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The Relationship Between the Behaviors of the Top 50 Most Endorsed Athletes in the World and the Monetary Value of Their Endorsement Deals

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The Relationship Between the Behaviors of the Top 50 Most Endorsed Athletes in the World and the Monetary Value of Their Endorsement Deals

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The relationship between behavior and the monetary value of endorsement deals
Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Issue

The top endorsed athletes in the world are most likely the ones who have the biggest impact on their sport. These athletes are usually among the best in their sport or they might have something special that creates a strong relationship between the athlete and his or her fans. It is possible to say that this relationship combined with their skills on and off of the fields, courts, or arenas is what makes these athletes special. Big companies all over the world feel attracted to these athletes and, as a result, they spend millions of dollars every year in order to make these athletes the face of their companies. This research investigates the relationship between the monetary values of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world and their behaviors. Companies spend millions of dollars every year on endorsement deals, so it is important that they pick the right athlete to represent them. Furthermore, the athletes that are being endorsed need to know if there is a possibility of gaining or losing endorsements based upon their behaviors. The methodology in this research utilizes Analysis of Variance to investigate this relationship.

The relationship between the behavior and the dollar amount ($) seems to be unclear since it may change depending on the reputation of the athlete, the sport that the athlete is involved with, how the public reacts to their behavior, as well as what the company anticipates the effect of the public perception to be on the reputation of the athlete and his or her value as a representative of the company. Although there are some studies indicating that behavior does have an impact on athletes’ endorsement deals and their finances, it is still difficult to predict whether or not behavior is the only factor. The audience for this research will be the marketers that are thinking about endorsing a top athlete, athletes themselves and anybody else who is interested in knowing more about the subject.

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**Research Objectives**

In a world where endorsing an athlete may cost millions of dollars, it is important to make sure that companies are endorsing the correct athlete(s). Should companies check to see if the athlete has committed any bad or good behaviors before endorsing the athlete? How important is it that companies cancel or stop advertisement deals with athletes after committing a behavior that might be considered negative in the eyes of the public? May notoriety be more important than behavior? In the case of an athlete engaging in a bad behavior, would it cost the athletes their endorsement deals forever or can time take care of the situation? People usually expect top athletes to behave as role models, to be involved in charities or community services and to stay as far away as possible from trouble. However, are these athletes behaving well in reality?

The main goals of this research will be to find out if there is a relationship between the monetary values of the endorsement deals of the top 50 endorsed athletes in the world and their behavior, as well as to answer the questions presented above.

**Researcher’s Own Contribution**

There have been different studies that compare the behavior of an athlete and its endorsement deals in a particular league or club, as well as studies that compare the sales of a company in relation to the endorsed athletes’ behaviors and performances. Likewise, there have been studies pertaining to athlete endorsements and their effects on the consumers. There have not been any studies conducted that show the comparison of the monetary value of endorsements of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world and their behaviors.

My contribution to this study will be to collect data about the behaviors of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world and to see if there is a relationship between their behaviors and the amount of money they receive in endorsement deals. While there are other possible causes that
could determine whether an athlete receives more or less money for their endorsements, this study will not focus on those factors, but will solely focus on their behaviors. Last but not least, it is possible that after conclusions have been drawn, companies could potentially use this study as a measurement to see what type of behaviors could be perceived as negative by the public.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Celebrity Effectiveness on Endorsement Deals

Companies spend a considerable amount of money every year on celebrities’ endorsement deals. Is endorsing a celebrity worth it to the companies and to the athletes? There have been multiple studies that have researched this topic and many have found that endorsing a celebrity does, in fact, have a positive impact on sales (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995). It helps in selling products, but could also be efficient in bringing over ideas and services. (Nelson, 2010) According to a study, celebrity endorsements have a positive impact on the revenues of the company, but only when the celebrity endorsing the product is very well liked and popular. (Silvera and Austad, 2004) This only works when the celebrity endorsing the product acts as though he or she truly likes the product. Selecting an athlete to represent a certain product is essential to make the advertisement credible. There are other studies that show an increase in sales due to the fact that many people want to affiliate themselves with the celebrity and, therefore, want to buy the product endorsed by the celebrity. (Bush and Martin and Bush, 2004) Other studies show that celebrity endorsement does not impact the sales of the company directly, but people become more aware of the product because of the celebrity representing the product. When there is an increase in brand awareness, it is much more likely that the overall revenues will increase. When people become aware of a certain brand that is well known, there is a greater chance that they will purchase that brand more often.
than others (Alnawas, 2010). At the end of the day, it all depends on how the customers perceive the behavior of that determined celebrity. Companies want to endorse celebrities that are well known and that will behave as a role model.

**Risks that Companies May Face While Endorsing a Celebrity**

If negative information about an athlete is revealed, the company that uses that athlete as their brand image could be at risk. People may potentially associate that particular brand with the athlete, which in return could associate a negative image with that brand (Amos & Holmes & Strutton, 2008). When the image of the athlete is shattered, the cash flow decreases significantly (Drewniak & Mahar & Russel, 2004). Other studies prove that when an athlete is involved in some kind of scandal, the stock market of the companies that endorse the athlete decreases. Their shareholders can also lose a large amount of money after a scandal (Knittel & Stango, 2010).

When endorsing an athlete for a product that is not related to the sport he or she plays, companies have to make sure that they know the popularity of the athlete, as well as the image the athlete holds within the public. If the public only appreciates the athlete for his talents regarding his sport, it would be recommended that the companies do not endorse the athlete for any non-sport products. Athletes that are also well known and well liked tend to be more effective for promoting non-sport products (Braunstein-Minkove & Zang & Trail, 2010).

In 2000, when former Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick was tried and convicted of charges pertaining to dog fighting, Nike was one of the first companies to cancel their contract with him. Vick returned to the NFL in 2009, and in 2011 Nike decided to start up his contract again and endorse him. People called it “Just re-do it” and said it was a gamble. Many people started to boycott Nike because of their decision to endorse Vick again. People started petitions
over the Internet trying to get signatures in order for Nike to drop the contract again with Vick. In this case, Nike not only risked their image, but they risked their revenues as well by signing a contract with a convicted felon. Another example of a company that put their image at risk regarding Michael Vick was Muscle-Pharm Corp., a nutritional supplement company which also endorsed the athlete (Bercovici, 2011).

**Athletes Listed as One of the Top 50 Most Endorsed Athletes Who Have Done or Have Been Involved in Some Type of Behavior That Could be perceived as Bad by the Public and by the Companies Who Endorses the Athletes**

The top athletes in the world are usually known because of their abilities on and off of the courts, arenas or fields. It is known that top athletes are expected to behave as role models at all times, but is that always true? Unfortunately, the answer is no. Here are some examples of athletes within the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world who have been involved in a type of scandal or have done something that could be perceived as negative behavior.

In 2015, after the AFC Championship game between the New England Patriots and the Indianapolis Colts, accusations that the New England Patriots had tampered with the footballs in a way that would help their quarterback, Tom Brady, were brought to light. The incident was called “Deflate-gate” and the investigations lead to the suspension of star quarterback Tom Brady for playing his part in the incident. It was not the first time the franchise had been involved in a scandal (“Spygate” in 2008) and the NFL commissioner, Roger Goodell, would not let this one get off that easy. As the investigation went on, the lawyer who was assigned to the case, Ted Walls, had concluded that it was highly likely that Tom Brady knew about the deflated balls. Goodell decided to punish the franchise, as well as the superstar himself. Tom Brady received a four-game suspension, which was later dismissed in federal court (Natta Jr. and Wickersham, 2015).
Lionel Messi has won the Best Player of the Year award five times and is probably one of the top five most known athletes in the world. Soccer is believed to be the sport that has the highest number of fans around the world, which could cause the athletes to be the center of attention for many. For a soccer player as popular as Lionel Messi to commit or be accused of committing a crime, the situation can be blown out of proportion within just a matter of seconds, which can be crucial for endorsers. In 2013, Lionel Messi and his father were both accused of tax evasion. Authorities believed that both Messi and his father defrauded more than $5 million dollars. The soccer player paid $6.75 million back in taxes plus interest, but according to CNN, a prosecutor said that both Messi and his father still needed to appear in court because they were potentially accountable and if convicted both could be sentenced to pay a $32 million dollar fine or serve 4 years in jail. (Goodman, 2013)

It seems as though tax evasion has become an increasing issue within the soccer world. Lionel Messi dealt with problems regarding tax evasion and now his teammate, Neymar Jr. is being accused committing the same crime. It all started in 2013 when Barcelona signed with Neymar Jr. The club that Neymar used to play for, Santos Futebol Clube, has said that Barcelona paid the athletes’ father money outside of their agreement so that the Catalan club could avoid taxes and also, Neymar’s father would facilitate the negotiation (Philips Erb, 2014). This was just one incident involving the soccer player who had his assets frozen by the Brazilian justice after being accused of tax evasion. It is not known if both cases were linked, but it seems like quite a coincidence (Dowley, 2015).

Scandals involving popular athletes do not only occur within football or soccer teams, but in all sports. PGA star, Phil Mickelson, was implicated in an illegal gambling, money-laundering

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case worth millions of dollars. Some sources say Mickelson was given up by a former bookie in exchange for a reduced sentence. That same former bookie is being accused of laundering around $2.75 million dollars for Mickelson between 2010 and 2013 (Datoc, 2015). That is not the only scandal involving the golfer. Mickelson has been accused of insider trading twice. In the first case, no evidence was found that the golfer was involved in a questionable trading of Clorox’s shares. The second case is still under investigation “over well-timed trades involving Dean Foods stock that netted him nearly $1 million dollar” (Harig, 2014).

NBA athletes have also been involved in scandals outside of the basketball arenas. Blake Griffin, who recently broke his hand during a fight with a staff member, has been surrounded by scandals. Regardless of the most recent incident, Griffin has showed an extremely explosive temper. Furthermore, in 2004 he was charged with one count of misdemeanor battery stemming from an incident at a strip club. “It’s alleged that Griffin battered the victim, Daniel Schuman, by squeezing his hand and shoulder and/or slapping him in the face (Si Wire, 2014).” It is important for athletes to understand that most of the companies that are interested in endorsing them are looking for more than just a good athlete, but rather, a well-rounded individual as well.

It is always important that the athletes, who are looking to get better endorsement deals remember that companies do not only look for criminal histories when making the decision to endorse an athlete. A large amount of major companies look at the athletes’ attitudes on and off of the courts. Some big examples, such as Tiger Woods and Wayne Rooney, did not commit any crimes, but lost endorsement deals due to their attitudes. In 2014, Kevin Durant posted a controversial picture, where he is seen smoking Hookah. Hookah is not illegal, but it is known for being harmful to one’s health. Durant was not committing a crime, but his attitude could have been
perceived as a negative behavior by many parents who do not want their kids thinking that just because Kevin Durant uses legal drugs, they can do the same. Durant has is entitled to use legal drugs, but he cannot expect everyone to agree with his decisions (Feldman, 2014).

**Athletes That Have Lost Endorsement Deals Because of Some Type of Behavior That Was Perceived as Bad by the Public, as Well as the Endorsers**

Athletes all over the world are earning millions of dollars in endorsement deals per year. Along with the endorsement deals comes the responsibility of behaving as a role model. When an athlete signs a deal with a company for an endorsement, the athlete essentially becomes the new face of the company immediately. Whether the athlete is the main sponsored athlete by that company or not, the attitudes and behaviors of that determined athlete will be judged by the company, as well as the customers of that company. Unfortunately, some of the endorsed athletes may end up behaving in a way that the company and customers may deem negative. Whether it is by mistake, or merely just stupidity, the endorsers are forced to take action. Below are some examples of athletes that have behaved in a way that was perceived as negative to the public, and therefore lost their endorsement deals.

Lance Armstrong, one of the best road-racing cyclists in the world, lost his endorsement deals after his involvement in a drug scandal. Lance had approximately 11 sponsorship deals on the morning of October 18th, 2012. That same afternoon, all sponsors, except for three, would terminate their relationship with the athlete. Some of the sponsors decided to let the deal expire, while others preferred to terminate the deal right away. Nike, who had been Armstrong’s supporter since 1996, was the first to announce that they would be ending their relationship with the athlete, stating that more than a thousand pages of evidence was difficult to ignore. Honey Stinger, Trek,
Easton-Bell Sports, 24-Hour Fitness and others also found it difficult to ignore the evidence and decided to end the sponsorship deals with Armstrong (Rottuno, 2012).

In 2003, one of the best athletes in the history of the NBA, Kobe Bryant, was accused of assaulting a 19-year-old girl in Colorado. Although the charges in this case were dropped and the athlete ended up only having to pay a large quantity of money to settle the case, the image of the athlete was damaged. McDonald’s, one of Bryant’s biggest endorsers, decided not to renew their three-year contract with him that expired that year. Another company that decided to cut their ties with Bryant was Ferrero of Italy, who also decided to let the contract expire and did not choose to renew it (Johnston, 2004). Kobe Bryant signed a multi-million dollar contract with Nike just before he was accused of assaulting the female. Nike did not drop the sponsorship, but they decided to keep Kobe’s face out of commercials and publicity for a while (Johnson, 2004).

Wayne Rooney, the captain for the England squad and the Manchester United soccer club, was caught cheating on his wife, who was five months pregnant, with a high-priced prostitute. The soccer player slept with the prostitute, Jennifer Thompson, about seven times over the course of four months. As it happened to the professional golfer Tiger Woods, Rooney was also supposed to lose around six million euros a year worth of sponsorship deals (Wright, 2012). One of Rooney’s biggest sponsors, Coca-Cola, first said that it was inappropriate to use him on their advertising campaigns, but that they would keep their relationship intact. Later on, the company decided that it was better to end their latest deal with Rooney, which began in 2006 and was thought to be worth around $2.5 million dollars (Seamark, 2011).

The latest case of an athlete having endorsement deals either terminated or suspended, happened to the world’s highest-paid female athlete in the world, Maria Sharapova. Sharapova has
been accused of taking performance-enhancing drugs. Sharapova failed to pass a drug test in the first major tournament of the year, the Australia Open. She was caught using a substance that was banned at the end of last year, the same substance that she had been taking since 2006. Sharapova gave a press conference apologizing to everybody for her mistake of not knowing about the prohibition of that substance. It may have been a mistake, but the case has generated a loss to Maria’s endorsement portfolio. Nike was surprised with the news and decided to suspend the relationship with Sharapova while the investigation continued. Porsche also stated that they would be postponing all sponsorship activities involving the athlete. TAG Heuer, famous Swiss brand, suspended all negotiations with the tennis player to renew a contract that expired at the end of last year (Mullen, 2016).

**Athletes Who Lost Endorsement Deals but Recovered Them in the Long Run**

As most people know, Kobe Bryant was accused of sexually assaulting a 19-year-old girl at a hotel room in 2003. Despite never getting charged for the crime, a lot of sponsors terminated their contracts with the famous basketball player. A few years later, many different companies who did not want anything to do with Kobe at that time were now offering millions of dollars to make him the face of their company. Popular companies, such as Nike and Coca-Cola, were using Kobe to sell their products. Coca-Cola had Kobe advertising their new product called Vitamin Water. Nike started a campaign featuring the shoes that Bryant would be using during the upcoming Olympic Games. Bryant was deemed MVP for the first time and would most likely receive a gold medal in the Olympic Games. He had completed his rehabilitation process and it was possible that the assault incident made him more mature on and off of the courts, which made him even more valuable to the companies endorsing him (Dahlberg, 2008).
In 2009, Tiger Woods went from being one of the most treasured athletes in the world to one of the most hated. The hate stemmed from a cheating scandal involving the athlete. It is believed that he lost around $50 million in annual income, his place as one of the top golfers in the world and his marriage. Everything seems to be going better for him now after six victories over the last year. Woods is back at the top of the rankings on the golf course and is one of the world’s highest-paid athletes. Several companies decided to support Woods again and the companies who never left are well respected. EA, Rolex, Upper Deck, NetJets and other companies are in Woods’ endorsement portfolio. Nike is still his largest endorser paying more than $20 million dollars per year. Nike has even started a new campaign called “Winning takes care of everything”. People believe that this campaign is related to Woods’ incident in 2009 (Badenhausen, 2013).

Athletes Who Have Given Back to the Community

Every athlete within the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world has been involved in giving back to the community. Whether it is by creating an organization, donating money, or participating in charity events, each athlete have given back in their own way.

Roger Federer, for example, is an athlete who is known for helping others and giving back to the community. Federer created his own foundation and according to the website, “The Roger Federer Foundation enhances a world where children living in poverty are able to take control of their future and actively shape it thanks to access to high quality early learning and education. We therefore wish to empower as many African children as possible by further developing existing educational services and early support in a sustainable way. Our goal is to maximize individual potential, build capacities of all relevant stakeholders in education and create opportunities. Although access to primary education has significantly increased in recent years, fundamental problems such as low classroom performance, poor attendance, high numbers of dropouts and low...
completion rates still persist or lack of early childhood education. The quality of early support and basic education is crucial as it is the foundation of all learning” (RF foundation, 2016). Federer has also won the Stefan Edberg award for sportsmanship 11 times over the past 12 years (Otto, 2015).

Lebron James has been the most notorious basketball player for a few years now. He has been known for his great abilities on the basketball court, as well as for the incredible work that he and his foundation have done. James will spend around $41 million dollars over time to send kids to college. He has partnered with the University of Akron to “provide four-year scholarships to the school for students of the “I Promise” program who qualify.” The plan is to provide a scholarship that will cover tuition and fees for more than one thousand kids. The criterion to qualify for the scholarship is still being determined between the foundation and the university. James said it was an honor for him to sponsor a plan like this, since he characterizes himself as a kid from Akron that could have used the same help (Ap, 2015).

Another great example of an athlete who has been extremely successful on and off of the track is Usain Bolt. The Jamaican runner, six-time Olympic gold medalist, has shown extreme care to his native country. Bolt donated approximately $1.3 million dollars to the school in which he attended growing up, William Knibb Memorial. Not only did he donate an incredible amount of money, but he has also donated a large amount of sporting equipment including 50 pairs of soccer cleats, shin pads, bats and several other types of equipment. The school has also received track and field equipment since 2002 as a request of Usain Bolt. He decided to donate to the school after it went through some financial struggles and threatened to cancel some of the sports (Bentley, 2015). Bolt gave a pair of autographed sneakers to nine-year-old Matthew Smith, who had his leg
amputated due to cancer. The story of the young kid touched the athlete’s heart since he uses his legs for his profession (Eaves, 2012).

**Research Hypotheses**

H$_0$: The mean monetary value of endorsements for the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world who have not showed any type of negative behavior is equal to those athletes who have showed some type of negative behavior.

H$_1$: The mean monetary value of endorsements for the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world who have not showed any type of negative behavior is more than those athletes who have showed some type of negative behavior.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

The data that will be used is nominal. Nominal data refers to the data that will be separated by names into two categories. In order to find out if there is a relationship between the behaviors of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world (behavior variable) and the monetary value of their endorsement deals ($ deals), the athletes who have committed any type of negatively perceived behavior will fall under category “1”. The athletes that have not shown any type of negative behavior are going to fall under category “0” (Index 1). The time frame that is going to be used in this research is between 1992 and 2015. Any behaviors before the year of 1992 or after the year of 2015 will not be used in the scientific section of this study. The year of 1992 was chosen because it was the year that the oldest athlete on the list, Phil Mickelson, debuted as a professional athlete. Likewise, 2015 was the last year that the ranking of the top 50 most endorsed players was posted. The statistical package, Minitab, was used to perform a statistical test called ANOVA, also known as Analysis of Variance. ANOVA tests the hypothesis that the means of two or more populations are equal. Since the independent variable is nominal and the dependent variable is quantitative, the best way to explain the relationship would be by running the ANOVA test.

Data Collection

All of the data needed to complete the research is available. Questionnaires and surveys, which are primary data, will not be used in this research due to the lack of value that it would add. This research will be based mainly around secondary data. Databases available on the Sherrod library website, as well as some databases from the Internet are going to be used. Credible websites, books, newspapers and magazines will also play a big role in this research. The main goal of this research is see if there is a relationship between the monetary values of the endorsement

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deals of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world and their behavior. For this particular research, data about scandals involving these athletes, as well as data of their endorsement deals will be very important in helping to find an accurate response to the hypothesis.

**Data Analysis**

As it was mentioned above, ANOVA will be the optimal measurement in this study. The sample of 50 athletes (appendix 1), including males, females and different sports, were divided into two categories called “0” and “1”. “0” represents those athletes who have not shown any type of behavior that could be perceived as negative by the public or their endorsers and “1” represents those athletes who have shown a type of behavior that could be perceived as negative by the public and their endorsers. Out of those 50 athletes, 24 athletes fell into the category of “1” and 26 into the category of “0”. The range of the monetary value of endorsement deals varied from $4.5 million to $58 million. A 95% confidence interval and a .05 alpha level were used because other studies suggested that an alpha level of .05 is a respectable compromise between the likelihoods of making Type I errors (occurs when rejecting the null hypothesis while, in fact, it is true) and Type II errors (occurs when failing to reject the null hypothesis while it is in fact false). The P-Value was expected to be relatively large because of the large standard deviations of $13,498,333 and $12,456,282. The P-Value was equal to .555, which is considered relatively high. If the P-value is higher than the alpha level, which is .05, then it is necessary to accept the null hypotheses.
Chapter 4: Findings

The goal of this research is to find out if there is a relationship between the behaviors of the top 50 endorsed athletes in the world and the monetary value of their endorsement deals. After running the ANOVA test and comparing the P-Value to the alpha level to see whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis, it was found that the P-Value of .555 was bigger than the alpha level of .05. Since the P-Value is bigger than the alpha level, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis, which states that “The mean monetary value of endorsements for the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world who have not showed any type of negative behavior is equal to those athletes who have showed some type of negative behavior.” In other words, there is not enough significant statistical evidence to support the idea that if an athlete engages in a behavior that could be considered as negative by his or her fans and endorsers, that there will be a negative effect on how much money the athlete receives from endorsement deals.
ANOVA Test Results:

One-way ANOVA: ($) Monetary Value of End. versus Committed a type of neg. beh.

Significance level \( \alpha = 0.05 \)

Factor Information

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Analysis of Variance

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Pooled StDev = 13009437

The relationship between behavior and the monetary value of endorsement deals
Chapter 5: Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations

Conclusions and Recommendations

One of the main goals of this research was to find out if there was a relationship between the way an athlete’s behaviors are perceived and the monetary value of their endorsements deals. Before running the statistical tests, I thought that behavior would have an influence on the monetary value of endorsement deals. The reason why I thought that was because some cases that were used in this research showed situations where athletes lost their endorsement deals because of a negative behaviors and because society as whole expects people to be punished for such actions. After running the tests and seeing the results, I discovered that there is no scientific evidence that an athlete’s behaviors that could be perceived as negative, might result in the athlete receiving less monetary endorsement deals.

Another main goal of this research was to show the athletes and the companies that endorse professional athletes, that behaviors can be perceived differently by society. People interpret situations in different ways. There were cases used in this study that showed athletes behaving poorly and they were criticized by some and defended by others. There were cases, such as Kobe Bryant and Tiger Woods, where athletes lost some of their endorsement deals, or were put aside for a period of time until they were able to rebuild their images. There were also cases, such as Michael Vick’s, where the athlete was sent to jail and lost all of his endorsement deals. It is important that both athletes and endorsers understand the importance of being able to see the types of behaviors that would most likely bring criticism and create problems for both the company and the athlete. It is also important for a company to be able to analyze and forecast situations that could possibly damage the athlete’s image as well as the companies’ image. This could be the difference between the loss and the profit for both parties.

The relationship between behavior and the monetary value of endorsement deals
In conclusion, no scientific proof has been provided to demonstrate that negatively perceived behaviors have an effect on an athlete’s endorsement deals. It is vital for athletes to understand that they must behave in the best way in order to avoid all possible problems. People see these athletes as role models and many of these people will either follow or try to imitate these athletes’ behaviors. Being able to perform in the best way on and off of the arenas, fields or courts may only increase the chances of people recognizing that particular athlete as an idol. If the athlete is able to do that, the chances of this athlete getting better endorsement deals and more money increases. For the companies out there looking to endorse a professional athlete, I recommend to run a background check on the athlete. Furthermore, the companies should choose an athlete that shares the same values that the company holds and that can best represent the company’s interest.

**Limitations**

There are some limitations attached to this study. The first important limitation to this study is the limited amount of information about the athletes and their endorsement deals. Companies have different contracts with endorsed athletes. Some companies do not allow the athletes to share the amount offered in the contract. Similarly, there are athletes who receive money for some individual campaigns or event appearances and it is difficult to determine whether that money is accounted for as endorsement money. A second limitation is that because of these athletes’ notoriety, some of the stories involving these athletes can be misinterpreted and sometimes the truth is unknown. It is important that the researcher uses reliable sources, such as credible websites, books, newspapers and magazines.

A third limitation in this study might be that the athletes in the sample are mostly the best within their respective sports. This means that not every athlete would face the same consequences when behaving in a negative way. The situations when top athletes, such as Roger Federer, engage
in a negative behavior compared to when players that are not as well known as Federer engage in a negative behavior, are approached differently by society and by the endorsers. Essentially, it could be worse for an athlete such as Roger Federer because more people would relate to the incident making it far more intense than it should be. On the other hand, it could also be easier on Federer, because endorsers would think twice before letting an athlete of his popularity go. Also, none of the athletes committed any type of extreme negative behavior that could result in prison time and terminate all of their endorsement contracts immediately.

A fourth limitation is the positive behaviors of these top 50 athletes. It may be a limitation because every single athlete in the list has either been involved in a type of charity or has started a charity of their own. This means it would be difficult to take the positive behaviors into consideration when comparing behavior and monetary value for endorsement deals. The last limitation for this study is that the researcher is not taking into consideration what other factors led to those athletes becoming one of the top 50 most endorsed athletes in the world or why one athlete gets more endorsement money than others. Gender, age, type of sport and popularity have no influence on this research. For example, if an athlete plays a sport that is more popular around the world compared to a sport that is more popular in a particular country, it does not interfere with this study. The only aspect being analyzed in this study is whether an athlete’s involvement in a scandal has an effect on the amount of money they receive in endorsement deals.
Work Cited


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Appendix

1) List of top 50 most endorsed players in the world (Weber, 2015) - their respective sports - the monetary value of their endorsement deals - the category they fall into according to their respective behaviors:

1- Roger Federer – Tennis - $58,000,000 – 0
2- Tiger Woods – Golf - $50,000,000 – 1, Caught cheating on his wife
3- Phil Mickelson – Golf - $44,000,000 – 1, Insider trading and laundering money
4- Lebron James – Basketball - $44,000,000 – 0
5- Kevin Durant – Basketball - $35,000,000 – 1, Posted a picture smoking hookah
6- Rory Mcilroy – Golf - $32,000,000 – 0
7- Novak Djokovic – Tennis - $31,000,000 – 0
8- Rafael Nadal – Tennis - $28,000,000 – 0
9- Cristiano Ronaldo – Soccer - $27,000,000 – 1, Arrested for a rape allegation (The Sun, 2005)
10- Mahendra Dhoni – Cricket - $27,000,000 – 1, Accused of covering up for fixed games
    (Tnn, 2014)
11- Kobe Bryant – Basketball - $26,000,000 – 1, Accused of raping a 19-year-old girl
12- Maria Sharapova – Tennis - $23,000,000 – 0
13- Lionel Messi – Soccer - $22,000,000 – 1, Tax evasion
14- Usain Bolt – Track & Field - $21,000,000 – 1, Accused of fleeing the scene after car accident and accused of using enhancement drugs (ABC news, 2012)
15- Neymar Jr. – Soccer - $17,000,000 – 1, Tax evasion and irregularities in contract
16- Andy Murray – Tennis - $16,000,000 – 0

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17- Floyd Mayweather – Boxing - $15,000,000 – 1, Domestic violence, went to jail for two months (Scott, 2015)

18- Derrick Rose – Basketball - $15,000,000 – 1, Accused of raping ex-girlfriend (Almasi, 2015)

19- Kei Nishikori – Tennis - $15,000,000 – 0

20- Serena Williams – Tennis - $13,000,000 – 1, was suspended for threatening a referee and had to pay a fee (Marija, 2009)

21- Manny Pacquiao – Boxing – 12,000,000 – 1, lost endorsement deals after gay comments (Garcia, 2015)

22- Dwyane Wade – Basketball - $12,000,000 – 1, $15,000 fee for flipping off fans and cheating scandal (Tate, 2014)

23- Peyton Manning – Football - $12,000,000 – 1, accused of assaulting a trainer at University of Tennessee (Silverman, 2016)

24- Justin Rose – Golf - $12,000,000 – 0

25- Drew Brees – Football - $11,000,000 – 0

26- Jordan Spieth – Golf - $11,000,000 – 0

27- Caroline Wozniacki – Tennis – $11,000,000 – 0

28- Gareth Bale – Soccer - $9,500,000 – 0

29- Dale Earnhardt Jr. – Nascar - $9,000,000 – 0

30- Carmelo Anthony – Basketball - $8,000,000 – 1, charged for DUI and sentenced for probation in 2008 and marijuana possession at the airport (ESPN, 2008)

31- Eli Manning – Football - $8,000,000 – 1, trial for selling forged memorabilia (Florio, 2012)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Endorsement Value</th>
<th>Behaviors/Scandals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Aaron Rodgers</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$7,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>JJ Watt</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$7,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Wayne Rooney</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td>caught cheating on pregnant wife</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Sergio Aguero</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Tom Brady</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td>“deflate-gate” scandal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Blake Griffin</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
<td>charged with misdemeanor, battery</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Jimmie Johnson</td>
<td>Nascar</td>
<td>$6,500,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Mesut Ozil</td>
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<td>accused of cheating on wife with former friend’s girlfriend</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(Holden, 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Ana Ivanovic</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Russel Wilson</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Zlatan Ibraimovich</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Chris Paul</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Danica Patrick</td>
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<td>incident on a race, had to pay a fee of $50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(James, 2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Steph Curry</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>$5,500,000</td>
<td></td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Tony Romo</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td></td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>Cesc Fabregas</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>James Rodriguez</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
<td>dramatic 125mph police chase as Real Madrid star drove to training (Shergo, 2016)</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>Luis Suarez</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
<td>Suspended for four months for biting other players (BBC, 2014)</td>
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<td>Russel Westbrook</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
<td></td>
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