties can have a better sense of how lived experiences inform downstream consequences for their organization and for their sponsors.

2 | Theoretical Background

2.1 | Conceptual Development

Based on his study of how spectators consume baseball, Holt (1995) advanced a typology of consumption for this experiential product as consuming through experience, integration, classification and play (Holt 1995). Consuming as experience brings forward emotions during consumption (see Hirschman and Holbrook 1982) that can provide feelings of connectedness. Consuming as classification and as play both capture the practice of behavioral participation with the context. Holt found that "All four metaphors are necessary to describe comprehensively how spectators consume professional baseball" (1995, 3). Experiential contexts share characteristics of Holt's metaphors as behavioral participation, feelings of connectedness, and meaningful interaction. At nearly the same time, experiential contexts became recognized as expanding platforms for embedded marketing through sponsorship (Cornwell and Maignan 1998) and brand placement (Russell 2002). The evolution of consumer understanding and marketing strategies brings us to the need for a measure of one's experiential engagement.

Broadly, in advertising, the context (e.g., the setting of a movie, sitcom, documentary) in which a brand's message appears is important to communication success (De Pelsmacker et al. 2002; Wang 2006). In contextual advertising (Zhang and Katona 2012), pairing advertising with consumers' content preferences is an established strategy. In associative marketing communication strategies—including product placement, influencer marketing, and sponsorship—context is central to effectiveness because messages are limited (Cornwell 2008). For example, brand outcomes in sponsoring are "accomplished through repeated presentation of brand associates" across properties that support contextual learning (Cornwell and Kwon 2020, 613). Despite its importance, context has yet to be explicitly addressed in the measurement of engagement.

Without a generalized construct of experiential engagement and a scale to measure it, researchers often use surrogate indicators to capture engagement or create their own context-specific engagement scales (e.g., Abbasi 2023; Abbasi et al. 2023; Abbasi et al. 2019), resulting in a proliferation of scales. Examples of surrogate indicators include ticket sales or attendance (e.g., McDonald and Karg 2015; Popp et al. 2023), social media engagement (e.g., engagement operationalized as likes, hearts, star ratings; Barger et al. 2016), and GPS tracking data in a venue (Abkarian et al. 2022). Some engagement scales measure behavior alone; for example, "To what extent did you watch or attend: the first day of the event, the second day of the event and the final day of the event?" (Wakefield 2012, 151). Not only do behavioral measures not capture the psychological state of engagement (e.g., an attendee may be present at the event solely for a work function, with no interest in the event), but also the plethora of engagement scales for every niche context, utilizing distinct behavioral operationalizations of engagement that

differ across studies, reduces the potential of experiential engagement as a broader theoretical construct.

To understand the role of experiential contexts in consumer behavior, it is important to distinguish experiential engagement from brand engagement. While consumer brand engagement has traditionally been viewed as having a specific object of engagement (e.g., Hollebeek 2011), new thinking recognizes the duality of brand engagement with context engagement (here, experiential engagement). Hollebeek et al. (2023) provide a systematic review of engagement, specifically oriented toward brands, but question whether brand-related interactions may work in tandem with behaviors such as attending live events to develop a consumer's engagement. Certainly, the "interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs" (Merriam-Webster) influences consumer brand engagement. In other words, rather than solely considering the role of engagement with a brand in determining brand outcomes, we consider how engagement with the context in which brands are found influences brand outcomes.

In sum, theory supporting consumer brand engagement has centered on a "cognitive, affective, behavioral" conceptualization (e.g., Cheung et al. 2015; Dessart et al. 2016; Opreana and Vinerean 2015) and depends on a focal brand object, which has limited relevance to experiential engagement. While we readily expect that these aspects of engagement interact, our research focuses on experiential engagement with contexts, rather than engagement with a specific object. Accordingly, we proceed by conceptualizing experiential engagement through a systematic literature review, the focus of which is scales that measure engagement with experiential contexts.

2.2 | Systematic Literature Review

2.2.1 | Literature Review Process

We conducted our systematic literature review using PRISMA guidelines (Moher et al. 2009). The PRISMA process uses three steps: (1) identification, (2) screening, and (3) inclusion. A visualization of the PRISMA process for articles included in Web of Science is presented in Figure 1. Also presented in Figure 1 is the process utilized in our review of Google Scholar articles. Given that Web of Science restricts indexing to approximately 15% of all journals based on journal quality (Quaderi 2023), it potentially misses context-relevant but narrow or niche scales; therefore, we also conducted a search of Google Scholar, using the same search terms. While not fully parallel to including unpublished "file drawer" studies in meta-analyzes—intended to capture papers without significant results—our inclusion of narrow topic journals from Google Scholar is more inclusive and representative of the work being conducted.

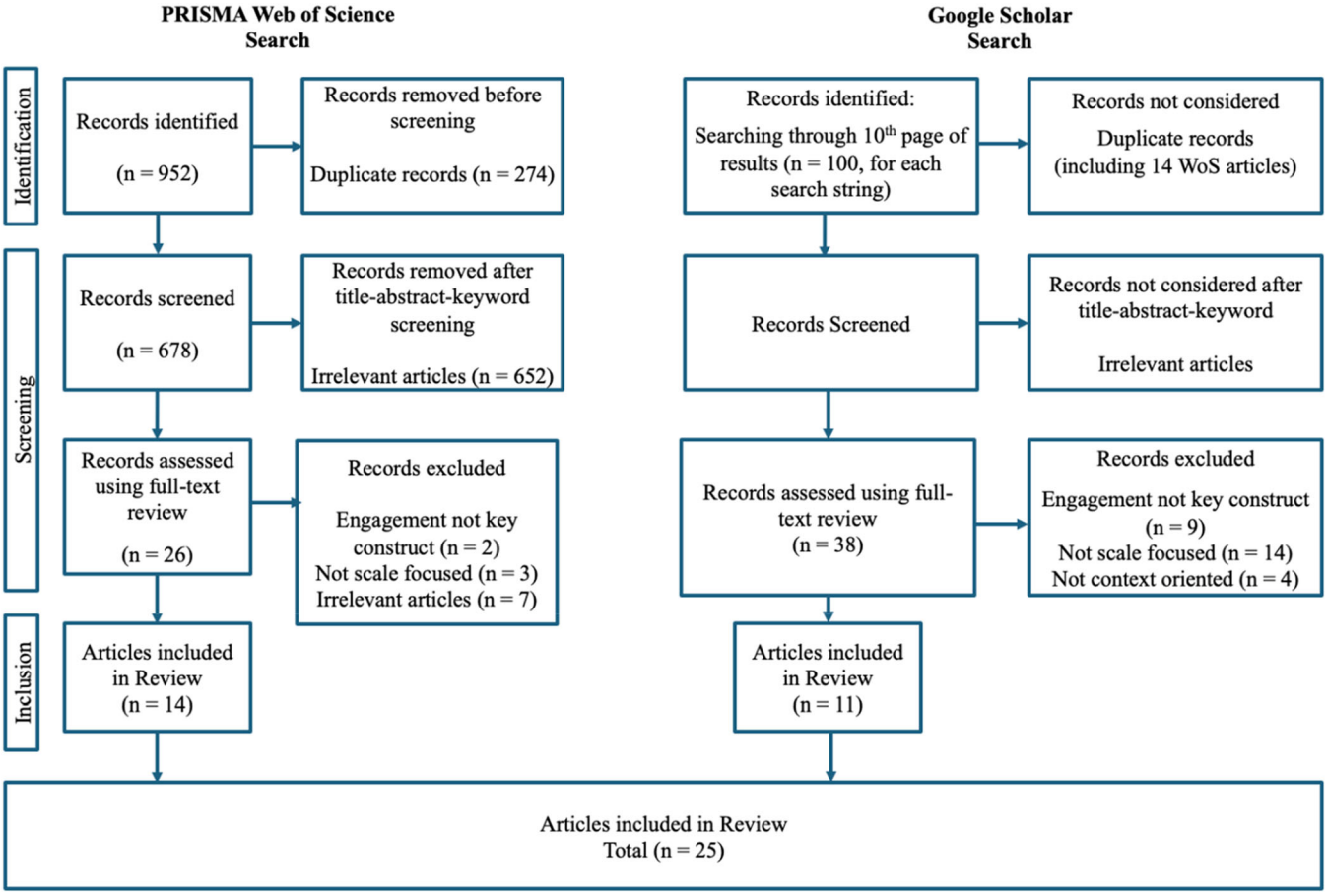

FIGURE 1 | PRISMA and Google Scholar searches.

The first step was to create a protocol for accepting versus rejecting papers into the review. We accepted papers that were published in peer-reviewed journals, written in English, and oriented toward consumers. We identified all works presenting scale development for an engagement construct oriented toward an experiential context. In other words, the criterion for including a report was the presence of scale development for engagement related to an experiential context. Articles that used established scales or did not develop a new scale were excluded from the review. Our systematic literature review is focused specifically on scale development, since our primary aim was to develop a scale based on existing scale items. Non-scale development literature is presented throughout the conceptual development. Data collected from each article were: number of scale items, number of scale factors, engagement definition, context, theoretical themes, author names and year of publication; no additional data were collected (e.g., participant details). Results were screened and data were collected by the first author. Articles meeting the criteria were first screened based on title, abstract, and keywords, followed by a full-text review. If it was unclear based on title, abstract, and keywords whether a report included scale development for engagement with an experiential context, the report was advanced and assessed based on full-text review.

Search terms included combinations of stems of *consumer, consumer engagement, engagement scale, engagement conceptualization, customer, fan, scale*, and *scale development*, either alone or paired with contexts (e.g., *experiences, arts, music, videogames, sports*). As an example, four separate search strings were (1) "consumer engagement"; (2) "consumer engagement" AND "music"; (3) "consumer engagement" AND "sports"; (4) "consumer" AND "engagement" AND "experiences." Although Web of Science and Google Scholar use search terms differently, we aimed to be consistent and used the same search terms for both databases (e.g., we searched "consumer engagement AND sports" in both Web of Science and Google Scholar). Articles were extracted on March 31, 2025. No start date or end date was specified for the search.

2.2.2 | Article Selection Process

As demonstrated in Figure 1, in the identification phase (Step 1), Web of Science was used to identify records meeting the acceptance protocol, resulting in 952 articles (of which 274 were duplicates). This provided 678 articles that were screened (Step 2) using title-abstract-keyword screening, of which 652 were irrelevant to the research area. Removal of the irrelevant articles provided a set of 26 articles, from which two were removed for not featuring engagement as the key construct, three were removed for lack of scale development, and seven others were removed because they were deemed irrelevant to the area as described. For example, Lee and Cho (2023) present a scale of brand experience that is validated in relation to brand engagement; however, engagement itself is not the construct of interest. Others, such as Maree and Van Heerden (2021), focus on engagement; however, they present an established scale and do not conduct scale development. Overall, Web of Science provided 14 articles to be considered in review.

Google Scholar search results were sorted by default relevance, as determined by Google (weighting full text, journal ranking, author, and citation count; scholar.google.com, 2025), and each article abstract was scanned by one author for contextual engagement scale development through the 10th page of search results. The 10th page was chosen for consistency and because 100 articles are provided in 10 pages of results. This process differs from that used in the Web of Science search in that the numbers of records identified are based on the 100 per string and the process is iterative. As with Web of Science, articles were removed from consideration if they appeared as duplicates or did not meet the relevance criteria for the research area. Following, the retained articles were screened based on title, abstract, and keywords, which led to 11 articles for full text review. In total, 38 Google Scholar articles were selected for full-text review; articles were excluded from final review for not featuring engagement as the focal construct ($n = 9$; e.g., Raja et al. (2020) measure attitudes toward music), not focusing on scale development ($n = 14$; e.g., Ferreira et al. 2020 compare different engagement scales), and for not being oriented towards an experiential context ($n = 4$; e.g., Dwivedi et al. 2016 measure brand behaviors). A final total of 25 articles included 14 from Web of Science and 11 from Google Scholar.

The article review process identified the phenomenon of interest and the method for scale development but focused primarily on the conceptual development. From the review, we found that a generalizable scale of engagement across contexts does not appear in the literature reviewed. In terms of methods, studies predominantly use exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis to assess scale validity (e.g., Hollebeek et al. 2016; Isaac et al. 2015; Opreana and Vinerean 2015; So et al. 2014; Vanstone et al. 2016). Others test nomological networks using correlations (Sprott et al. 2009; Vivek et al. 2014). These approaches, while commonplace, do not have the methodological advantages in testing relationships between variables and gaining model fit statistics for a system of relationships that are found in structural equation modeling (Raykov 2012).

Examining the conceptual development of each article revealed the repeated presence of three facets of experiential engagement: behavioral involvement, intimacy, and influence. Indeed, for each context identified in the review, we can consider how engagement is formed through a consumer's interactions with the context, their emotional connection to the context, and their experience with other individuals regarding the context. These facets of engagement have been reflected in measures of engagement related to a context for decades (discussed further later); however, the focus on cognitive, affective, and behavioral subdimensions of engagement (Brodie et al. 2011; Kemp 2015; Vivek et al. 2012) has obscured the importance of engagement as a unifying experience. Therefore, our theoretical conceptualization of experiential engagement is rooted in capturing these implicit facets of the engaging experience, thus providing a construct that is generalizable across contexts.

2.3 | Scale Development

2.3.1 | Definition Development

Definitions of engagement vary throughout the 25 reviewed articles. Theoretically, we see experiential engagement as going beyond transactional relations (Thakur 2016; Vivek et al. 2014; Yoshida et al. 2014) and as dependent on experiences that are vested with emotion (Monferrer et al. 2019; Pansari and Kumar 2017; Wakefield 2016). Additionally, as highlighted by Hollebeek et al. (2023), interactivity is a critical component of engagement (Abbasi et al. 2023; Dwyer et al. 2015; De Geus et al. 2016; Obilo et al. 2021; Opreana and Vineran 2015; Thakur 2016; Vivek et al. 2014). Following our review and identification of the facets of experiential engagement, we developed a working definition of the construct that is relevant to a general or a specific experiential context. We submitted the working definition to five academic and six industry experts for feedback. After revision, we put forward the following definition:

> *Experiential engagement is the product of cumulative and ongoing behavioral and emotional exposure, involvement, and interaction that an individual has with a definite observable context (whether broadly or narrowly defined, for example, broadly music or narrowly jazz, broadly sport or narrowly golf).*

2.3.2 | Challenges of Scale Adaptation

In their review of four issues of the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, Haws et al. (2023) found nearly half of the scales in use to be improvised or ad hoc. Interestingly, these authors note that even in using previously published scales, they had not been validated in the original work and were not validated when cited and used subsequently. Critique of scale adaptation is similar in other disciplines (e.g., organization science, Heggestad et al. 2019; information systems, Pillet et al. 2023).

It appears that two aspects of time are driving the use of adapted scales across disciplinary boundaries. The first is the high investment of extensive scale development as classically outlined by Churchill (1979) and Netemeyer et al. (2003). The second is the pressure for shorter scales, which in turn leads to adaptation. In this regard, perhaps the most compelling discussion of the extensive use of adapted scales comes from Rammstedt and John (2007), who state: "time has changed" (p. 204). They discuss that, in the 80 s and 90 s, scales with 40-60 items were viewed as short but that the demand for super-short measures is growing.

2.3.3 | Current Scale Adaptation

Across the 25 papers identified in the systematic literature review, there were 466 scale items for engagement oriented toward a context, from which we created the experiential engagement scale. Our goal was to adapt scale items that reflect the facets theorized and to provide validation of our adapted scale. In doing so, we utilized items that were (1) succinct and (2) generalizable to a wide variety of experiential contexts such that any future context use would not alter validity. We also utilized items that would allow differentiation between higher versus lower engaged individuals. In this regard, the work of Rammstedt and John (2007) was helpful. Their 10-item short version of the "Big Five" personality inventory selected items from the original 44 that captured a high and low of each dimension and were not highly redundant in content. Lastly, we sought cognitive validity, where scale adaptation is free from problematic item characteristics that bias survey responses (Pillet et al. 2023). With these goals in mind, we sought two items for each of the three experiential engagement facets detailed in the next section.

Item reduction followed a four-step process (see Figure 2). First, of the 466 items, we identified and removed 93 duplicate scale items, which reduced the sample to 373 items. Second, we dropped scale items such as identification, in line with Bagozzi (1984) discussion that constructs identified as antecedents or consequences of a construct should not be measures of the construct. Additionally, hyper-specific or vague items were dropped in this stage (e.g., "I feel good when my performance is

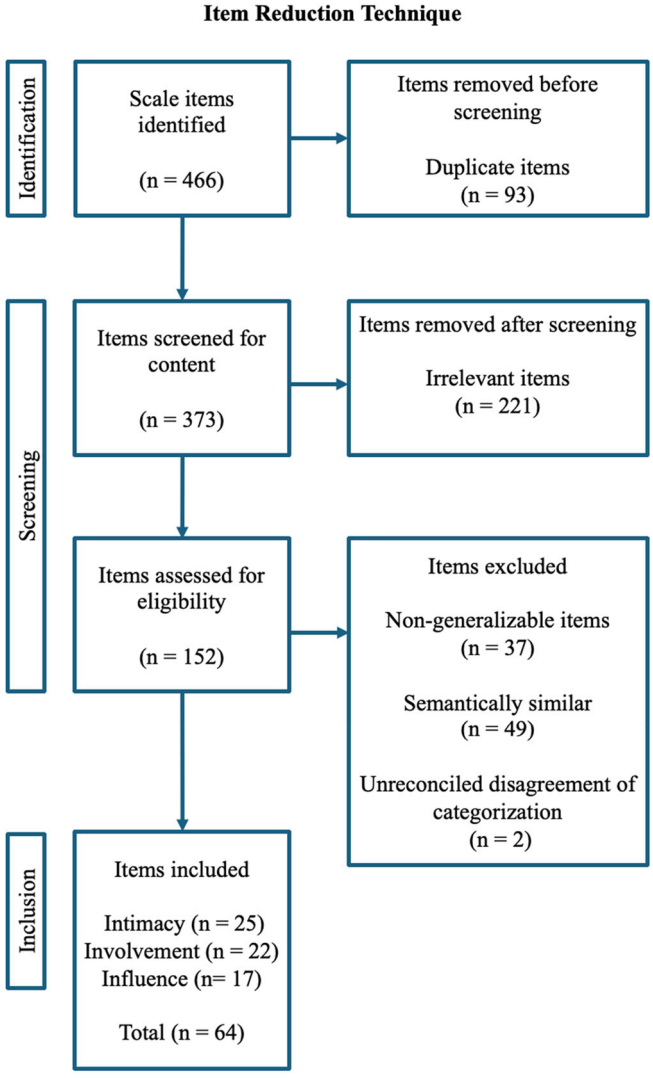

FIGURE 2 | Flow chart for item reduction technique.

applauded," Chin and Rickard 2012, p. 446; "I feel different," Brockmyer et al. 2009, 627), which reduced the sample to 152 items (221 items removed). Third, we dropped semantically similar items (49 items removed, e.g., for items "When interacting with X, I feel happy" and "Using X makes me happy," only one item was retained) and excluding items that were not generalizable across contexts (37 items removed, e.g., "I felt a sense of adventure," "I was aware of my own values," De Geus et al. 2016, 284), reducing to a sample of 66 items.

Subsequently, an independent coder and two authors categorized the 66 items as representative of one of the three facets of experiential engagement (behavior both in-person and remote, intimacy both social and parasocial, and influence both from and to the individual, which are detailed further in the next section). The inter-rater reliability amongst coders was 93.93%, representing agreement on 62 of the 66 items. Upon review, agreement on classification was reached for two of the four items involving disagreement. The other two items ("Anything related to X grabs my attention," Vivek et al. 2014, 409; "I felt personally involved with it," Kemp 2015, Table 1) were dropped due to unreconciled disagreement. This resulted in 64 items across the three facets.

Finally, two authors judged each of the remaining 64 items and identified the items that were most representative for each theoretical facet, narrowing the total to five items per facet (15 total items). From the 15 items, the authors chose the two items that best represent each theoretical facet and present these as "source items" in Table 1.

2.3.4 | Facets of Experiential Engagement

Across the 25 articles in the systematic literature review, we find three theoretical facets of engagement repeated in the literature: behavioral involvement, intimacy, and influence. These three facets not only emerge conceptually in the literature but also are reflected in the scale items used to measure engagement with various contexts. In the review, no scale was identified that captures all three theoretical facets and is also generalizable to multiple contexts. We emphasize again that it is the *nature* of engagement based on behavioral and emotional exposure to an experiential context that allows a latent construct. Next, we provide a summary of each facet, highlighting the items existing in the literature and their relationship to the experiential engagement scale items.

2.3.4.1 | Behavioral Involvement. Behavioral involvement is consistently identified as a facet of experiential engagement (e.g., Abbasi et al. 2023; Calder et al. 2016; Kemp 2015; Opreana and Vinerean 2015). It is logical that behavioral involvement is foundational to the latent construct of experiential engagement because it provides exposure to, participation in, and interaction with a context. For example, in a video game context, Brockmyer et al. (2009) put forth a 19-item engagement scale that consists of predominantly interactive behaviors (e.g., "I play longer than I am meant to"; "I feel like I just can't stop playing," p. 627). Behavioral involvement has also been captured by items such as "I attend arts performances as often as I can" and "I am a frequent attender at arts events" (Kemp 2015, Table 1), from which we adapt our first item, "*I attend live [sporting events] regularly*." Next, we adapt our second item, "*I watch [broadcast sporting events] regularly*," from "I go out of my way to hear music" (Vanstone et al. 2016, 478) and "I try to fit playing esports gaming into my schedule" (Abbasi et al. 2023, 270).

2.3.4.2 | Intimacy. Across contexts, intimacy underlies engagement. Indeed, in an industry report, Haven (2007) identifies intimacy as a key defining feature of engagement. This also corresponds to Hollebeek (2011) vision of engagement

TABLE 1 | Scale item adaption.

Facet	Scale item	Source
Behavioral involvement	I attend live [sporting events] regularly.	I am a frequent attender at arts events (Kemp 2015, Table 1)
		I attend arts performances as often as I can (Kemp 2015, Table 1)
Behavioral involvement	I watch [broadcast sporting events] regularly.	I go out of my way to hear music (Vanstone et al. 2016, 478)
		I try to fit playing esports gaming brand into my schedule (Abbasi et al. 2023, 270)
Intimacy	I am passionate about [sports].	I am passionate about [X] (Vivek et al. 2014, 409)
		I love [X] (Ndhlovu and Maree 2022, 234)
Intimacy	I follow [athletes] on social media.	I often like brands or musicians on Facebook (Hollebeek et al. 2016, 420)
		I follow blogs related to [X] (Obilo et al. 2021, 9)
Influence	I recommend [sporting events] to friends.	Part of my role among friends is to keep them informed about new music or when bands will be touring (Hollebeek et al. 2016, 420)
		I love to discuss the brand-related post with my friends and family (Waqas et al. 2021, 114)
Influence	I am often asked my opinion on [sports].	I try to get others interested in [X] (Dessart et al. 2016, 16)
		I give advice to others regarding X products (Obilo et al. 2021, 9)

as passion and to Vivek and colleagues' (2012) view of enthused participation as the "zealous reactions and feelings of a person related to using or interacting with the focus of their engagement" (p. 407). Specifically, items representing passion appear repeatedly, such as "I am passionate about [X]" (Vivek et al. 2014, 409) and "I love [X]" (Ndhlovu and Maree 2022, 234), from which we adapt our item, "*I am passionate about [sports]*." However, intimacy occurs through more than strong positive emotions toward the context. For example, throughout the 25 contextual scale development papers, intimacy emerges from items that emphasize connection through parasocial relationships (e.g., "I often like brands or musicians on Facebook," Hollebeek et al. 2016, 420) and Obilo and colleagues' (2021) "I follow blogs related to [X]" (p. 9). As such, from these two reference items, we adapt our item, "*I follow [athletes] on social media*."

2.3.4.3 | Influence. Influence is in keeping with engagement as social interaction (Calder et al. 2009). In considering customer engagement value, Kumar et al. (2010) view a customer's behavior to influence other customers as a component beyond transaction value. The influence facet underpins the latent construct of experiential engagement, is widely represented, and is diverse. Influence can occur in myriad ways, such as personal endorsements (Dessart et al. 2016; e.g., "I promote X," p. 16), advocating (Dwyer et al. 2015; e.g., "I tell others about the great players on the Fav Team," p. 649), and co-creation (Obilo et al. 2021; e.g., "I make constructive suggestions to brand about how to improve its products," p. 9). For example, Dwyer and colleagues' (2015) study on "sport team brand evangelism" involves trying to recruit others to support the brand; this behavior is exemplary of the influence dimension of experiential engagement. Our goal—to be agnostic to the particular form or channel the influence takes but capture the two-way expression of influence—allowed focus on influencing others through providing recommendations and being influenced by recommendations from others. Accordingly, we adapted the following two items to capture influence: (1) "*I recommend [sporting events] to friends*," adapted from "Part of my role among friends is to keep them informed about new music or when bands will be touring" (Hollebeek et al. 2016, 420) and "I love to discuss the brand-related post with my friends and family" (Waqas et al. 2021, 114); and (2) "*I am often asked my opinion on [sports]*," inspired by "I try to get others interested in [X]" (Dessart et al. 2016, 16) and "I give advice to others regarding X products" (Obilo et al. 2021, 9).

2.4 | Hypotheses Development: Antecedents and Consequences of Experiential Engagement

Following Hollebeek and colleagues' (2023) recommendations, we conduct theory testing of experiential engagement using multiple nomological networks after construct conceptualization. By using a nomological network for three contexts (sports, music, and track and field), we can assess whether experiential engagement, as a construct, is theoretically stable across contexts. Our hypotheses center on the nomological networks.

We begin by examining antecedents of experiential engagement and focus on four general individual-level factors: motivation, identification, psychological involvement, and exposure. As previously mentioned, we propose that experiential contexts share the characteristics of behavioral participation, feelings of connectedness, and meaningful interaction that allow experiential engagement to be generalizable across contexts. A consumer's motivation is a strong predictor of related behavior (Mowen and Minor 1995) and should drive meaningful interaction with the context, which increases experiential engagement. Feelings of connectedness can be represented by identification with other fans of the context—as identification centers on feeling a bond (Cameron 2004)—and, as such, should increase experiential engagement with the context. A consumer's psychological involvement is an antecedent of behavioral activation (Brandão et al. 2019) and, as such, should be positively associated with behavioral participation with an experiential context. We propose that experiential engagement with a context necessitates behavioral participation with the context. Lastly, we consider how actual exposure to the experiential context drives experiential engagement, expecting a positive effect of event exposure on experiential engagement.

The individual factors proposed have been established in prior research as relevant to engagement with a context and are used in our nomological network for testing construct validity (Cronbach and Meehl 1955). Though these relationships are already established in the literature and do not represent new theorizing, they are useful in understanding the generalizability of experiential engagement. If the construct is generalizable across contexts, the theoretical relationships between constructs should be stable across contexts. Thus, we propose:

H1: *Individual level factors such as (a) motivation, (b) identification, (c) psychological involvement, and (d) exposure will be significant antecedents of experiential engagement, demonstrating positive relationships.*

Next, we consider consequences of experiential engagement. In the context of sport, consumer engagement is associated with a range of consequences (e.g., patronage, brand word of mouth, brand purchase, and referrals; McDonald et al. 2022) that may be applicable to experiential engagement. Such consequences range on a spectrum from more general factors to more specific behaviors. On a general level, we consider the outcome of context knowledge development; on a specific behavioral level, we consider betting on sports, playing fantasy sports, and paying for a premium streaming service.

Brand knowledge is one component of brand equity (Keller 2003), which previous research identifies as a consequence of consumer engagement (Hollebeek et al. 2014; Vander Schee et al. 2020). As such, we expect context knowledge (e.g., regarding sport or music) to be a consequence of experiential engagement. Betting on sports and playing fantasy sports are positively related to each other (Houghton et al. 2023), suggesting they may share an underlying driver such as experiential engagement. Indeed, before a consumer invests in sports betting or fantasy sports, they must have sufficient knowledge gained through experiences with a context (Kwak and

McDaniel 2011). Further, if context knowledge is an outcome of engagement, then constructs that rely on that knowledge should also be outcomes rather than antecedents of experiential engagement. Similarly, experiential engagement should also influence other investment behaviors, such as willingness to pay for a premium product related to a context. Again, our focus is on establishing a nomological network for testing construct validity.

H2: *Experiential engagement will be a significant, positive predictor of downstream behavioral or cognitive outcomes such as (a) decisions regarding purchase (e.g., placing a sporting bet, willingness to pay for context-related streaming services), (b) social engagement (e.g., play fantasy game related to the context), and (c) individual change (e.g., context-related knowledge development).*

It should be noted that we test these hypotheses, which are generally written, for use across three studies that vary in terms of their nomological networks. Multiple networks are used to test the construct validity in terms of differing context types (e.g., sport, music) and in terms of use in general versus narrow areas (sport vs. track and field).

3 | Studies Overview

We first present a preliminary study followed by four empirical studies. The preliminary study considers face validity. Study 1 examines construct validity and tests our theory using a nomological network in the context of general sport. Study 2 tests an additional nomological network to generalize findings to a music context. Study 3 tests scale validity using a field sample from a track and field event. Study 4 employs a large consumer sample to further validate the scale by establishing convergent, discriminant, and nomological validity. All studies received institutional review board approval.

MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012) identify 26 contributors to method bias; however, most are centered on participant characteristics, survey instructions, ambiguity of individual questions, and the mode of survey administration or general survey characteristics (Baumgartner and Weijters 2012). Methods to reduce bias were taken across all our studies. We address participant characteristics by using three distinct samples across the studies – real-life event attendees, students, and an online sample. Before collecting data, all surveys were pretested by non-academics for instruction clarity and question ambiguity. We also include scale item randomization and standardized data collection procedures across all participants within a study. Lastly, antecedent and outcome variables were temporally separated (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Additional details are provided in the methods section of each study.

4 | Face Validity Study

We examined the face validity of the experiential engagement scale in a sports context. Participants were 177 students from a large US university (55% Female, $M_{age} = 20.91$ years, $SD_{age} = 2.33$) who completed the study for course credit. The study consisted of two components: the six-item experiential engagement scale and item-by-item face validity ratings ("Please rate how representative each behavior is for the typical person who is very engaged with sports from 1 (not at all representative) to 7 (very representative)"). The mean engagement score was 4.95 with a standard deviation of 1.77. For the face validity ratings, all six statements received a rating above the midpoint of the scale (all means > 4.00; all $ps < 0.01$). The results demonstrate that participants viewed the six scale items to be representative of individuals who are engaged with sports.

5 | Study 1: Sport as an Experiential Context

The objective of Study 1 is to assess construct validity by examining convergent validity, discriminant validity, and theory testing through nomological validity. In doing so, we also test H1 (predictors of experiential engagement) and H2 (outcomes of experiential engagement).

5.1 | Method

Participants were 179 students from a large US university (44% Female, $M_{age} = 21.91$, $SD_{age} = 0.98$) who completed the study in exchange for course credit. Students completed the survey as part of the human subject pool requirement. Students were physically in the school research lab when they completed the online survey at individual computer stations. Given the ubiquitous nature of sports at large US universities, a student sample was selected to test the scale in a general sports context. To give participants exposure to popular sports contexts, we asked them to read two press-releases, one announcing the sponsor for the 2023 Rose Bowl football game and one announcing the sponsor for the 2023 NBA Finals in basketball; the order of the two press-releases was counterbalanced. The press-releases served the purpose of activating sport-related cognition in participants.

Participants responded to the six-item experiential engagement scale, measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = 0.93$). Subsequently, participants completed two items to report on sports betting behavior and participation in fantasy sports, using 7-point Likert scales ("I play fantasy sports" and "I bet on sporting outcomes," 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree, r = .58, p* < 0.001). Participants then read a short story as a "filler task." This was done to temporally separate the collection antecedent and outcome variables (Podsakoff et al. 2003) of experiential engagement.

Participants then rated their motivation to consume sports on a six-item, 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = 0.87$, adapted from the 9-factor, 27 item scale by Trail and James 2001). We selected six items reflecting the factors of achievement (two items: "I feel like I have won when my favorite team wins; "I feel proud when my favorite team plays well"), drama ("A sports game is more enjoyable to me when the outcome is not decided until the very end"), escape ("Sports games represent an escape for me from my day-to-day activities"), esthetics ("I appreciate the beauty inherent in sports games"), and physical skill ("Watching a well-executed athletic

performance is something I enjoy"). Factors not used in the study were knowledge (e.g., "I usually know the teams win/loss record"), family (e.g., "I like going to games with my family"), physical attraction (e.g., "The main reason that I watch is because I find the players attractive"), and social (e.g., "I like to talk to other people sitting near me during the games") (Trail and James 2001). For example, knowledge items were excluded since we position context knowledge as an outcome of experiential engagement, thus, including knowledge in an antecedent of engagement scales would not be appropriate. Similarly, drawing on Hollebeek et al. (2014) we view social interaction as a critical component of engagement; thus we avoid also positioning it as part of the motivation to consume sports antecedent.

Lastly, participants rated their sports fan identification on a five-item, 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = 0.87$, adapted from Cameron 2004). The sports fan identification scale is originally a 12-item scale (Cameron 2004); for brevity we selected five items and oriented them to the sports utilized in our orientation press releases: "I feel strong ties to other [professional basketball/college football] fans"; "I often think about being a [professional basketball/college football] fan"; "In general, being a [professional basketball/college football] fan is an important part of my self-image"; "In general, I am glad to be a [professional basketball/college football] fan"; "Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a [professional basketball/college football] fan." All scales in Study 1 demonstrated excellent reliability (all $\alpha > 0.83$, see Table 2).

5.2 | Data Analysis and Results

The data were analyzed using R Studio, with the lavaan package. We tested the conceptual model, shown in Figure 3, using structural equation modeling (SEM). Following best practices in the SEM literature, we first tested the measurement model to establish the validity and reliability of the latent constructs before testing the structural model (Kline 2023). We used maximum likelihood estimation. When using maximum likelihood estimation, it is suggested to aim for a minimum of five (Anderson and Gerbing 1988; Tanaka 1987) to ten (Bentler and Chou 1987) observations per observed variable. Our model (Figure 3) contains 18 observed variables, thus suggesting that a sample size of 179 meets the minimum requirement for SEM.

TABLE 2 | Descriptive statistics and correlations (Studies 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Study	*M*	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
Study 1: Sports context ($N = 179$)									
1. Experiential engagement	5.15	1.73	0.94	0.71	*(0.93)*				
2. Motivation to consume sports	5.56	1.18	0.86	0.51	0.67**	*(0.87)*			
3. Sports fan identification	4.32	1.63	0.87	0.63	0.65**	0.45**	*(0.87)*		
4. Fantasy sports	4.15	2.60	NA	NA	0.66**	0.43**	0.48**	NA	
5. Sports betting	2.84	2.24	NA	NA	0.47**	0.31**	0.33**	0.58**	NA
Study 2: Music context ($N = 242$)									
1. Experiential engagement	4.03	1.46	0.89	0.57	*(0.89)*				
2. Music fan identification	3.82	1.48	0.90	0.50	0.78**	*(0.92)*			
3. Involvement	4.67	1.06	0.92	0.69	0.67**	0.65**	*(0.90)*		
4. Music knowledge (1–5)	2.22	1.49	NA	NA	0.40**	0.38**	0.31**	NA	
5. Pay for premium streaming	6.14	1.49	NA	NA	0.35**	0.34**	0.23**	0.28**	NA
Study 3: Field study ($N = 156$)									
1. Experiential engagement	4.81	1.46	0.86	0.51	*(0.84)*				
2. Involvement	6.23	0.93	0.95	0.72	0.37**	*(0.93)*			
3. Exposure (0–4)	1.83	0.91	0.85	0.55	0.42**	0.44**	*(0.85)*		
Study 4: Online sports ($N = 408$)									
1. Experiential engagement	5.51	1.14	0.90	0.60	*(0.90)*				
2. Sports involvement	5.73	1.08	0.92	0.67	0.86**	*(0.92)*			
3. Sports fandom self-perception	5.29	1.51	NA	NA	0.47**	0.41**	NA		
4. Brand equity (Coca Cola*)	5.50	1.16	0.87	0.63	0.74**	0.71**	0.41**	*(0.88)*	
5. Brand word of mouth (Coca-Cola*)	5.58	1.15	0.85	0.61	0.78**	0.78**	0.41**	0.81**	*(0.82)*

Note: The values in parentheses represent Cronbach's alpha coefficients. NA = single-item measures.
*Four brands were examined in Study 4; details for only the Coca Cola brand are presented here (details for the remaining three brands are presented in the Supporting Information).

5.2.1 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted confirmatory factor analyzes (CFAs) to examine the unidimensionality. Three separate CFAs were conducted, one for each of the constructs: experiential engagement (six items), motivation to consume sports (six items), and sports fan identification (five items). In all CFA models, the items were specified as reflective indicators. The descriptive statistics and inter-construct correlations are presented in Table 2. For greater comparability of results, we present results for all four studies in a single table.

5.2.1.1 | Experiential Engagement. The single-factor, six-item CFA model exhibited excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2(9) = 12.50$, $p = 0.187$, RMSEA = 0.047, 95% CI = [0.000, 0.112], CFI = 0.996, TLI = 0.993, SRMR = 0.015), as indicated by a nonsignificant model p value ($p > 0.05$) and a range of model fit indices (SRMR < 0.08, CFI and TLI >0.95, RMSEA < 0.08) (Hu and Bentler 1999; Kline 2023). The standardized factor loadings were sizable ($\beta > 0.77$) and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) (see Table 3). The composite reliability (CR) exceeded the suggested cut-off value of 0.80, and the average

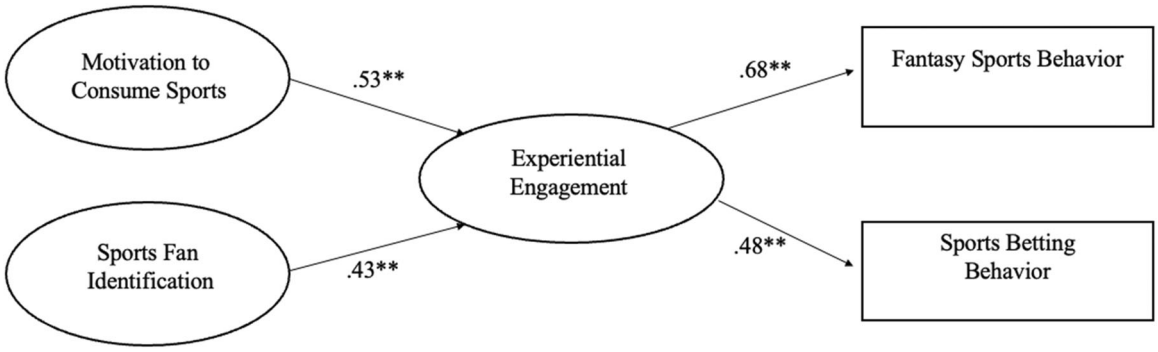

FIGURE 3 | Study 1: Results of hypothesis testing. Values in the diagram represent standardized regression coefficients *$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.001$.

TABLE 3 | Results of experiential engagement CFA (Studies 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Item	Study 1 (General sports)	Study 2 (Music)	Study 3 (Track and field)	Study 4 (General sports)
1. I attend live [sporting events] regularly	0.78 (0.12)	0.65 (0.11)	0.68 (0.13)	0.73 (0.06)
2. I watch [broadcast sporting events] regularly	0.84 (0.13)	0.81 (0.10)	0.68 (0.15)	0.75 (0.06)
3. I follow [athletes] on social media	0.82 (0.13)	0.76 (0.12)	0.40 (0.19)	0.80 (0.06)
4. I am passionate about [sports]	0.89 (0.11)	0.85 (0.09)	0.89 (0.12)	0.77 (0.06)
5. I recommend [sports] events to friends	0.87 (0.11)	0.79 (0.10)	0.91 (0.12)	0.81 (0.06)
6. I am often asked my opinion on [sports]	0.84 (0.13)	0.70 (0.10)	0.61 (0.16)	0.77 (0.06)
Model fit statistics				
N	179	242	156	408
χ^2	12.50	29.72	11.61	19.01
df	9	9	9	9
p	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.025
CFI	0.996	0.972	0.994	0.992
TLI	0.993	0.954	0.990	0.987
RMSEA	0.047	0.098	0.043	0.052
[95% CI]	[0.000, 0.112]	[0.052, 0.145]	[0.000, 0.116]	[0.000, 0.091]
SRMR	0.015	0.029	0.032	0.017
CR	0.94	0.89	0.86	0.90
AVE	0.71	0.58	0.51	0.60

Note: Standardized factor loadings and standard errors are reported in the table. Standard errors for Study 4 varieded from 0.058 to 0.063 but are reported rounded to two decimal places.

variance extracted (AVE) exceeded the suggested cut-off value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker 1981). These results demonstrate convergent validity and unidimensionality of the experiential engagement construct. The CR and AVE values are reported in Table 3.

To rule out alternative explanations, we also tested a three-factor CFA model comprising behavioral involvement, influence, and intimacy as distinct factors of experiential engagement, each represented by two indicators. The covariance matrix was not positive definite, rendering the results unreliable. Additionally, the hierarchical model including a second-order engagement latent variable did not converge. Therefore, we retained the single-factor model.

5.2.1.2 | Motivation to Consume Sports. Following the best practices recommended in the literature (e.g., Tajdini et al. 2022), we tested single-factor CFAs to examine unidimensionality, before testing the multi-factor CFA, as part of the measurement model testing. The initial single-factor, six-item CFA model exhibited poor fit to the data (e.g., RMSEA = 0.254). Based on modification indices, two items that shared similar wording and content were allowed to covary. Both items refer to positive emotions when a sports team experiences success. This theory-driven re-specification is consistent with the recommendations offered in the literature (Brown 2015), and the model indicated good fit to the data (χ^2 (8) = 12.56, $p = 0.128$, RMSEA = 0.056, 95% CI = [.000, 0.122], TLI = 0.986, CFI = 0.992, SRMR = 0.031). We retained this model in the subsequent analyzes.

5.2.1.3 | Sports Fan Identification. The single-factor, five-item CFA also exhibited poor model fit to the data (e.g., RMSEA = 0.226). The removal of one item, which had more than one high modification index value, substantially improved model fit ($\chi^2(2) = 3.81$, $p = 0.148$, RMSEA = 0.071, 95% CI = [.000, 0.197], TLI = 0.985, CFI = 0.995, SRMR = 0.019). We retained the four-item sports fan identification model moving forward.

5.2.2 | Discriminant Validity

We conducted a three-factor CFA, followed by nested model comparisons, to examine discriminant validity of experiential engagement in relation to two other theoretically related constructs (i.e., motivation to consume sports and sports fan identification). This three-factor, 16-item CFA model indicated good fit to the data (χ^2 (100) = 196.75, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.074, 95% CI [0.055, 0.091], CFI = 0.954, TLI = 0.945, SRMR = 0.062).

The AVE for each construct was greater than the squared correlation between the construct and other constructs, further supporting discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981). However, the AVE-based Fornell–Larcker criterion has limited sensitivity in detecting discriminant validity violations, especially when constructs are highly correlated. In contrast, the nested model comparison approach proposed by Bagozzi et al. (1991) is considered more rigorous and statistically robust, as it directly tests whether two constructs are empirically distinguishable via a chi-square difference test (Henseler et al. 2015; Rönkkö and Cho 2022).

Therefore, we conducted a series of CFAs following the procedure recommended by Bagozzi et al. (1991). For each pair of constructs, we estimated and compared two models (a two-factor model and a single-factor constrained model). Discriminant validity is supported if the fit of the two-factor model is significantly better than that of the single-factor constrained model, as evidenced from a chi-square difference test.

5.2.2.1 | Experiential Engagement and Motivation to Consume Sports. Results of chi-square difference tests supported discriminant validity between the experiential engagement and motivation to consume sports constructs. The two-factor model revealed a significantly better fit than the single-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2$ (1) = 142.47, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that experiential engagement is distinct from motivation to consume sport.

5.2.2.2 | Experiential Engagement and Sports Fan Identification. Results of chi-square difference tests supported discriminant validity between the experiential engagement and sports fan identification constructs. The two-factor model revealed a significantly better fit than the single-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 164.00$, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that experiential engagement is distinct from sports fan identification.

5.2.3 | Nomological Validity

To test the nomological network, we used structural equation modeling (SEM). We tested a model (Figure 3) in which motivation to consume sports and sports fan identification were antecedents of experiential engagement, while sports betting (single item) and fantasy sports behavior (single item) were consequences of experiential engagement.

The overall model exhibited acceptable fit (Browne and Cudeck 1993) to the data ($\chi^2(103) = 250.51$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.072, 95% CI [0.056, 0.088], CFI = 0.948, TLI = 0.939, SRMR = 0.065). The SRMR value indicated good fit (< 0.08), and the incremental fit indices indicated acceptable fit (CFI and TLI > 0.90, Hu and Bentler 1999; Kline 2023). An RMSEA value below 0.08 is considered acceptable (Browne and Cudeck 1993).

Motivation to consume sports ($\beta = 0.53$, SE = 0.08, $z = 7.34$, $p < 0.001$) and sports fan identification ($\beta = 0.43$, $SE = 0.07$, $z = 5.93$, $p < 0.001$) were both significant antecedents of experiential engagement. Additionally, experiential engagement exhibited a significant positive relationship with both fantasy sports behavior ($\beta = 0.68$, $SE = 0.13$, $z = 9.52$, $p < 0.001$) and sports betting behavior ($\beta = 0.48$, $SE = 0.12$, $z = 6.41$, $p < 0.001$).

5.2.3.1 | Robustness Checks. To check the robustness of the results, we also conducted three separate regression analyzes. First, we demonstrated that motivation to consume sports

and sports fan identification are significant predictors of experiential engagement (Model 1). Subsequently, we assessed whether sports betting behavior (Model 2) and fantasy sports behavior (Model 3) are significant outcomes of experiential engagement. Motivation to consume sports was a significant predictor of experiential engagement ($\beta = 0.47$, $SE = 0.08$, $t = 8.16$, $p < 0.001$), as was sports fan identification ($\beta = 0.44$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 8.16$, $p < 0.001$). Engagement was a significant predictor of both fantasy sports behavior ($\beta = 0.66$, $SE = 0.08$, $t = 11.70$, $p < 0.001$) and sports betting behavior ($\beta = 0.47$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = 7.07$, $p < 0.001$).

5.3 | Discussion

In Study 1, we demonstrate convergent and discriminant validity of our unidimensional scale. We also find that sports fan identification and motivation to consume sports are significant predictors of experimental engagement, thus supporting H1. Additionally, in support of H2, we demonstrate that higher experiential engagement is positively related to sports betting and fantasy sports behavior. The influence of experiential engagement on two managerially relevant dependent variables is in keeping with our argument regarding the usefulness of the scale to managers. While sports is one of the largest experiential engagement contexts utilized as a marketing platform, we seek to demonstrate the generalizability of the experiential engagement construct in Study 2 by examining a different context.

6 | Study 2: Music as an Experiential Context

The aim of Study 2 is to generalize findings from Study 1 to the context of music. We again assess construct validity using an SEM approach. In the nomological network, we position psychological involvement and fan identification as antecedents of experiential engagement, while we extend our consequences to popular music knowledge and managerially relevant willingness to pay for a premium music streaming service.

6.1 | Method

Participants were 242 students from a large US university (55% Female, $M_{age} = 20.69$, $SD_{age} = 1.52$) who completed the study in exchange for course credit. The data were collected in the same manner as in Study 1 (physically in the lab). Similar to Study 1, to give participants exposure to popular music contexts, we asked them to read four fictitious press-releases, each announcing the new sponsor of a music event (Coachella, Bonnaroo, The Weekend Tour, Foo Fighters Tour). Music engagement is common across demographics; however, the music events selected were relevant to our university sample based on the demographics of those attending these events being similar to the demographics of university students. For example, a survey of Coachella attendees reveals that the largest age range is 18 to 24 (Biobrain 2024). The order of the four press-releases was randomized. Subsequently, participants completed a popular music knowledge measure. The music knowledge measure provided participants with the names of five songs from Spotify's top 10 hits in the United States and globally (January 2024), and participants were instructed to name the artist of each song. We summed the correct responses and treated music knowledge as a single item.

Willingness to pay for a premium streaming service was measured with a single item developed for this study on a 7-point Likert scale: "I am willing to pay for a premium music streaming service" (e.g., Spotify, Apple Music), (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). After, participants completed a short-story filler task to temporally separate collection of the outcome variables from the measurement of antecedents.

Popular music fan identification was measured similarly as in Study 1, with five items from Cameron (2004, $\alpha = 0.92$) made specific to "popular music." Psychological involvement was measured using a 10-item made specific to music: "Please rate your involvement with music on the dimensions," (1 = *unimportant*, 7 = *important*; [Zaichkowsky 1994], $\alpha = 0.90$). Lastly, participants responded to the six-item experiential engagement scale specified for popular music, which was measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = 0.89$). As in Study 1, we tested the nomological network using structural equation modeling in R Studio.

6.2 | Data Analysis and Results

6.2.1 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis–Experiential Engagement

We assessed the unidimensionality of the experiential engagement construct using CFA. The single-factor CFA model exhibited satisfactory fit to the data ($\chi^2(9) = 29.72$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.098, 95% CI [0.052, 0.150], CFI = 0.972, TLI = 0.954, SRMR = 0.029); however, the RMSEA value was marginal. The SRMR value (< 0.08) indicated good model fit, and the incremental fit indices (CFI and TLI > 0.95) also supported good fit (Hu and Bentler 1999; Kline 2023). While RMSEA exceeded the ideal threshold of 0.08, values below 0.10 are considered acceptable (Browne and Cudeck 1993). The standardized factor loadings for experiential engagement were sizable ($\beta > 0.64$) and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3). The CR value for the experiential engagement construct exceeded the suggested cut-off value of 0.80, and the AVE value exceeded the suggested cut-off value of 0.50 (Table 3). These results again demonstrate the convergent validity of the unidimensional experiential engagement construct. We also tested a three-factor model, comprising behavioral involvement, influence, and intimacy as distinct factors; the covariance matrix was not positive definite, rendering the results unreliable. Additionally, a separate model with the three facets loading onto a second-order engagement latent construct did not converge. Therefore, we retained the single-factor model. These results further support the unidimensionality of the experiential engagement construct.

6.2.1.1 | Psychological Involvement. The initial single-factor, 10-item CFA model exhibited poor fit to the data (e.g.,

RMSEA = 0.117). One item with multiple high modification indices was removed from the model. Additionally, two items that reflect arousal-related aspects of involvement—namely, the tendency for involving and fascinating stimuli to elicit heightened states of arousal—were allowed to covary. This theoretically grounded re-specification significantly improved model fit ($\chi^2(26) = 71.70$, $p = 0.026$, RMSEA = 0.085, 95% CI [.057, 0.113], CFI = 0.959, TLI = 0.943, SRMR = 0.037). We retained the modified model for further analysis.

6.2.1.2 | Fan Identification. The single-factor, five-item CFA model also revealed poor fit to the data (e.g., RMSEA = 0.161). Two items that shared similar wording and content (i.e., people thinking about being a popular music fan) were allowed to covary, which significantly improved model fit ($\chi^2(4) = 8.81$, $p = 0.066$, RMSEA = 0.071, 95% CI [0.000, 0.145], CFI = 0.995, TLI = 0.987, SRMR = 0.016). We retained the modified model for further analysis.

6.2.2 | Discriminant Validity

To examine discriminant validity, we tested a three-factor CFA with experiential engagement, psychological involvement, and music fan identification as the three factors. The CFA model indicated good fit to the data ($\chi^2(165) = 301.55$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.058, 95% CI [0.046, 0.071], CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.952, SRMR = 0.042). The AVE for each construct was greater than the squared correlation between the construct and other constructs, indicating discriminant validity between the constructs (Fornell and Larcker 1981). Chi-square difference tests comparing single-factor versus two-factor models provided further support for discriminant validity between the experiential engagement and psychological involvement ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 186.05$, $p < 0.001$), as well as between experiential engagement and fan identification ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 92.86$, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that experiential engagement is distinct from psychological involvement and fan identification.

6.2.3 | Nomological Validity

We used the same analytic procedure as in Study 1. We tested the model shown in Figure 4, in which psychological involvement and popular music fan identification were antecedents of experiential engagement, while willingness to pay for a premium music service (single-item) and popular music knowledge (single-item) were the consequences of experiential engagement. Correlations between all variables are presented in Table 2. The model exhibited good fit to the data ($\chi^2(203) = 344.60$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.054, 95% CI [0.042, 0.065], CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.952, SRMR = 0.044). Both psychological involvement ($\beta = 0.32$, $SE = 0.07$, $z = 4.58$, $p < 0.001$) and popular music fan identification ($\beta = 0.64$, $SE = 0.08$, $z = 7.46$, $p < 0.001$) were significant antecedents of experiential engagement. In turn, experiential engagement was significantly and positively related to music knowledge ($\beta = 0.41$, $SE = 0.09$, $z = 5.93$, $p < 0.001$) and willingness to pay for a premium music streaming service ($\beta = 0.38$, $SE = 0.09$, $z = 5.50$, $p < 0.001$).

6.2.3.1 | Robustness Checks. We again tested the nomological network using three regression models to check the robustness of our results. In Model 1, psychological involvement ($\beta = 0.28$, $SE = 0.07$, $t = 5.39$, $p < 0.001$) and popular music fan identification ($\beta = 0.60$, $SE = 0.05$, $t = 11.66$, $p < 0.001$) were significant predictors of experiential engagement. In Model 2, experiential engagement was a significant predictor of music knowledge ($\beta = 0.39$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 6.73$, $p < 0.001$). In Model 3, experiential engagement was a significant predictor of premium music streaming service ($\beta = 0.35$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 5.80$, $p < 0.001$).

6.3 | Discussion

Between Study 1 and Study 2, we demonstrate the generalizability of experiential engagement across contexts (i.e., sports in Study 1 and music in Study 2). Second, we introduce a consequence of experiential engagement that is managerially focused: Willingness to pay for a premium music streaming service. This again supports H2 and demonstrates that experiential engagement connects with a managerially relevant variable of interest. Lastly, we replicate the findings from Study 1 regarding identification as an antecedent of experiential engagement, in support of H1. Study 1 and Study 2 support the generalizability of the scale in terms of context but do not address general usefulness in a specific setting. Thus, Study 3 presents a field study in the context of track and field, to

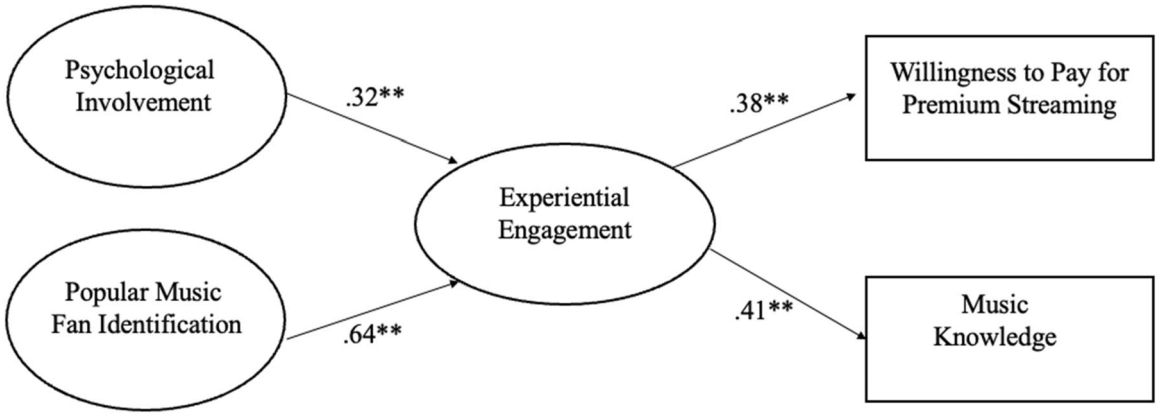

FIGURE 4 | Study 2: Results of hypothesis testing. Values in the diagram represent standardized regression coefficients. *$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.001$.

examine use of the scale in a niche context and outside of a lab setting.

7 | Study 3: Field Study

The field study has two primary objectives. First, we again aim to assess the construct validity of the experiential engagement scale. We extend Studies 1 and 2 by using a field study sample rather than a student lab sample. Second, we aim to generalize the theoretical relevance of experiential engagement to a narrow context in testing H1. Our use of a narrow sport such as track and field provides a strong test of the usefulness of the scale for diverse contexts. This framework assesses the relationship between exposure in a specific sport and experiential engagement in that sport's context, with exposure being an antecedent to experiential engagement. Additionally, we again position psychological involvement as an antecedent of experiential engagement. The conceptual model for Study 3 is presented in Figure 5.

7.1 | Method

Field data were collected at a 2023 Track and Field Championship over the entirety of the 2-day event (i.e., we set up before the event started and left after the last attendee each day) using paper and pencil questionnaires. The first author was present at the event to collect the data. To maximize sample size, participants received the survey in one of two ways: (1) they approached the local travel booth where the first author was located and were offered the survey or (2) the first author approached the attendees and offered the survey. All participants received a small toy in exchange for their participation.

The sample consisted of 156 participants who were attending the event (52.9% Female; 20.65% 18–34 years old; 43.23% 35–54 years old; 36.13% 55–74 years old). Participants were invited to complete a paper and pencil survey, in which they rated their psychological involvement with track and field, experiential engagement, and event exposure to track and field events. For the track and field study, psychological involvement was again measured using Zaichkowsky's 10-item scale (1994, $\alpha = 0.93$). Event exposure was captured with a five-item scale (five events: National Track and Field Championships, Olympic Track and Field, World Championships for Track and Field, Boston Marathon, Prefontaine Classic); "In the last year, for these events, please indicate your experience"; $0 = I$ *did not watch this event*, $4 = I$ *watched most of this event*, $\alpha = 0.85$).

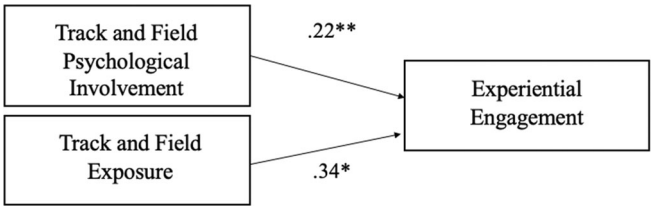

FIGURE 5 | Study 3: Results of hypothesis testing. Note. Values in the diagram represent standardized regression coefficients. $^{*}p < 0.01$, $^{**}p < 0.001$.

Participants were instructed to complete the measurement section in relation to track and field. The six-item experiential engagement scale was measured at the end of the study with the context focus stated as "Track and Field" ($\alpha = 0.84$).

Given the paper and pencil, in-person, sporting event nature of the survey, we did not have the filler task as in Study 1 and Study 2. Psychological involvement was physically separated (on a different page) from experiential engagement and event exposure, partly addressing the separation of measurement issue (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Additionally, the consent form assured confidentiality, and no identifying information was collected, reducing evaluation apprehension (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

7.2 | Data Analysis and Results

7.2.1 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis–Experiential Engagement

We assessed the unidimensionality of the experiential engagement construct using CFA. The model exhibited excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2(9) = 11.61$, $p = 0.24$, RMSEA = 0.043, 95% CI [0.000, 0.116], CFI = 0.994, TLI = 0.990, SRMR = 0.032). Standardized factor loadings were sizable ($\beta > 0.60$) and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), with the exception of one item ($\beta = 0.40$) (Table 3). This item assessed following athletes on social media, a behavior likely less prevalent in track and field compared to more media-intensive sports such as football. The CR exceeded the suggested cut-off of 0.80, and the AVE value exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Table 3). These results support the convergent validity of the unidimensional experiential engagement construct.

We also tested an alternative three-factor engagement model, comprising behavioral involvement, influence, and intimacy. This model revealed good fit to the data ($\chi^2(6) = 9.34$, $p = 0.16$, RMSEA = 0.060, 95% CI [0.000, 0.142], CFI = 0.992, TLI = 0.980, SRMR = 0.029). A chi-square difference test, however, revealed no significant improvement in fit over the unidimensional model ($\Delta\chi^2(3) = 2.27$, $p = 0.519$). Additionally, the hierarchical model exhibited the same model fit as the three-factor model. Therefore, we retained the more parsimonious unidimensional model (MacCallum 1995).

7.2.1.1 | Track and Field Exposure. A single factor CFA was tested for track and field event exposure. The model demonstrated acceptable fit in support of unidimensionality ($\chi^2(5) = 10.24$, $p = 0.07$, RMSEA = 0.082, 95% CI [0.000, 0.142], CFI = 0.984, TLI = 0.969, SRMR = 0.029).

7.2.1.2 | Track and Field Psychological Involvement. The initial single-factor CFA model for psychological involvement in track and field revealed poor fit (RMSEA = 0.170). One item with multiple high modification indices was removed. Based on theoretical considerations, we allowed the error terms of two items—assessing perceptions of track and field as "important" and "exciting"—to covary. The revised model yielded acceptable fit ($\chi^2(13) = 31.46$, $p = 0.003$, RMSEA =

0.096, 95% CI [0.044, 0.147], CFI = 0.979, TLI = 0.966, SRMR = 0.022). We retained this modified version of the track and field psychological involvement scale.

7.2.2 | Discriminant Validity

To examine discriminant validity, we tested a three-factor CFA with experiential engagement, event exposure, and psychological involvement as the three factors. The model fit well to the data ($\chi^2(131) = 190.40$, $p = 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.054, 95% CI = [0.032, 0.073], TLI = 0.959, CFI = 0.965, SRMR = 0.058). The AVE for each construct was greater than the squared correlation between the construct and other constructs. Additionally, the results of chi-square difference tests comparing single-factor and two-factor models supported discriminant validity between event exposure and experiential engagement ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 266.02$, $p < 0.001$), and between psychological involvement and experiential engagement ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 334.12$, $p < 0.001$).

7.2.3 | Nomological Validity

Given the small sample size in this field study, we used a regression-based approach to test nomological validity. We regressed experiential engagement on track and field psychological involvement and event exposure (Figure 5). Both track and field psychological involvement ($\beta = 0.22$, $t = 2.72$, $p < 0.01$) and event exposure ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 4.12$, $p < 0.001$) were significant predictors of experiential engagement.

7.3 | Discussion

The field study accomplished the aim of assessing construct validity. We again find support for H1 through the antecedent roles of both psychological involvement and event exposure for experiential engagement. We also accomplish the second aim of demonstrating that the experiential engagement scale functions well when specified to a narrow context, in this case, track and field. The field study demonstrates that the experiential engagement scale is useful for a narrow context, and further, construct validity is supported in a field study sample.

8 | Study 4: Brand Outcomes

Study 4 uses a large, general population sample to test whether experiential engagement can predict sponsor brand outcomes, and whether it does so better than two alternative measures, the sports fandom self-perception measure and sport involvement scale. Sports fandom self-perception is a single item measure (Kunkel et al. 2022) that has been shown to predict behavioral outcomes in sport comparable to muti-item attitudinal scales. Given our arguments of the value of parsimony and the need for short scales, this scale was selected as a comparator. With eight items, the sport involvement scale (Shank and Beasley 1998) adapted from Zaichkowsky (1994) provides an alternative of a similar length that, while an antecedent to experiential engagement, may be used directly to predict brand outcomes. Both are validated measures of a consumer's relationship with the sporting context. As such, our goal is to examine experiential engagement in predicting brand outcomes as compared to sports fandom self-perception and sport involvement. We consider brand outcomes of brand equity and brand word of mouth.

8.1 | Method

Participants were 408 MTurk workers (36% Female, $M_{age} = 33.40$ $SD_{age} = 7.35$) who completed the 15-min study in exchange for $1.75. As in the previous studies, we used sponsorship stimuli; however, in Study 4 we utilized visual "flyers" rather than press-releases. Participants viewed four flyers, in a randomized order, each of which announcing a real-world sponsor for a sporting event (i.e., NCAA Basketball Final Four—Coca-Cola, MLB World Series—Capital One, NHL Stanley Cup—Geico, and the FIFA Women's World Cup—Lay's Chips). Given the study aim of evaluating the effect of experiential engagement on brand outcomes, sponsorship stimuli were used to activate the brands in the context of sponsorship.

Following stimulus presentation, participants completed the six-item experiential engagement scale ($\alpha = 0.90$), followed by, in a randomized order (helping prevent common method bias; Podsakoff et al. 2003), the adapted Kunkel et al.'s (2022) single-item sports fandom self-perception measure where "teams and leagues" was replaced by "sports" ("When I think about [sports], I consider myself a..." 1 = *casual observer*; 7 = *hard-core fanatic*), and the Shank and Beasley's (1998) sport involvement inventory (8 items; e.g., "To me, sports are:" 1 = *Worthless*; 7 = *Valuable*, $\alpha = 0.92$).

After the three individual difference scales, participants completed a filler memory recall task. This served to temporally separate the predictor variables from the outcome variables (Podsakoff et al. 2003) and was not analyzed in this study. Subsequently in a randomized order, we measured the dependent variables for each of the four brands. Brand equity was measured with a four-item scale from Yoo and Donthu (2001; "It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand even if they are the same," "Even if another brand has the same features as X, I would prefer to buy X," "Even if there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X," "If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X," 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*, $\alpha = 0.88$). Brand word of mouth was measured with a three-item scale (Sun et al. 2021, who adapted it from Zeithaml et al. 1996; "I say positive things about this brand to other people," I recommend this brand to anyone who seeks my advice," "I encourage friends and relatives to do business with this brand," 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*, $\alpha = 0.82$).

8.2 | Data Analysis and Results

8.2.1 | Confirmatory Factor Analysis

8.2.1.1 | Experiential Engagement. We again assessed the unidimensionality of the experiential engagement construct

using CFA. The model exhibited excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2(9) = 19.01$, $p = 0.03$, RMSEA = 0.052, 95% CI [0.000, 0.091], CFI = 0.992, TLI = 0.987, SRMR = 0.017). Standardized factor loadings were sizable ($\beta > 0.60$) and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The composite reliability (CR) exceeded the suggested cut-off of 0.80, and the AVE value exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Table 3). These results support the convergent validity of the unidimensional experiential engagement construct.

Importantly, we also tested an alternative three-factor engagement model, comprising behavioral involvement, influence, and intimacy. The covariance matrix was not positive definite, and as such, the estimates are unreliable. Further, the hierarchical model does not converge, again supporting the unidimensionality of the experiential engagement scale.

8.2.1.2 | Sport Involvement. A single factor CFA was tested for sport involvement. The model demonstrated acceptable fit ($\chi^2(20) = 48.30$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.059, 95% CI [0.033, 0.084], CFI = 0.986, TLI = 0.980, SRMR = 0.020).

8.2.1.3 | Brand Equity. Brand equity was measured for all four brands of interest. We present the model fit for one of the brands (Coca-Cola) in the main text as results are similar across brands; models for the remaining brands can be found in the Supporting Information. The single-factor CFA model for brand equity demonstrated poor fit; allowing items two and four to covary improved model fit ($\chi^2(2) = 0.326$, $p = 0.57$, RMSEA = 0.000, 95% CI [0.000, 0.108], CFI = 1.000, TLI = 1.005, SRMR = 0.002).

8.2.1.4 | Brand Word of Mouth. Since brand word of mouth is a three-item measure, the model is just-identified and does not provide model fit statistics because there are zero degrees of freedom.

8.2.2 | Discriminant Validity

To examine discriminant validity for experiential engagement and sport involvement we use a chi-square difference test to compare the single-factor *vs.* two-factor models. Comparing the two models demonstrates support for discriminant validity between the Experiential engagement and sport involvement ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 33.258$, $p < 0.001$). We do not test for discriminant validity with sports fandom self-perception, which was measured using a single item.

We also test for discriminant validity between experiential engagement and the two dependent variables for the Coca Cola brand. Discriminant validity testing for the other three brands can be found in the Supporting Information. The chi-square test supports discriminant validity for experiential engagement and brand word of mouth ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 31.477$, $p < 0.001$), as well as experiential engagement and brand equity ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 173.35$, $p < 0.001$).

8.2.3 | Explanatory Power

We tested three different models. Experiential engagement (M1) or sport involvement (M2) or sports fandom self-perception (M3) was the independent variable in these models. The tested outcomes were brand equity and brand word of mouth in all three models. We compared models based on fit statistics used throughout the paper (i.e., CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR). Model M1 indicates better fit to the data in comparison to Models M2 and M3. Experiential engagement (Model M1) explains greater variance in brand equity (69%) and brand word of mouth (83%) than sport involvement (Model M2) or sports fandom self-perception (Model M3) (see Table 4).

Subsequently, we tested a SEM model, in which experiential engagement, sport involvement, and sports fandom self-perception were included as predictors of brand equity and brand word of mouth. The model exhibited good fit to the data ($\chi^2(199) = 346.62$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.043, 95% CI [0.034, 0.051], CFI = 0.977, TLI = 0.973, SRMR = 0.026).

Experiential engagement was a significant, positive predictor of brand equity ($\beta = 0.64$, $SE = 0.40$, $z = 2.86$, $p = 0.004$); while, neither sports fandom self-perception ($\beta = 0.05$, $SE = 0.08$, $z = 1.25$, $p = 0.21$) nor Sport involvement ($\beta = 0.18$, $SE = 0.36$, $z = 0.90$, $p = 0.37$) were significantly related to brand equity. For brand word of mouth, experiential engagement was a significant, positive predictor ($\beta = 0.60$, $SE = 0.54$, $z = 2.81$, $p = 0.005$); while, neither sport fanaticism ($\beta = 0.02$, $SE = 0.10$, $z = 0.61$, $p = 0.54$) nor sport involvement ($\beta = 0.32$, $SE = 0.47$, $z = 1.71$, $p = 0.09$) were significantly related to brand equity. See Supporting Information for the similar results of the other three brands.

8.3 | Discussion

Study 4 builds on the previous studies in two primary ways: First, we extend the results to an online, nonstudent sample. Second, we demonstrate that experiential engagement explains more variance in brand outcomes than sports fandom self-perception and sport involvement; additionally experiential engagement is a significant predictor of brand outcomes when controlling for sports fandom self-perception and sport involvement. As such, we not only find support for convergent and discriminant validity, as in the previous studies, but we also demonstrate the predictive power of experiential engagement. Limitations of the study, including the use of the single-item sports fandom self-perception measure, are discussed further in the General Discussion.

9 | General Discussion

9.1 | Theoretical Contribution

Current marketing approaches, such as brand placement, influencer marketing, and sponsorship, rely heavily on the context for engagement-related outcomes. We bring forward

TABLE 4 | Comparison of model fit for experiential engagement, sport involvement, and sports fandom self-perception on brand equity and brand word of mouth for Coca Cola.

	Model 1 experiential engagement	Model 2 sport involvement	Model 3 sports fandom self-perception
N	408	408	408
χ^2	98.35	163.43	35.10
df	61	86	17
P	0.002	< 0.001	0.006
CFI	0.989	0.982	0.990
TLI	0.986	0.978	0.984
RMSEA	0.039	0.047	0.051
[95% CI]	[0.020, 0.055]	[0.034, 0.060]	[0.020, 0.079]
SRMR	0.020	0.025	0.019
R^2 Brand Equity	0.690	0.649	0.194
R^2 Brand Word of Mouth	0.830	0.806	0.205

Note: See Supporting Information for model fit comparisons for Geico, Lay's, and Capital One.

experiential engagement as a concept that has been established across disciplines but that has not been recognized as having an essential nature across contexts. Our main theoretical contribution is to identify the essential nature of experiential engagement as a generalizable construct. In terms of theory building, we define experiential engagement and demonstrate, through four empirical studies, how this construct helps explain varied behaviors across contexts. Using the four empirical studies, we test a unidimensional scale that reflects three consistent facets present in engagement scales oriented towards a context: behavioral involvement, intimacy, and influence. We balance presenting a scale that represents these theoretical facets with providing a scale that is short and generalizable. Additionally, we demonstrate that experiential engagement is a significant predictor of brand outcomes even when controlling for sports involvement and sports fandom self-perception.

Our adapted scale should be useful in experiential contexts where engagement is often measured as behavior or by proxy. While simple behavioral measures and proxy variables can be useful, they may be limited in capturing experiential engagement and its influence on downstream consequences. Additionally, for those managing brands, measuring experiential engagement may offer valuable insights, particularly as an outcome of activation in sponsoring or creative interactions in art. The scale may also serve as an independent variable, such as treating experiential engagement as an individual difference. For example, in a sports context, individuals with higher versus lower experiential engagement may differ in their responses to sponsorship by brands.

Going forward, in terms of applied and academic research, short scales are typically preferred to limit respondent fatigue. Nonetheless, long scales are common. For example, music is an experiential consumption context where longer scales have been developed (e.g., 32-item MUSE scale, Chin and Rickard 2012) but where a shorter scale of experiential engagement might be useful. Similarly, esthetic arts engagement has been measured with a 20-item scale (Kemp 2015). Far more importantly, researchers regularly shorten long scales, often to the detriment of measurement quality. For example, a 6-year sample of articles in six top psychology journals found 164 shortened tests in 170 papers (Kruyen et al. 2013). These researchers found that mean items of measures reduced from 19.28 to 9.36, but that in 21 instances, shortening involved reduction of original items by 80 percent or more to a mean of 6.33. Several negative consequences of scale shortening were found; most notably, statistics-driven scale reduction strategies orienting to high alphas tended to select highly correlated items, thus narrowing construct coverage. Our scale, although short, covers all identified facets of the phenomenon.

9.2 | Future Directions

Relevant to assessing short scales, in Study 4, we compared an ultra-short (i.e., single item) sports fandom self-perception measure (Kunkel et al. 2022) to our short (i.e., six items) experiential engagement scale. While sports fandom self-perception was previously used to segment consumers, we aimed to assess brand outcomes. Kunkel et al. (2022) note that one limitation of the sports fandom self-perception measure is the low-end anchor of "casual observer," which still necessitates involvement with sports. Our findings show that sports fandom self-perception is relatively normally distributed, with a slight skew towards the high-end of the scale, so their concern of a limiting anchor, was not evident in our data.

The experiential engagement scale was developed with the objective of being utilized in any experiential context, but it was examined only in the context of sport and music. Testing the scale in additional experiential contexts is encouraged. We considered the use of the scale in the narrow sport context of track and field, but examination in other narrow contexts is encouraged to learn if there are boundaries on scale generalizability. Further, the approach of adapting items rather than

engaging in a traditional scale development procedure could also be criticized. In defense of the approach taken, we benefited from the work of others who tested their developed scales in varied contexts, often in field studies. Lastly, not only were our studies all conducted in the United States, but also, the systematic literature review was restricted to articles written in English, which may limit the generalizability of the results to contexts where English is not a common language. Future research could expand the literature search in other languages and perhaps test the scale in other languages, while considering linguistic and cultural equivalence (e.g., cultural invariance testing) after translation.

9.3 | Conclusion

In contrast to past research, we put forward a unidimensional, reflective experiential engagement measure and demonstrate its relationship with related variables (e.g., involvement, identification) using structural equation modeling. Structural equation modeling provides an advantage for testing nomological validity: it not only evaluates the relationships between variables but also assesses how well those variables function together as a system. Furthermore, we demonstrate that experiential engagement functions similarly in a nomological network across multiple contexts.

Acknowledgments

No financial or material support to report and no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

References

Abbasi, A. Z. 2023. "Specifying, Estimating and Validating Consumer eSports Engagement Composite Model: A Composite Confirmatory Approach." *EuroMed Journal of Business* 18, no. 3: 452–466.

Abbasi, A. Z., M. Asif, A. Shamim, D. H. Ting, and R. A. Rather. 2023. "Engagement and Consumption Behavior of eSports Gamers." *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC* 27, no. 2: 261–282.

Abbasi, A. Z., D. H. Ting, H. Hlavacs, L. V. Costa, and A. I. Veloso. 2019. "An Empirical Validation of Consumer Video Game Engagement: A Playful-Consumption Experience Approach." *Entertainment Computing* 29: 43–55.

Abkarian, H., D. Tahlyan, H. Mahmassani, and K. Smilowitz. 2022. "Characterizing Visitor Engagement Behavior at Large-Scale Events: Activity Sequence Clustering and Ranking Using GPS Tracking Data." *Tourism Management* 88: 104421.

Anderson, J. C., and D. W. Gerbing. 1988. "Structural Equation Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach." *Psychological Bulletin* 103, no. 3: 411–423.

Bagozzi, R. P. 1984. "A Prospectus for Theory Construction in Marketing." *Journal of Marketing* 48, no. 1: 11–29.

Bagozzi, R. P., Y. Yi, and L. W. Phillips. 1991. "Assessing Construct Validity in Organizational Research." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 36, no. 3: 421–458.

Barger, V., J. W. Peltier, and D. E. Schultz. 2016. "Social Media and Consumer Engagement: A Review and Research Agenda." *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* 10, no. 4: 268–287.

Baumgartner, H., and B. Weijters. 2012. "Commentary on 'Common Method Bias in Marketing: Causes, Mechanisms, and Procedural Remedies'." *Journal of Retailing* 88, no. 4: 563–566.

Bentler, P. M., and C. P. Chou. 1987. "Practical Issues in Structural Modeling." *Sociological Methods and Research* 16, no. 1: 78–117.

Biobrain. 2024. The Coachella Chronicles: Deciphering Attendees' Sentiments. https://www.biobrain.io/reports/the-coachella-chronicles-deciphering-attendees-sentiments.

Brandão, A., E. Pinho, and P. Rodrigues. 2019. "Antecedents and Consequences of Luxury Brand Engagement in Social Media." *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC* 23, no. 2: 163–183.

Brockmyer, J. H., C. M. Fox, K. A. Curtiss, E. McBroom, K. M. Burkhart, and J. N. Pidruzny. 2009. "The Development of the Game Engagement Questionnaire: A Measure of Engagement in Video Game-Playing." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45, no. 4: 624–634.

Brodie, R. J., L. D. Hollebeek, B. Jurić, and A. Ilić. 2011. "Customer Engagement: Conceptual Domain, Fundamental Propositions, and Implications for Research." *Journal of Service Research* 14, no. 3: 252–271.

Brown, T. A. 2015. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Applied Research*. Guilford Publications.

Browne, M. W., and R. Cudeck. 1993. "Alternative Ways of Assessing Model Fit." In *Testing Structural Equation Models*, edited by K. A. Bollen and J. S. Long, 136–162. Sage.

Calder, B. J., M. S. Isaac, and E. C. Malthouse. 2016. "How to Capture Consumer Experiences: A Context-Specific Approach to Measuring Engagement: Predicting Consumer Behavior Across Qualitatively Different Experiences." *Journal of Advertising Research* 56, no. 1: 39–52.

Calder, B. J., E. C. Malthouse, and U. Schaedel. 2009. "An Experimental Study of the Relationship Between Online Engagement and Advertising Effectiveness." *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 23, no. 4: 321–331.

Cameron, J. E. 2004. "A Three-Factor Model of Social Identity." *Self and Identity* 3, no. 3: 239–262.

Cheung, C. M. K., M. K. O. Lee, and X.-L. Jin. 2015. "Customer Engagement in an Online Social Platform: A Conceptual Model and Scale Development." In International Conference on Information Systems 2011 (Vol. 4, pp. 3105-3112).

Chin, T., and N. S. Rickard. 2012. "The Music Use (MUSE) Questionnaire: An Instrument to Measure Engagement in Music." *Music Perception* 29, no. 4: 429–446.

Churchill Jr., G. A. 1979. "A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs." *Journal of Marketing Research* 16, no. 1: 64–73.

Cornwell, T. B. 2008. "State of Art and Science in Sponsorship-Linked Marketing." *Journal of Advertising* 37, no. 3: 41–55.

Cornwell, T. B. 2025. *Sponsorship in Marketing: Effective Partnerships in Sports, Arts and Events* (3rd Edition. Routledge).

Cornwell, T. B., and Y. Kwon. 2020. "Sponsorship-Linked Marketing: Research Surpluses and Shortages." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 48, no. 4: 607–629.

Cornwell, T. B., and I. Maignan. 1998. "An International Review of Sponsorship Research." *Journal of Advertising* 27, no. 1: 1–21.

Cronbach, L. J., and P. E. Meehl. 1955. "Construct Validity in Psychological Tests." *Psychological Bulletin* 52, no. 4: 281–302.

De Geus, S., G. Richards, and V. Toepoel. 2016. "Conceptualisation and Operationalisation of Event and Festival Experiences: Creation of an

Event Experience Scale." *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 16, no. 3: 274–296.

Dessart, L., C. Veloutsou, and A. Morgan-Thomas. 2016. "Capturing Consumer Engagement: Duality, Dimensionality and Measurement." *Journal of Marketing Management* 32, no. 5–6: 399–426.

Dwivedi, A., D. Wilkie, L. Johnson, and J. Weerawardena. 2016. "Establishing Measures and Drivers of Consumer Brand Engagement Behaviours." *Journal of Brand Management* 23, no. 5: 41–69.

Dwyer, B., G. P. Greenhalgh, and C. W. LeCrom. 2015. "Exploring Fan Behavior: Developing A Scale to Measure Sport eFANgelism." *Journal of Sport Management* 29, no. 6: 642–656.

Ferreira, M., F. Zambaldi, and D. D. S. Guerra. 2020. "Consumer Engagement in Social Media: Scale Comparison Analysis." *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 29, no. 4: 491–503.

Fornell, C., and D. F. Larcker. 1981. "Evaluating Structural Equation Models With Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error." *Journal of Marketing Research* 18, no. 1: 39–50.

Haven, B. 2007. "Marketing's New Key Metric: Engagement." *Marketing*: 1–15.

Haws, K. L., K. L. Sample, and J. Hulland. 2023. "Scale Use and Abuse: Towards Best Practices in the Deployment of Scales." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 33, no. 1: 226–243.

Heggestad, E. D., D. J. Scheaf, G. C. Banks, M. Monroe Hausfeld, S. Tonidandel, and E. B. Williams. 2019. "Scale Adaptation in Organizational Science Research: A Review and Best-Practice Recommendations." *Journal of Management* 45, no. 6: 2596–2627.

Henseler, J., C. M. Ringle, and M. Sarstedt. 2015. "A New Criterion for Assessing Discriminant Validity in Variance-Based Structural Equation Modeling." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 43: 115–135.

Hirschman, E. C., and M. B. Holbrook. 1982. "Hedonic Consumption: Emerging Concepts, Methods and Propositions." *Journal of Marketing* 46, no. 3: 92–101.

Hollebeek, L. 2011. "Exploring Customer Brand Engagement: Definition and Themes." *Journal of Strategic Marketing* 19, no. 7: 555–573.

Hollebeek, L. D., M. S. Glynn, and R. J. Brodie. 2014. "Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation." *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 28, no. 2: 149–165.

Hollebeek, L. D., E. C. Malthouse, and M. P. Block. 2016. "Sounds of Music: Exploring Consumers' Musical Engagement." *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 33, no. 6: 417–427.

Hollebeek, L. D., M. Sarstedt, C. Menidjel, D. E. Sprott, and S. Urbonavicius. 2023. "Hallmarks and Potential Pitfalls of Customer- and Consumer Engagement Scales: A Systematic Review." *Psychology and Marketing* 40, no. 6: 1074–1088.

Holt, D. B. 1995. "How Consumers Consume: A Typology of Consumption Practices." *Journal of Consumer Research* 22, no. 1: 1–16.

Houghton, D. M., E. L. Nowlin, D. Walker, and B. T. McLeod. 2023. "Which Fantasy Sports Players Will Bet on Sports? A Trait-Based Predictive Model of Fantasy Sport Players Engaging in Sports Betting." *Sport Marketing Quarterly* 32, no. 2: 105–123.

Hu, L., and P. M. Bentler. 1999. "Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Covariance Structure Analysis: Conventional Criteria Versus New Alternatives." *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 6, no. 1: 1–55.

Isaac, M. S., B. Calder, and E. Malthouse. 2015. "Capturing Consumer Experiences: A Context-Specific Approach to Measuring Engagement." *Journal of Advertising Research* 56, no. 1: 39–52.

Keller, K. L. 2003. "Brand Synthesis: The Multidimensionality of Brand Knowledge." *Journal of Consumer Research* 29, no. 4: 595–600.

Kemp, E. 2015. "Engaging Consumers in Esthetic Offerings: Conceptualizing and Developing a Measure for Arts Engagement." *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 20, no. 2: 137–148.

Kline, R. B. 2023. *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling* (5th ed. Guilford Press).

Kruyen, P. M., W. H. M. Emons, and K. Sijtsma. 2013. "On the Shortcomings of Shortened Tests: A Literature Review." *International Journal of Testing* 13, no. 3: 223–248.

Kumar, V., L. Aksoy, B. Donkers, R. Venkatesan, T. Wiesel, and S. Tillmanns. 2010. "Undervalued or Overvalued Customers: Capturing Total Customer Engagement Value." *Journal of Service Research* 13, no. 3: 297–310.

Kunkel, T., A. Karg, and H. McDonald. 2022. "The Utility of a Single-Item Self-Perception Fandom Measure for Sport Consumer Segmentation and Predicting Behavior." *Sport Marketing Quarterly* 31, no. 2: 141–156.

Kwak, D. H., and S. R. McDaniel. 2011. "Using an Extended Technology Acceptance Model in Exploring Antecedents to Adopting Fantasy Sports League Websites." *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship* 12, no. 3: 43–56.

Lee, H., and C. H. Cho. 2023. "Virtual Brand Experience in Digital Reality Advertising: Conceptualization and Measurement." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 22, no. 2: 300–313.

MacCallum, R. C. 1995. "Model Specification: Procedures, Strategies, and Related Issues." In *Structural Equation Modeling: Concepts, Issues, and Applications*, edited by R. H. Hoyle, 16–36. Sage Publications, Inc.

MacKenzie, S. B., and P. M. Podsakoff. 2012. "Common Method Bias in Marketing: Causes, Mechanisms, and Procedural Remedies." *Journal of Retailing* 88, no. 4: 542–555.

Maree, T., and G. Van Heerden. 2021. "Beyond the "Like": Customer Engagement of Brand Fans on Facebook." *European Business Review* 33, no. 2: 255–271.

McDonald, H., R. Biscaia, M. Yoshida, J. Conduit, and J. P. Doyle. 2022. "Customer Engagement in Sport: An Updated Review and Research Agenda." *Journal of Sport Management* 36, no. 3: 289–304.

McDonald, H., and A. Karg. 2015. "Quantifying the Positive Effects of Sponsor Level, Length, Prominence and Relatedness on Recall and Residual Recall Rates Over Time." *Journal of Marketing Communications* 21, no. 5: 372–391.

Moher, D., A. Liberati, J. Tetzlaff, and D. G. Altman, T. PRISMA Group. 2009. "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The Prisma Statement." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 151, no. 4: 264–269.

Monferrer, D., M. A. Moliner, and M. Estrada. 2019. "Increasing Customer Loyalty Through Customer Engagement in the Retail Banking Industry." *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC* 23, no. 3: 461–484.

Mowen, J. C., and M. Minor. 1995. *Consumer Behavior* (4th ed.) Prentice Hall.

Ndhlovu, T., and T. Maree. 2022. "Consumer Brand Engagement: Refined Measurement Scales for Product and Service Contexts." *Journal of Business Research* 146: 228–240.

Netemeyer, R. G., W. O. Bearden, and S. Sharma. 2003. *Scaling Procedures: Issues and Applications*. Sage Publications.

Obilo, O. O., E. Chefor, and A. Saleh. 2021. "Revisiting the Consumer Brand Engagement Concept." *Journal of Business Research* 126: 634–643.

Opreana, A., and S. Vinerean. 2015. "Consumer Engagement in Online Settings: Conceptualization and Validation of Measurement Scales." *Expert Journal of Marketing* 3, no. 2: 35–50.

Pansari, A., and V. Kumar. 2017. "Customer Engagement: The Construct, Antecedents, and Consequences." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 45: 294–311.

De Pelsmacker, P., M. Geuens, and P. Anckaert. 2002. "Media Context and Advertising Effectiveness: The Role of Context Appreciation and Context/Ad Similarity." *Journal of Advertising* 31, no. 2: 49–61.

Pillet, J. C., K. D. Carillo, C. Vitari, and F. Pigni. 2023. "Improving Scale Adaptation Practices in Information Systems Research: Development and Validation of a Cognitive Validity Assessment Method." *Information Systems Journal* 33: 842–889.

Podsakoff, P. M., S. B. MacKenzie, J. Y. Lee, and N. P. Podsakoff. 2003. "Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88, no. 5: 879–903.

Popp, N., J. Simmons, S. L. Shapiro, and N. Watanabe. 2023. "Predicting Ticket Holder No-Shows: Examining Differences Between Reported and Actual Attendance at College Football Games." *Sport Marketing Quarterly* 32, no. 1: 3–17.

Quaderi, N. 2023. Clarivite. https://clarivate.com/academia-government/blog/supporting-integrity-of-the-scholarly-record-our-commitment-to-curation-and-selectivity-in-the-web-of-science/.

Raja, M. W., S. Anand, and I. Kumar. 2020. "Multi-Item Scale Construction to Measure Consumers' Attitude Toward Advertising Music." *Journal of Marketing Communications* 26, no. 3: 314–327.

Rammstedt, B., and O. P. John. 2007. "Measuring Personality in One Minute or Less: A 10-item Short Version of the Big Five Inventory in English and German." *Journal of Research in Personality* 41, no. 1: 203–212.

Raykov, T. 2012. "Scale Construction and Development Using Structural Equation Modeling." In *Handbook of Structural Equation Modeling*, edited by In. R. H. Hoyle, 472–492. The Guilford Press.

Rönkkö, M., and E. Cho. 2022. "An Updated Guideline for Assessing Discriminant Validity." *Organizational Research Methods* 25, no. 1: 6–14.

Russell, C. A. 2002. "Investigating the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Television Shows: The Role of Modality and Plot Connection Congruence on Brand Memory and Attitude." *Journal of Consumer Research* 29, no. 3: 306–318.

Vander Schee, B. A., J. Peltier, and A. J. Dahl. 2020. "Antecedent Consumer Factors, Consequential Branding Outcomes and Measures of Online Consumer Engagement: Current Research and Future Directions." *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* 14, no. 2: 239–268.

Shank, M. D., and F. M. Beasley. 1998. "Fan or Fanatic: Refining a Measure of Sport Involvement." *Journal of Sport Behavior* 21, no. 4: 435–443.

So, K. K. F., C. King, and B. Sparks. 2014. "Customer Engagement With Tourism Brands: Scale Development and Validation." *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 38, no. 3: 304–329.

Sprott, D., S. Czellar, and E. Spangenberg. 2009. "The Importance of a General Measure of Brand Engagement on Market Behavior: Development and Validation of a Scale." *Journal of Marketing Research* 46, no. 1: 92–104.

Sun, X., T. Foscht, and A. B. Eisingerich. 2021. "Does Educating Customers Create Positive Word of Mouth?" *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 62: 102638.

Tajdini, S., E. Ramirez, and G. L. Frankwick. 2022. "Developing a Multi-Dimensional Product Evaluation Scale." *Psychology and Marketing* 39, no. 2: 271–293.

Tanaka, J. S. 1987. "'How Big is Big Enough?': Sample Size and Goodness of Fit in Structural Equation Models With Latent Variables." *Child Development* 58, no. 1: 134–146.

Thakur, R. 2016. "Understanding Customer Engagement and Loyalty: A Case of Mobile Devices for Shopping." *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 32: 151–163.

Trail, G. T., and J. D. James. 2001. "The Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption: Assessment of the Scale's Psychometric Properties." *Journal of Sport Behavior* 24, no. 1: 108–127.

Vanstone, A. D., M. Wolf, T. Poon, and L. L. Cuddy. 2016. "Measuring Engagement With Music: Development of an Informant-Report Questionnaire." *Aging and Mental Health* 20, no. 5: 474–484.

Vivek, S. D., S. E. Beatty, V. Dalela, and R. M. Morgan. 2014. "A Generalized Multidimensional Scale for Measuring Customer Engagement." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 22, no. 4: 401–420.

Vivek, S. D., S. E. Beatty, and R. M. Morgan. 2012. "Customer Engagement: Exploring Customer Relationships Beyond Purchase." *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 20, no. 2: 122–146.

Wakefield, K. 2016. "Using Fan Passion to Predict Attendance, Media Consumption, and Social Media Behaviors." *Journal of Sport Management* 30, no. 3: 229–247.

Wakefield, K. L. 2012. "How Sponsorships Work: The Sponsorship Engagement Model." *Event Management* 16, no. 2: 143–155.

Wang, A. 2006. "Advertising Engagement: A Driver of Message Involvement on Message Effects." *Journal of Advertising Research* 46, no. 4: 355–368.

Waqas, M., Z. L. B. Hamzah, and N. A. M. Salleh. 2021. "Customer Experience: A Systematic Literature Review and Consumer Culture Theory-Based Conceptualisation." *Management Review Quarterly* 71: 135–176.

Yoo, B., and N. Donthu. 2001. "Developing and Validating a Multidimensional Consumer-Based Brand Equity Scale." *Journal of Business Research* 52, no. 1: 1–14.

Yoshida, M., B. Gordon, M. Nakazawa, and R. Biscaia. 2014. "Conceptualization and Measurement of Fan Engagement: Empirical Evidence From a Professional Sport Context." *Journal of Sport Management* 28, no. 4: 399–417.

Zaichkowsky, J. L. 1994. "The Personal Involvement Inventory: Reduction, Revision, and Application to Advertising." *Journal of Advertising* 23, no. 4: 59–70.

Zeithaml, V. A., L. L. Berry, and A. Parasuraman. 1996. "The Behavioral Consequences of Service Quality." *Journal of Marketing* 60, no. 2: 31–46.

Zhang, K., and Z. Katona. 2012. "Contextual Advertising." *Marketing Science* 31, no. 6: 980–994.

Supporting Information

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section.
Supplemental A: Engagement Scales with Context Table.
Supplemental B: Study 4 Additional Results.