



The effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty: *The case of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs*

By: **AHMED HUSSEN**

A thesis submitted to the school of graduate studies of Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of MA in Marketing Management in School of Commerce

Advisor: **Mulugeta G/Medhin (Ph.D)**

June, 2016

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Statement of Certification

This is to certify that **Ahmed Hussen** has carried out his research work on the topic entitled **“The effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty: the case of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs”** is his original work and is suitable for submission for the award of Master’s Degree in Marketing Management.

Advisor: Dr. Mulugeta G/Medhin
June, 2016

Declaration

I certify that this research paper entitled “**“The effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty: the case of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs”**” has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree.

I also certify that the thesis/project has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Declared by:

Name: _____

Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopia Coffee Football Clubs. A structured questionnaire and interview was developed. The hypotheses were simultaneously tested on a sample of 347 fans out of 384 distributed, giving a valid response rate of 90.36 percent. Several analytical techniques were used to assess the relationships among the variables under investigation such as correlation and multiple regressions. The applications used to analyze and examine the hypotheses are the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The findings of this study have shown a significant effect of brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image on fan base loyalty at the level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The mean scores of brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty range from 2.27 to 2.66 which is below average. The results are useful in identifying areas for strategic focus to increase the fan base loyalty of football clubs. As evident from the finding section that the study was conducted in two selected football clubs in Addis Ababa, applicability of the results in other football clubs may result differently. Further, as the study is conducted in the football industry, application of the same in other team sports, like; athletics, volleyball and other team sports may not come up with the same findings.

Key words: Brand Association, Brand Awareness, Brand Identity, Brand Image, Correlation, Fan Base Loyalty, Multiple Regression and Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Soccer is a multibillion dollar business that represent a vital and weighty factor in national and local economies. With the growth of the sports business sector's importance over the last few years, the professionalization of football clubs structure and management has increased correspondingly. As a result the terms of business in this industry have completely changed; with professional football clubs turning in to corporate businesses (Desbores, 2007). Hence, the competition between football clubs is no longer restricted to the sports field but extends to the economic domain. Moreover, this industry also faces competition from other types of sport and entertainment. (Hock, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2009).

Millions of people around the world play football and its industry produces greater revenue than any other sports. Important football tournaments, such as the World Cups generate a higher degree of interest than even the Olympic Games. Professional football leagues around the world, such as the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga attracts huge attention from millions of global fans. Described as the "the world's game", football has long been a source of competition, history and champions (Anon, 2005). Given the degree to which football teams are commercializing and diversifying in terms of their business interests, it is becoming increasingly necessary to develop a consumer base which is willing and able to purchase products and services offered by the sports team franchise, European and South American teams have thus far led this development, however Asian and African teams are also now following their European counterparts lead. The most significant difference between those groups may be in their brand value.

Nowadays, many sport clubs are acting like commercial firms, this has strongly influenced the adoption of marketing competencies and practices. According with Keller et al. (2002) in an increasingly competitive world populated with millions of marks, it must be taken into account not only the differentiation of the brand but also the benchmark market and what it has in common with the other competitors. In this vein, each football club is a brand like other sectors of economic activity. Sport managers are beginning to view their teams as brands to be managed. The aim of

professional sport teams is to create a strong brand, which influence the behavior of actual and potential fans and which create brand extension across merchandising categories and geographical boundaries. Therefore, a stable fan base as an imperative driver of a club brand competitive advantage.

The Ethiopian Premier League is founded in 1944 E.C. with five member teams. There are different football clubs in Ethiopia. Saint George Football Club, Ethiopian Coffee Football Club, Dedebit Football Club and Mebrat Hail Football Club are among the most popular football clubs who have strong fan base. This research study focused on the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of selected football clubs in Addis Ababa. Despite the high level interest of Ethiopian people in football among all other team sports, the interest and popularity of the Ethiopian Premier League in general and the football clubs in particular is relatively very low.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE FOOTBALL CLUBS

Although there is no complete accordance of fact and figures regarding the origin of the globally recognized and loved game of soccer, it was believed to really begin to take shape in England. The history of the game in Ethiopia seemed to have the same conclusion. Historical documentation if not recorded ended up to give an estimated date and place of on the histories of current sport activities; and as such they do not exaggerate the truth but merely support the given circumstantial fact. In general speaking of soccer in Ethiopia and its history, we need to research the origin to objectively base our discussion and writings. Certainly in the case of soccer there seems to be a missing link.

The St. George Club was brought into existence some 72 years ago. If questions like when, where and by who were raised then there are few supporting documents to establish some kind of accuracy. Documents of course are verifying facts. The club in general was founded at the Arada neighborhood in December 1928 with the united effort of the area residents with such people like Mr. Ayale Atnaf and George Dukes. Certainly when mentioning the founders, it always needed to have the famed Mr. Yidnekachew's name along with others; he joined the club after two month of its existence (Saint George F.C, 2015).

Prior to three decades and half, after the Derg Regime established itself and started to impose its ideology upon others, in the year 1976 soccer lover civil servants of the country commenced to engage in football when opportunities appeared to be arisen. At the time, there was a factory namely Kefa Coffee Sifting/Coffee Board/. And the following account was happened during the time soccer was regarded as a part time job and politics was the regular norm of the society: The employees of the factory as well as close friends Solomon Befikadu and Nesredin Kedir came up with an idea to establish a football club which was conceived by them for long period, and started to register players. The rise of Ethiopia Coffee was skyrocketed and the club strode from fame to fame and the period was 1984. After the establishment of Addis Ababa sport council and the decision to enclose sport clubs under the council, the club was restructured anew and established itself on solid foundation, thus it hired Siyoum Abate as head coach. Throughout the coming 10 years Coffee Gebeya has savored a number of victories and passed through lots of roller coaster. The coach Siyoum Abate was told to endorse new players and to solidify the club by the guardian angel of the club Lieutenant Fekade Mamo. Thus, the club managed to persuade marvelous players such as Million Begashaw from Maritime and Mengistu Bogale from Berta Sport Club as well as a number of other players from various places, and as a result the club appeared to be solid and much stronger than before (Ethiopian Coffee F.C, 2015).

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In professional sports, the brand is one of the primary concerns of managers and potential sponsors. It is the key element that allows a team to differentiate itself from its competitors, even if the consumer doesn't always perceive the product as having concrete attributes (Gladden et al., 1998). High level of brand awareness as well as a positive brand image increase the probability of brand choice, generate higher consumer loyalty and vulnerability to competitive marketing actions (Keller, 1993). In addition as the battlefield for consumers keeps expanding, a sport team brand has to develop internationally to remain competitive. In light of this dilemma, the careful choice of an appropriate brand management practices become critical in the future success and marketing performance of football clubs.

The biggest challenge facing the leading clubs is in developing the relationship that they hold with their fans and converting the positive relationship in to commercial revenues. The club's aim should be to move a fan from someone who is well aware of the club to someone who identifies himself with the club. The attached fans devotes larger parts of their times to their clubs and therefore have a larger propensity to purchase goods and services relating to the teams and their sponsors (brand finance, 2007).

Despite the high level of interest of Ethiopians in football among all other team sports, the interest and popularity of Ethiopian Premier League in general and the football clubs in particular is relatively very low. The football clubs have a low level of brand awareness and equity. Many football experts regard this problem as the result of faint or weak fan base. The average attendances of football games compared with other leagues marked a small number of attendances. Those problems indicate that football clubs have failed to attract fans and make them enthusiastic and loyal to a team (Super sport, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary for them to make a new brand management strategy based on consumer research.

It is widely accepted that the management of professional sports team have in mind the ultimate goal of encouraging strong team loyalty, in order to create future opportunities for the teams. Existing researches on sport branding suggests that fans who are deeply identified with a specific team tend to hold an extremely high degree of loyalty and frequently regard the team as being central to their identity (Funk & James, 2006). The degree of identification between fans and sport teams is the best logical predictor of team loyalty.

In general, these football clubs need to develop an effective brand management strategy and practices for positive relationship with their customers in order to gain a higher degree of team loyalty and a remarkable marketing performance. It is important to understand why customers enter in to relationship with football clubs. It is broadly accepted that when consumers identify themselves with a particular football club, the team loyalty should be strengthened. Therefore, identification with their fans is reasonably the key issue for all football clubs.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on my research the following questions were responded:-

Main Research Question:

To what extent do brand management practices affect the fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs?

Sub Research Questions:

- To what extent club brand awareness affects the fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs?
- To what extent club brand identity affects the fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs?
- Why club brand association affects the fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs?
- How club brand image affects the fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs?

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

The overall objective of this study is to examine the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs.

Specific Objectives:

- To analyze the effect of club brand identity on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs.
- To examine the effect of club brand awareness on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs.
- To investigate the effect of club brand association on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs.
- To examine the effect of club brand image on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Football is the sector of research because strong, unwavering and durable consumer brand relationship features this industry. Football fans are consumers with special emotions and behavior with their football club brand. Fans highly involved with a club have long term relation with its brand, can be extremely loyal and hold a particular team as central to their identity. This research paper have different significances:

- The study is a very important document to fill the gap between theory and practice.
- It can be used as a stepping stone for other researches and studies in this interesting area. Since, there is a very high limitation of prior studies in the football industry.
- The study recommend a new brand management model for professional football clubs in Ethiopia.
- The study is also help to understand the significant relationship between fans and teams that have been regarded as the most important branding aspect in the football industry, research lags behind this development, especially in Ethiopia which is one of the sport developing countries.
- The study will help different stakeholders who have special interest in football investment.
- The study will also help the government to strictly focus on the football industry and to increase the role of football in the country's economic boom.
- It provides sufficient information for the readers about the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of professional football clubs.

1.7. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is done on two football clubs in Addis Ababa:

- *Saint George Football Club*

- *Ethiopian Coffee Football Club*

Since, those selected football clubs have greater fan base and are well known by the football family. These football clubs are the most successful not only on the field but also in commercialization when we compared with other football clubs in Addis Ababa. The study is concentrated on the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of those selected football clubs.

1.8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The following are the limitations that I faced while conducting the study:

- The study is conducted on selected football clubs; therefore, it is difficult to make full generalizations about other football clubs.
- Research requires availability of sufficient time, money and other resources which all are scarce.

The following are actions or activities undertaken in order to reduce the negative impact of the limitations:

- Extensive study about the activities of those football clubs and relating them to existing theories and literature in order to increase the level of generalizability.
- Before collecting data, proper briefing was given to the participants in order to make it clear that they should give the proper information without making assumptions.

1.9. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is structured in five chapters as follows; following introduction in the first chapter, chapter 2 contains a review of the literature including the different elements. An in-depth literature study is done and a conceptual framework is presented. The research design and methodology is presented in chapter 3. Specifically, this chapter shows the research sampling method followed by methods used in collecting data are all outlined. Furthermore, statistical methods used to analyze the data are also explained. In chapter four, the results and findings of the study are discussed. Finally, the last chapter enclosed summary of major findings, conclusion drawn, recommendations and areas where further research may be productive.

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many kinds of existing theories and definitions which are related to brand strategy and management for sports teams. In this chapter, the literature on brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image, brand loyalty and fan base loyalty are chosen to apply the selected theories to the team sports context. Furthermore, the following sub-sections try to generate a conceptual model and hypotheses.

2.1. BRANDS

A brand can be defined as a name and/or symbol (such as logo, trademark, or package design) which is intended to distinguish the goods or services of a vendor or group of vendors from those of other vendors in the market, and to enable consumers to identify the goods of a particular vendor. Branding serves the dual function of both identifying the source of the product to the customer and guaranteeing quality, while also protecting the producer from being confused with competitors selling seemingly identical goods (Aaker, 1991). In this sense, brands enable consumers to identify and bond with a particular product or service (Weilbacher, 1995). From the customer's perspective, a brand can be the expression of an accumulation of all their experiences of the product or service which it represents, and is the main point of contact between the customer and the product (Kapferer, 2004). A successful brand identifies the good or service customer in such a way as to communicate relevant, unique qualities which correspond to the needs or desires of the consumer (Chernatony and McDonald, 1998).

The word brand, derives from the practice of branding. Farmers and cowboys alike used a steaming hot branding iron to burn the initials of the owner on livestock. This enabled farmers to recognize their own cattle and buyers to distinguish the cattle of certain farmers from other, possibly inferior ones. Many sources have their own description for the word brand and that definition has changed over the course of time quite dramatically. At least in the view of some modern experts on brands and brand management. The American Marketing Association (AMA) states that brands are a name, sign, symbol, design or a combination of them that are intended to identify products or services of one seller and to differentiate them from those of another seller. This definition includes many traditional elements of brands such as the factors related to visual identity and clear external elements associated to companies and brands.

A different approach and definition is provided in *Radikaali Brändi*, by Nando Malmelin and Jukka Hakala. They state that a brand is no longer comprised by just these elements mentioned by the AMA. By their definition brands are not only tangible representations of a product, service or company, but hold within them many intangible elements that are more difficult to measure. According to the new, more holistic definition of a brand, they are no longer a marketing-driven and advertising driven concept, but a more comprehensive concept that incorporates everything a company does. A clear evolution can be seen in the theory of brands from the previously mentioned

definitions. In the 1930's the brand was considered a particular trademark or logo. It was a tangible representation of the product and whom it belonged to. The 1980's definition of *The Oxford American Dictionary* states a more commercial view with defining a brand as goods of a particular make. Brands are somewhat obscure by definition. Some suggest that the term incorporates everything a company does and stands for and some take apart the concept into smaller, easier to measure, sub-categories. These sub-categories are related to the company, company leadership, employees and all identifiable attributes of the company. Even though there are many different approaches and views on what brands are, it has been stated that the concept is highly dynamic and prone to change by nature. A brand is not only something that incorporates the product, name, or logo. It is a concept that drives the whole organization and thought processes associated with it. It combines communication and action (*Radikaali Brändi*; Malmelin, Hakala 2008).

Today the word brand has gained more and more abstract meanings. A brand means all the inceptions, associations, descriptions, ideas and promises that develop in consumers' minds about a product or business (Brändäys 2007-2010). Brand is the added value for what the consumer is ready to pay more, compared to an ordinary, unnamed product that fulfills the same desire (Laakso 2003). Keller (2008) concludes American Marketing Association's definition of a brand as follows: “--- whenever a marketer creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he or she has created a brand.”

Not only physical products can be branded but many other things; services, distributors, online products and services, people and organizations, sport, art and entertainment, geographical places and ideas according to Keller (2008). A strong brand can deliver for a company market leadership, a stable or sustainable competitive advantage, international reach, a platform from which to expand activities and long-term profit. It is a huge asset for companies, in brand marketing terms it is equity (Arnold 1998).

Nowadays, with the increased competition in all business areas having a brand is not a choice, rather it is an inevitable necessity that eventually will be causes increase profitability and create competitive advantage. (Amini 1392). Nowadays, if the brand for organizations be not valuable par with financial assets and their technological, unmistakable it isn't less valuable of them. This topic is important so that experts in this field know the brand as the character and brand characters can stated core and the nearest variable in the consumer decision making when purchasing. Many companies especially those that have brand of systems have found that creating a successful brand is needy mobilize the whole organization. Every aspect of the organization, including the behavior and performance of employees especially those that are active in the field communication with customers and also heads of the companies should be aware the value of brand and always reflect in their work. (Batra & homer 2011).

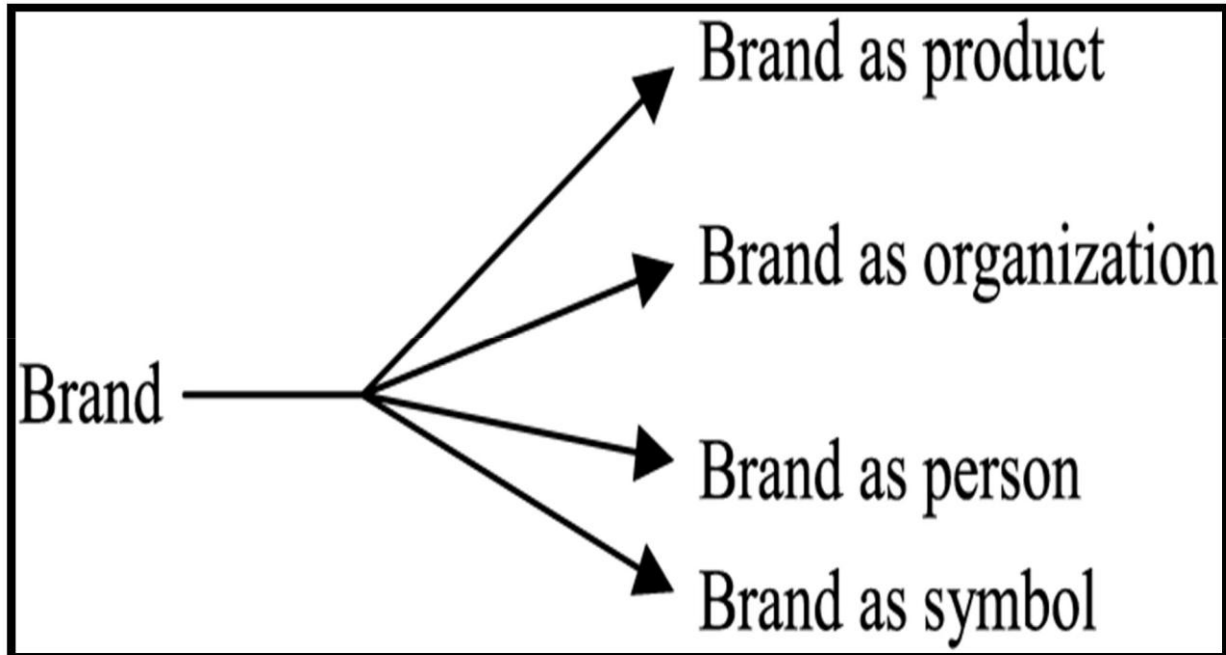


Figure 2.1: Brand Perspective

Source: Brand perspectives after Aaker's definition (Aaker 1996, 79.)

Branding challenges in the sport club setting

As mentioned earlier brands very much exist in the minds of the customers, making the management of brands challenging (Schilhaneck, 2008). To make this even more difficult, the sport club setting is characterized by a number of challenges particular to this field.

Heterogeneous customer groups: There are a number of heterogeneous customer groups with different backgrounds and preferences that sport teams have to take into account (Gladden, Milne & Sutton, 1998; Schilhaneck, 2008). A crucial challenge for sports teams can be the spectator base being very complex consisting of men, women and children with different backgrounds and ideas of what they want to see and experience during a sporting event (Schilhaneck, 2008). However sport teams also have other key audience groups a part from the direct fans (regular spectators). Sponsors, media and the municipality can be such groups, all with potentially different interests that the club have to have in mind when trying to shape the image of their brand (Schilhaneck, 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2002).

Service quality & characteristics: The sporting event is characterized by a number of unique service characteristics being short lived, intangible, the outcome hard to control and also subjective in the eyes of the fans. Different customer groups have different expectations and this is a particular challenge for sport services (Grönroos, 2007). All these factors contribute to the complexity of branding in the sport club setting (Gladden, Milne & Sutton, 1998; Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The sporting event itself (the game) is produced and consumed at the same time, customers are not

left with anything other than the experience of watching the game (Schilhaneck, 2008) and the game becomes a significant part of the service delivery process (Ross, 2006). In branding of products, customers are left with a tangible product that represents the brand (Aaker, 1991). Consequently, when sports being more like a service, substitute methods of branding have to be identified to overcome these discussed challenges. A consistent level of quality is said to be a condition for a successful brand (Grönroos, 1990). Problems arise for all service firms in maintaining a consistent level of quality in their services due to the interaction and involvement of the customer in the service process, the unpredictability and diverse customer expectations and the reliance on employees to maintain a consistent level of quality throughout each service encounter (Grönroos, 2007).

On-field performance: People like to associate themselves with a winning team and to have a high performance team with a winning record can certainly help sport organizations to leverage their brand. This is especially true if teams do not yet have a winning history to look back on and is in the beginning of creating both a strong team and brand (Richelieu, 2003). However Schilhaneck (2008) points to team performance also as a particular challenge in the branding process for sport clubs and that the quality of the product (team production) and the uncontrollable factor of the opposing team can make team performance an obstacle to building a strong brand. Couvelaere & Riche lieu (2005) underlines that a minimum of team success actually is a prerequisite for sports teams to maintain in order for them to expect fans to associate themselves with the team and brand. Further, for teams to expect that fans will help promote the club and moreover for the club to have the foundation to build a successful brand a certain winning record is required (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). Field performance is an underlying dimension in sports and to capture loyal fans to a losing team is a difficult task (Ross, 2006). People are less likely to associate themselves, get social approval and self-esteem by identifying themselves with a poor performance team. Still the success of a sport club does not mean that teams have to win every game to reach a high level of emotional and loyal commitment from fans, but should parallel to the quest for success on the field attempt to establish external values in the minds of customers (Richelieu, 2003). In times of struggle, regarding field performance, external values will help to keep fans loyal and committed (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005).

Finances and management: Financial stability is one of the keys to be able to properly adopt a brand strategy that teams wish to implement (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). Without a stable economy teams often have more than enough working out financial issues and this draws attention away from developing the brand, as much as it obstructs the actual possibilities to allocate resources to brand and marketing efforts (Richelieu, 2003). Further Schilhaneck (2008) mentions the competence of management as a potential challenge to for example gaining contact and achieving sponsorship. Sponsorship is one crucial activity for sports teams as it can add significantly to the revenues of sports organizations (Speed & Thompson, 2000). According to Speed and Thompson (2000) companies willing to involve themselves in sponsorship often look for status of the sponsored event/team or often events/teams they have a personal liking to. In order for teams to gain sponsorship they should therefore look for companies with a personal interest in the sport or team and try to create an experience that attracts companies. Schilhaneck (2008) adds to the discussion by saying that the reputation and network of skilled and experienced managers can help overcome insecurity for companies to involve themselves in sponsorship. On the other

hand inexperienced managers could increase the uncertainty and the perceived risk for potential sponsors. Of course the skills of management is important also for a number of different reasons. To handle financial management, marketing, strategic decision-making etc. are all important aspects that requires a certain amount of skill and experience amongst managers (Schilhaneck, 2008).


Most Valuable European Football Club Brands

The Top Five:

1. Real Madrid

	Trademark Value 2007 £271m	2007 Broadcasting Revenue (%) 38%
	2007 Matchday Revenue (%) 23%	BrandBeta® Rating AAA
	2007 Commercial Revenue (%) 39%	

2. Manchester United

	Trademark Value 2007£264m	2007 Broadcasting Revenue (%) 29%
	2007 Matchday Revenue (%) 44%	BrandBeta® Rating AAA
	2007 Commercial Revenue (%) 27%	

3. Barcelona

	Trademark Value 2007 £215m	2007 Broadcasting Revenue (%) 37%
	2007 Matchday Revenue (%) 31%	BrandBeta® Rating AA+
	2007 Commercial Revenue (%) 32%	

4. Arsenal

	Trademark Value 2007 £201m	2007 Broadcasting Revenue (%) 25%
	2007 Matchday Revenue (%) 51%	BrandBeta® Rating AA-
	2007 Commercial Revenue (%) 24%	

5. Chelsea


	Trademark Value 2007 £184m	2007 Broadcasting Revenue (%) 31%
	2007 Matchday Revenue (%) 39%	BrandBeta® Rating A+
	2007 Commercial Revenue (%) 30%	

Figure 2.2: Football clubs brand value Source: Brand Finance (2007)

No.	Researches	Results About Brand
1	Chernatony & Segal-Horn (2001)	Dimensions subject was emphasized (Fixation Stability and Values)
2	Grace & O’Cass (2005)	Dimensions of brand was investigated in the form of brand evidence and brand communications (Controlled and Uncontrolled)
3	Berry & Seltman (2007)	Customer experience, organizational values
4	Berry (2000)	Value brand share, external communications, customer experience from organization, concept of brand, awareness of brand, displayed brand
5	Brady& Bourdeau (2005)	Symptoms of internal (national recognition, media coverage and ranking), Symptoms of external (price, advertising and referrals Pioneers

Table 2.1: Previous researches on brand

2.2. BRAND AWARENESS

Brand awareness refers to the ability of a potential customer to recognize the brand while categorizing the brand to a specific class (D. Aaker, 1991). It is believed that brand awareness is one of the main subjects to pay attention to in brand equity. To second, according to T. Shimp (2010), from the consumer's point, a brand has no equity unless customer is at least aware of the brand. The recall of brand awareness is based on a continuum where the brand recognition is in the lowest level and the highest level where the named brand is going along with unaided cancellation.

As for the product, it is important to be recognized and reach awareness level among other similar or identical items while the potential consumer is making purchase decisions. According to D. Blackwell et al. (2001), the product needs to be in the set of awareness before the consideration stage is being reached. It is believed that brands with a higher level of recognition would be more likely purchased than the ones with no recognition. Moreover, brand awareness is an initial goal for new brands. Based on W. Hoyer (1990), this is an explanation why customers buy well-known brands rather than unknown ones.

D. Aaker (1991) has presented The Brand Awareness Pyramid (T. Shimp, 2010, p. 38) where four levels of brand awareness are introduced. First level is *brand unawareness*. Customers do not recognise the brand and have no initial interest to become loyal to the brand that is not known. Second level is *brand recognition*. Brand recognition represents relatively casual level of awareness. Customer is able to recognize the brand unless hints are been given about the brand. However, there are customer who are able to retrieve the brand with no direct reminders. *Brand recall* indicating a deeper form of brand awareness follows next. This level is a goal which is strived by majorities of marketers. Customers are able to recall a brand with no additional effort. In *brand recall* level only well-known brands are present. Lastly, D. Aaker (1991), has introduced the top level of brand awareness. The *Top of Mind* level is the brand awareness stage where company's brand is the first brand that consumers recall.

Brand awareness is the first and fundamental attribute of customer brand equity; and sometimes it is underestimated component of brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1986; Tong and Hawley, 2009). Brand awareness is defined as "the ability of a buyer to recognize or recall that brand is a member of certain product category" (Aaker, 1991). Keller (1993) found that it composes of both brand recall and recognition. He further (Keller 1993, p3) explains that brand recognition "relates to consumer" ability to confirm the prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue". However, brand recall is "related to consumer" ability to retrieve the brand when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue". (Keller, 1993, p3) For a new or niche brand, the important issue is recognition; on the other hand, for a well-known brand, recall and top-of-mind is more sensitive and significant (Aaker, 1986).

Beside, brand awareness affects customers to make their decision, particularly for low-involvement packaged goods and strengthens brand performance in the market (Huang and Sarigöllü, 2011). Hence, marketers should concentrate on brand management and appropriate tactics to build and maintain customers" brand awareness by enhancing connection between a

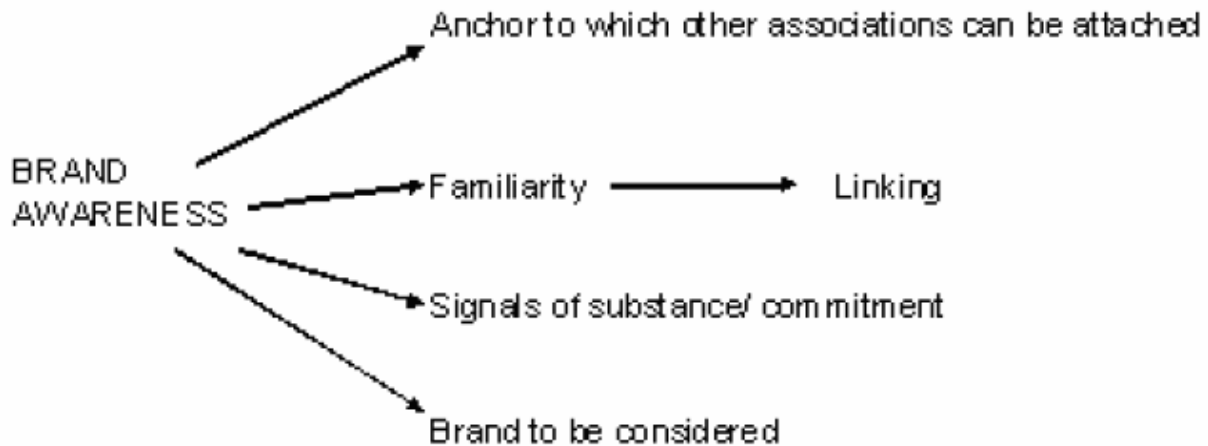
product and its customers, so as to influence customer brand selection (Wang *et al.*, 2008; Xu and Chen, 2010).

As already mentioned, an important dimension of brand equity is brand awareness, very often an undervalued component. Not only that awareness is almost a prerequisite for a brand to be included in the consideration set (the brands that receive consideration for purchase), but it also influences perceptions and attitudes, and can be a driver for brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991). Reflecting the salience of the brand in the customers mind, awareness can be assessed at several levels such as recognition, recall, top of mind, brand dominance (the only brand recalled), or, even more, brand knowledge (what the brand stands for is very well known by consumers) (Aaker, 1996). Brand awareness is the first and prerequisite dimension of the entire brand knowledge system in consumers' minds, reflecting their ability to identify the brand under different conditions: the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and the ease with which it does so (Keller, 1993).

Brand awareness is essential in buying decision-making as it is important that consumers recall the brand in the context of a given specific product category, awareness increasing the probability that the brand will be a member of the consideration set. Awareness also affects decisions about brands in the consideration set, even in the absence of any brand associations in consumers' minds. In low involvement decision settings, a minimum level of brand awareness may be sufficient for the choice to be final. Awareness can also influence consumer decision making by affecting brand associations that form the brand image (Keller, 1998).

The attitude activation is sometimes "automatic" (it occurs spontaneously upon the mere observation of the attitude object) and sometimes "controlled" (the active attention of the individual to retrieve previously stored evaluation is required). It was also proven (Farquhar, 2000) that only high accessible attitudes (brands with a high level of awareness) can be relevant when purchasing or repurchasing a brand.

Other authors (Laurent, Kapferer and Roussel, 1995) suggest three classical measures of brand awareness in a given product category: spontaneous (unaided) awareness (consumers are asked, without any prompting, to name the brands they know in the product category – in this case the unaided awareness of a brand is the percentage of interviewees indicating they know that brand), top of mind awareness (using the same question, the percentage of interviewees who name the brand first is considered) and, respectively, aided awareness (brand names are presented to interviewees – in this case the aided awareness of a brand is the percentage of interviewees who indicate they know that brand).



Unaware of Brand → ¹ Brand Recognition → ² Brand Recall → ³ Top of Mind

Figure 2.3: Brand awareness model 1

Source: Aaker, 1991, p 63

Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recall relates to consumers ability to retrieve the brand when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue. In other words, brand recall requires that consumers correctly generate the brand from memory (Keller 1993). Brand recognition relates to consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue. In other words, brand recognition requires that consumers correctly discriminate the brand as having been seen or heard previously (Keller 1993). Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making for three major reasons. First, it is important that consumers think of the brand when they think about the product category. Raising brand awareness increases the likelihood that the brand will be a member of the consideration set (Baker 1986; Nedungadi 1990). Second, brand awareness can affect decisions about brands in the consideration set, even if there are essentially no other brand associations. For example, consumers have been shown to adopt a decision rule to buy only familiar, well-established brands (Jacoby, Syzabillo, and Busato-Schach 1977; Roselius 1971). Finally, brand awareness affects consumer decision making by influencing the formation and strength of brand associations in the brand image. A necessary condition for the creation of a brand image is that a brand node has been established in memory, and the nature of that brand node should affect how easily different kinds of information can become attached to the brand in memory (Keller 1993).

Brand awareness can also affect decisions about brands within the consideration set (Hoyer & Brown 1990; Keller 1993). Consumers may employ a heuristic (decision rule) to buy only familiar, well-established brands (Roselius 1971; Jacoby et al. 1977, both cited in Keller 1993). Consumers do not always spend a great deal of time making purchase decisions. In a study of pre-purchase search for laundry powder, Hoyer (1984) found that the median number of packages examined in-store was 1.2 before a selection was made. Dickson and Sawyer (1986) found that for purchases such as coffee, toothpaste and margarine, the consumer took an average 12 seconds from the time of first looking at the shelf to the time they placed the item in their trolley. In many cases consumers try to minimize the costs of decision making in terms of time spent, and cognitive effort, by employing simple rules of thumb, such as 'buy the brand I've heard of'. This is particularly likely to occur in low involvement situations where a minimum level of brand awareness may be sufficient for choice (Hoyer & Brown 1990; Mackay 1990). In such situations, the consumer may lack the motivation or the ability to judge between brands (Petty & Cacioppo 1986).

A further way brand awareness may affect choice within the consideration set is by influencing perceived quality. In a consumer choice study by Hoyer and Brown (1990) over 70% of consumers selected a known brand of peanut butter from among a choice of three, even though another brand was 'objectively' better quality (as determined by blind taste tests), and even though they had neither bought or used the brand before. This result is even more surprising considering the subjects were given the opportunity to taste all of the brands. Just being a known brand dramatically affected their evaluation of the brand. Intuitively, this makes sense: a consumer may rationalize that if they have heard of a brand, the company must be spending a fair sum on advertising. If it is spending a lot on advertising, then the company must be reasonably profitable which means that other consumers must be buying the product and they must be satisfied enough with its performance, therefore the product must be of reasonable quality. Stokes (1985) found that for a low involvement product (rice) familiarity had a greater magnitude of effect on the quality perception of a brand than either price or packaging. And further, that familiarity had a significant effect on purchase intention whereas price and package design did not.

How Does Brand Awareness Benefit the Marketing Manager?

Brand awareness should be an important goal of the marketing communications efforts of a firm as it has a number of important functions. It is widely acknowledged that without brand awareness occurring, brand attitude and brand image cannot be formed. However, equally important but less widely recognised is the importance of brand awareness as a heuristic which can affect inclusion in the consideration set, and in many situations may be sufficient by itself to determine choice from the consideration set i.e., brand awareness can determine not only entry to the consideration set, but can also determine which brand is chosen from the consideration set. Aaker (1991a, b) argues strongly the case for brand building and maintaining brand equity; he cites brand name awareness as one of four major brand assets which add value to the product or service and/or its customers. Investments in brand equity and in particular brand awareness can lead to sustainable competitive advantages and thus to long term value. Brand awareness can add value by 1. Placing the brand in the consumer's mind, 2. Acting as a barrier to entry to new unestablished brands (Stokes 1985), 3. Reassuring the customer of the organization's commitment and product quality, and 4. Providing leverage in the distribution channels (intermediaries are customers too, and are just as suspicious as consumers are of unknown products) (Aaker 1992).

However, there is difficulty in demonstrating the value of assets such as brand awareness to managers. Aaker (1991a) complains the problem is that, firstly, enormous pressure exists for organizations and their brands to demonstrate short-term profit results. Brand managers are often given a one to three year time horizon and little incentive to make strategic brand building investments. And secondly, demonstrating the long-term value of brand building is "exceptionally difficult" (Hogarth 1980, Aaker 1991a). Even managers who claim that they are concerned with the brand building activities of their firm, find difficulty in gaining support and resources for these activities.

Ross (2006) suggests that brand awareness is an important part of spectator-based brand equity because when fans would think about a product category (sports, football, ice hockey etc.) it is crucial that customers recall and identify the specific brand (Manchester United, New York Rangers etc.). Gladden & Funk (2002) states however that this problem is less important for regional clubs as the competition among local teams usually are less fierce.

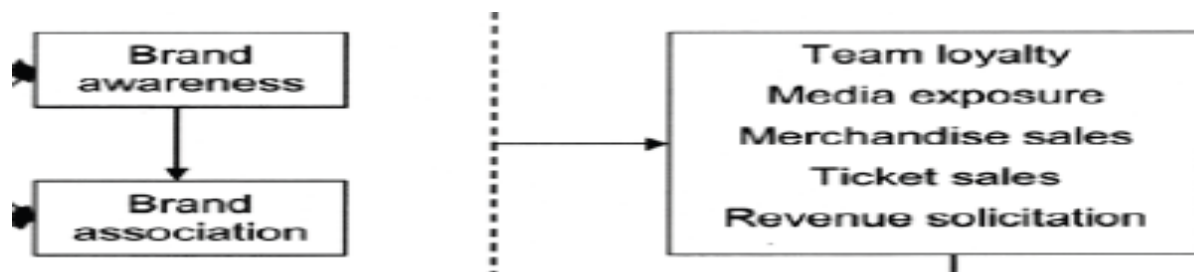


Figure 2.4: Brand awareness model 2

Source: Spectator based brand equity (Ross, 2006).

2.3. BRAND IDENTITY

According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), brand identity can be defined as a unique set of associations that contain an implied guarantee of quality to customers and indicate both a core and an extended identity. Core identity is the fundamental essence of the brand that remains constant across time and geographic locations. The core identity of a brand comprises of the elements of a brand that are most likely to remain constant despite changing environments. Elements of the core identity might include particular attributes of the product, the user profile of the product, branded store ambience and product performance. Extended identity, as might be expected, refers to those elements of the brand that aim to provide texture and completeness to the brand. The extended identity of a brand should be layered over the core identity to add detail, focusing on the personality of the brand. Brand identity as a whole must take into account many different considerations including positioning and personality (de Chernatony, 1999). These are built through the culture within the organisation, and the relationship which employees of the company, to whom the brand refers, have with stakeholders in the brand. Communication techniques can be used to form the associations in a customer's mind which come together to form the overall image of the brand (Kapferer, 1997). Brand identity can aid in the forming of relationships between the consumer and the product or company by creating a value proposition of the practical, emotional or self-expressive potential of the product. Aaker (1996) proposes a vision of brand identity as being embodied by four elements; product dimensions, organisational attributes, personality and relationship attributes, and symbolic dimensions.

In order to achieve success in its aims, a brand must develop an identity which resonates with consumers, enables a customer to distinguish the brand from its competitors, and is descriptive of the capabilities and objectives of the product or company it represents (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). The responsibility of brand managers in ensuring the brand succeeds is to plan, nurture, support, and protect the brand (Knapp, 2000). Essential in building a successful brand is appreciating how best to develop a brand that effectively speaks to the identity of the product or service it represents (Aaker, 1996). A brand should project relevant, long-lasting, believable benefits of the product or service (Ward et al., 1999). Brands that are able to portray this kind of cohesive gain advantage in the market and add value to the products and services they represent in the form of a price premium (Schmitt and Simonson, 1997).

Particularly when brands encounter aggressive competition in the marketplace, a strong and attractive image and reputation can differentiate a brand from that competition. The result of this is to generate consumer loyalty, leading to growth and strengthening of the brand. One way of promoting a strong brand identity is by linking the attributes of the brand to a method of communicating these attributes in a way that complements the strengths of the product the brand aims to highlight, and is also easily accessible to customers.

<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Olins et al. (1989)	Connection with the impressions, the image, and the personality reflected by a brand
Ind (1992)	Ethical and cultural values as well as organizational history and philosophy
Aaker (1996)	A unique set of associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain
Dowling (1996)	Perceptions and beliefs concerning relevant brand characteristics, such as culture, climate, skills, values, competitive position, product offerings, as well as their reactions to the firm, including firm-related moods emotions, and evaluations
Brown and Dacin (1997)	Customers' knowledge concerning a brand, conceptualized alternatively as brand image, brand reputation, or, more generally, brand associations
Balmer (1998)	The core of what the brand is and many unique features of the brand, for instance history, philosophy, culture, communication and the industry the brand manages in
Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000)	Resonating with consumers, differentiating the brand from those of competitors, and what the organization wants the brand to stand for
Melewar and Wooldridge (2001)	A strategic indication of brand-level vision and mission, supported by the strategies which a brand employs in its operations or production
Melewar and Jenkins (2002)	A broad range of functions including business strategy, philosophy of key executives, brand culture, behavior and design which are inter-reliant and unique to each organization
Bhattacharya and Sen (2003)	A subset of brand associations that composes the brand's identity
Nandan (2005)	The perception of the brand as it is interpreted by the consumer

Table 2.2: Definitions of Brand Identity

To be effective, a brand identity needs to resonate with customers, differentiate the brand from competitors, and represent what the organization can and will do over time (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). To excel, a brand image must be well planned, nurtured, supported, and vigilantly guarded (Knapp, 2000). One key to successful brand-building is to understand how to develop a brand identity – to know what the brand stands for and to effectively express that identity (Aaker, 1996). A brand is a distinctive identity that differentiates a relevant, enduring, and credible promise of value associated with a product, service, or organization and indicates the source of that promise (Ward et al., 1999). Companies that present a cohesive, distinctive, and relevant brand identity can create a preference in the marketplace, add value to their products and services, and may command a price premium (Schmitt and Simonson, 1997).

Defining the identity of the sports team:

Keller (2001) states that creating a strong brand identity relates specifically to brand awareness. It has been mentioned earlier that brand awareness is about customer's ability to recall and recognize the brand (Ross, 2006). However Keller (2001) also emphasizes that a strong brand identity will enhance customer brand awareness in the sense that customers relates certain values the brand represents and therefore it is crucial for managers to consciously and carefully work to establish a meaningful identity. Disregarding the establishment and the communication of a clear and consistent identity, the likelihood of customer brand awareness and positive associations is decreased (Keller, 2001). Berry (2000) specifically looked into service companies and confirms the statements from Keller (2001) by saying that the company's construction of its brand identity through e.g. advertising, its facilities and the appearance of the employees directly influence customers' brand awareness. According to Richelieu (2003) the identity of the sports team consists of two central elements: *the attributes of the team* and the *value the team represents to its fans*. The attributes of the team refers to the core values of the team, meaning what the team wants to be associated with and recognized for (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The intention is for sports organizations to identify key elements they want the team to represent (ambition, solidarity, fighting spirit, etc.) to send a message of meaning to the team and at the same time provide direction to the brand (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The history of the team and its presence in the community are often used as assets in order to trigger an emotional response and a sense of belonging with its fans (Kapferer, 2001). Also the stadium or arena can withhold a great part of a clubs identity (memories of championships or dreadful defeats) and be something to help build and strengthen the identity of a sports team (Schilhanek, 2008).

After establishing the values management intends the team to stand for and represent, it is crucial that these values can be either transferred or is already perceived to be the values of the team in the eyes of the fans (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The values of the team should be translated into a value proposition (Kotler, 2008) that clearly states the benefits of the brand to its fans to support and trigger the buying decision (Richelieu, 2003) and create brand awareness (Keller, 2001). This external picture of the brand (fans perception of the brand) is the subjective associations customers holds towards the brand (Schilhanek, 2008) and the idea is that the stronger and clearer the identity of the club brand, the stronger and more unique will the associations customer hold towards the brand be. Crucial in this step is therefore to ensure that managers' belief in what the team and organization should stand for is understood and agreed upon

also with the fans. A common characteristic of teams that have successfully built and strengthened their brands have in terms of identity often performed surveys throughout and after the season in order to measure and understand fans perception of the brand image (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005; Richelieu, 2003; Richelieu et al. 2011). Brand identity and the communications of these values are vital for new customers who have little or no experience with the companies' services to form their impressions (Berry, 2000). The communication of the identity is crucial to gain new customers as it is the only evidence of what the company, or in this case the sports organization, stands for and must appeal to the customers in order to gain their attention (Berry, 2000). Finally sport organizations should carefully evaluate how the brand identity is communicated. When a clear identity is formulated this should be communicated with consistency and should reach as many potential customers as possible with a unifying message (Schilhaneck, 2008).

Brand identity of sports teams (Team identity):

In the modern society, a sports team may be regarded as an organisational brand, and, as such, the identity of the brand is strongly linked to a consumer's knowledge of the team (Brown and Dacin 1997). Research suggests that identification with an organisation derives from the way the characteristics or identity of the organisation are perceived. (Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail 1994). This perceived identity is linked to the organisation's enduring objectives, structure, administration and ethos (Kunda 1999; Scott and Lane 2000) that are integral and fundamental to the organisation, and distinguishes the organisation from others like it (Albert and Whetten 1985). To this end, a sports team's brand identity should reflect to fans or potential fans the sum of all the team has to offer (Urde, 2003). Brand identity takes on a more specific meaning when relating to sports team brands thanks to the degree to which individuals tend to identify with their favorite teams. This might include the team's most attractive and core attributes and values which the team represents, potential benefits to the supporter, and the significance of the experience of viewing that team in action (Bennett and Rundle-Thiele, 2005). Attached to this brand identity are a number of brand associations in the mind of the supporter which are linked to following that team. (Aaker, 1997).

Fan-Team Identification:

Identification with a sports team is one of example of organisational identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992), and it has attracted attention from those who regard sports fans as customers (Wann et al., 2001). Sports management academics have emphasised the bond of identity between fans and sports teams in the last decade. Hogg and Abrams (1988, p.128) note "support for the home team is more than an act, it is part of identification with that team and/or what it represents" focusing on solidarity among British football fans. Sports fans who support a particular team obtain greater pleasure from their bonds with sports or sporting events than spectators who do not feel an attachment to a specific team. Furthermore, the ties with a particular sports team are connected to the fans' feelings of self-worth, ambition and aggression. (Wann and Branscombe, 1993; Sloan, 1989).

Individual identification with a sports team can vary depending on his or her motivation to be connected with the team. People who maintain a low level of identification with the group tend to have a passive relationship with the team, and attend games or events for entertainment value, social interaction opportunities, or stress-relieving qualities. In contrast to them, highly dedicated fans usually show their strong loyalty and regard the team's identity as integral to their own. Fans who feel a strong identification with their favourite team are those most likely to seek negative interaction with fans of an opposite team (Branscombe and Wann, 1994).

People who keep a high level of identification with their favorite team are more susceptible to changes in emotions depending on that team's success or failure. That is, they frequently feel the successes and failures of their team in person since their feelings are closely linked with the performance of the team (Hirt, Zillman, Erickson, and Kennedy, 1992). Cialdini et al. (1976) describe the desire of individuals as "Basking-In Reflected-Glory (BIRGing)" in order to associate themselves with a successful team, and mention "Cutting-Off-Reflected Failure (CORFing)" as the contrary concept of it. This explains the reason why fans are more likely to attend matches during periods when their favorite team performing well, while less fans go to the stadium when the team is on a losing streak or performing poorly (End, Dietz-Uhler, and Demakakos, 2003). Watching the success of the team is particularly effective in improving an individual's ego (Cialdini et al., 1976). In fact, there is some level of psychological risk related to team identification. As such, fans are not sufficiently able to distance themselves from the failures of their chosen team, although they felt excited and happy after the team's successful performances (Wann and Branscombe, 1990).

Wann and Branscombe (1993) maintain that F-T identification is an individual's attachment to or concern for a specific sports team. Mahony (1995, p.12) describes F-T identification as "the degree to which a fan defines him/herself by the same attribute that defines the sport team". F-T identification literature is mainly driven by the effort of Daniel Wann and his colleagues. They propose that F-T identification has an influence on diverse constructs such as attribution of competition outcomes (Wann and Dolan, 1994), team knowledge and beliefs (Wann and Branscombe, 1995b), emotions (Wann and Branscombe, 1992; Wann et al., 1994), self-esteem (Wann and Branscombe, 1990), perceptions of influence (Wann et al., 1994), and belief in personal competence (Hirt et al., 1992; Madrigal, 1995).

Identity construct is the key to understanding fan behaviour, and therefore many researchers have studied to discover it. Lee (1985) observes the relation between self-esteem and social identity in the context of basketball fans. Furthermore, a recent research has found that gender has an effect on the development of sports fan identity in the context of socialisation (End et al., 2004). Murrell and Dietz (1992) studied the influence of group identity on levels and degrees of team support. Wann et al. (1996) analysed the reason why fans begin to identify with sports teams, why this support continues, and under what circumstances it tends to end.

On the other hand, a number of researchers have proven that identification is relevant to the marketing area, since the potential fans can contribute to the financial success of sports teams. Identification with the team supported by fans has been identified as a potential means of manipulation that brand managers can operate to reduce price sensitivity on fans (Sutton et al., 1997). Furthermore, identification can be utilized to analyze the degree of consumption among fans (Gladden and Funk, 2001; Trail, Anderson, and Fink, 2005; Trail, Fink, and Anderson, 2003), as a method to measure a fan’s psychological well-being (Wann, 2006), and as an element to explain the emotional and even aggressive behavior of fans (Wann et al., 2002).

F-T identification is related to the consequences of brand equity as well. Gladden et al. (1998) and Ross (2006) identify the relationship between F-T identification and brand equity in their model. F-T identification is an indicator of attendance at collegiate sports events (Wann et al., 2004; Laverie and Arnett, 2000), and ticket sales and merchandise sales (Kwon and Armstrong, 2002). Sponsorship and sports ground advertising are also suggested as the examples of the connection (Gwinner and Swanson, 2003).

Researcher	Definition
<i>Hogg and Abrams (1988)</i>	The part of identification with the team and/or what it represents
<i>Sloan (1989); Wann and Branscombe (1993)</i>	The fans’ feelings of self-worth, ambition and aggression relevant to a particular sports team
<i>Wann and Branscombe (1993)</i>	An individual’s attachment to or concern for a specific sports team
<i>Mahony (1995, p.12)</i>	The degree to which a fan defines him/herself by the same attribute that defines the sport team
<i>Sutton, McDonald, Milne and Cimperman (1997)</i>	A potential means of manipulation that brand managers can operate to reduce price sensitivity on fans
<i>Wann et al. (2002)</i>	The degree of the emotional and even aggressive behavior of fans
<i>Wann (2006)</i>	A method to measure a fan’s psychological well-being

Table 2.3: Definitions of F-T Identification

2.4. BRAND ASSOCIATION

According to Tuaber (1981), a brand represents a group of concepts that are associated in consumers' minds with a particular brand. Specifically, these concepts are "linked" to a brand in a consumer's memory (Aaker, 1991). Keller (1993) defines brand associations as the "other informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory": The meaning of the brand to consumers is defined by these associations. It is described as "anything linked in memory to a brand" and brand image is as seen as "a set of associations, usually related in some meaningful way" (Aaker, 1991). Keller (1993) defined brand associations as "impressions based on other information that is related to impressions created by the brand in the minds of consumers and that include the brands meaning for the consumers". Associations can be conceptualized as the meaning a consumer assigns to the brand upon seeing or hearing its name, logo or theme tune etc. Brands can be revealed to consumers in a number of ways (Williams, 2000): Any visual, audio or sensory impact that a brand that retains value in the mind of the consumer can be considered an association. The component associations of a consumer's awareness of a brand name affects the "encoding, storage and utilization of new information about the brand" (Lynch and Srull, 1982, p.27) and may have an impact upon a consumer's response to the brand (Aaker and Keller 1990; Keller and Aaker, 1992).

Research exploring the psychology of consumer decision-making tends to show that the associations consumers make with brand names are based on images, perceptions, and beliefs deriving from past experiences and information which has been synthesised by the consumer (Jacoby, Szybillo and Busato-Schach, 1977). In order to properly understand brand associations, it is therefore necessary to examine the processes involved in developing an individual's memory. Most of the widely accepted understandings of human memory structure consist of some element of associative model formulation (Anderson, 1983; Wyer and Srull, 1989).

Brand associations are crucial to organizations for a variety of functions, which include processing and/or retrieving information, distinguishing the brand, persuading potential customers of the imperative to buy and creating positive emotions on the part of customers about being connected to the brand, and inspiring new and varied products (Aaker 1991). This is true regardless of what the content of these decisions is. In fact, all associations that are retrieved in the mind of the consumer when a product is mentioned contribute to that consumer's perception of the brand, and are therefore capable of influencing decision-making by the consumer regarding that brand (Aaker 1991). Essentially, this is the most important function of brand associations. If anything an organisation does is capable of affecting a consumer's opinion of the brand it is necessary to analyse marketing and branding decisions very closely in order avoid negative effects.

There are many different forms of brand association. The amount of information which is conveyed through an association can differentiate between different associations (Alba and Hutchinson 1987; Chattopadhyay and Alba 1988; Johnson 1984). The quality of responses to brand associations, in terms of how strong and unique they are perceived to be, is key in analysing the differential response that constitutes brand equity. Before considering these responses, it is useful to examine the different types of brand associations that may present themselves in the mind of the consumer. In his seminal piece of work Keller (1993) classified brand associations into three predominant categories with differing levels of abstraction: attributes, benefits and attitudes.

Researcher	Definition
<i>Tuaber (1981)</i>	A collection of concepts that consumers discover to connect to a particular brand
<i>Lynch and Srull (1982)</i>	Affecting on the „encoding, storage and utilisation of new information about the brand“
<i>Aaker (1991)</i>	(a) Anything „linked“ in a consumer’s memory to a brand (b) The consumer’s perception of the brand and thus influencing decision-making by the consumer regarding that brand (c) Differentiating the brand, causing a reason to purchase, creating positive attributes or feelings, and offering a basis for new goods or services
<i>Keller (1993)</i>	The other informational nodes which are linked to the brand node in memory, and these associations include the meaning of the brand to customers
<i>Aaker (1996)</i>	A key component of brand identity in forming consumers' view of a brand
<i>Williams (2000)</i>	Anything a brand does, says, or looks like that has made an impression on customers that they link with the brand

Table 2.4 Definitions of Brand Associations

Different brands have various associations to present and potential clients. According to D. Aaker (1991), these associations are assumed to be a basis for future purchases or even as a stimulator to attract loyal customers to the brand. Associations about the brand can help to create or improve the value of the brand to the same level as loyal customers. Consumers, when faced with many brands, can forget one brand over another, but associations derived from their memories can help while they make purchasing decisions. Also, the customer having associations about the certain brand can distinguish from other ones and chose the brand which brought most positive or pleasant memories of purchasing experiences. These memory associations serve for well-positioned brands which later would be hard to replace in customers preference activities by other brands. However, this is more complicated and harder to achieve because customers habits, tastes and also needs are changing quite regularly depending on their lifestyle. Furthermore, sometimes product attributes or client benefits are included into associations dimension as an additional tool to attract customers. By attracting customers, some associations about the brand can create positive feelings for the clients such as slogans, or music in the promotional video, etc.

While brand awareness is the first step in in recalling a brand name, brand associations are the first thoughts and associations that come to mind after the brand is recalled (Aaker, 1996). This information is a vital part of whether or not the purchase decision is made as these associations are the thoughts that come to mind when contemplating to make a purchase decision (Ross, 2006). This model suggests that brand awareness and brand association form the foundation for spectator-based brand equity. A particularly important factor in this model is the fact that brand associations might directly influence team loyalty. Aaker (1991) also agrees upon this notion saying that brand awareness and associations in the mind of the consumer is the foundation for the purchase decision and for brand loyalty.

Brand associations of sports teams (Team associations):

There are relatively few research studies that have examined the specific area of brand associations (Aaker, 1991, 1996; del Rio, Vazquez, and Iglesias, 2001; Heath, 1999; Lederer and Hill, 2001), and very few of those have focused on brand associations in the context of sport. As discussed, brand associations can be perceived of as the thoughts and emotions that a consumer mentally links to the brand in question (Aaker, 1996). For some individuals, viewing a sporting event is an opportunity to enjoy the excitement of watching their favourite team playing live, while, for others, it is simply a chance to spend time with their family and friends, or even to network with business connections. This can alter depending on the sport in question; some sports (e.g., Amateur Football League) tend to attract audiences who see the game as an opportunity for social interaction, whereas others (e.g., Major Professional Football League) attract audiences who are more committed to concentrating on the actual game (James and Ross 2002). Given the number of different motivations spectators at sports games can have, there is a wealth of different associations that marketers must take into account when devising strategies. Ultimately, marketers will have to combine both tangible and intangible attributes to create an effective brand identity that appeals to a wide spectrum of consumers. This has been referred to as the "unique set of brand associations that a brand strategist aspires to create or maintain," (Aaker 1996, p.68).

Most of the many associations that are formed with particular sports are intangible and experiential (Mullin et al. 2000). Gladden and Funk (2002) have developed the Team Association Model (TAM) in an attempt to more thoroughly analyse brand associations. Gladden and Funk identified sixteen dimensions of brand association as potentially contributing to the foundation of brand associations in sport. These were conceived out of the three categories proposed by Keller (1993), and point to the significance of emotional identification with a team, and the exhilaration felt when watching that team play live. Gladden and Funk (2001) also measured 13 attributes and benefits which can be associated with a sports team's brand and found that vicarious achievement based on the successes of the team, nostalgia for previous experiences of watching the team play, peer group acceptance of emotional attachment to the team, the 'escapism' of becoming immersed in the game, tradition, product delivery and star players were reliable predictors of loyalty to a team. Similarly, Funk (2002) reported that six of these associations (star player, vicarious achievement, nostalgia, product delivery, success and escape) categorized consumers by their membership of three groups; casual, moderate and loyal.

Ross et al. (2006) have developed the Team Brand Association Scale (TBAS). The TBAS analyses 11 brand associations held by consumers that relate to professional sports. Associations assessed by the TBAS, as defined by Ross et al., include:

1. Persons who are not players but are associated with a particular sport team, for example the manager or coach ("Non-player Personnel");
2. The performance, and/or success of a team ("Team Success");
3. The history of a particular sport team, for example success in previous seasons ("Team History");
4. The stadium and geographical community which the team calls "home" ("Stadium Community");
5. Specific characteristics displayed by the team on the field ("Team-play Characteristics");
6. The identifying marks associated with a specific sport team ("Brand Mark");
7. The team's dedication to their fans ("Organizational Attributes");
8. Consuming food and drink at the stadium ("Concessions");
9. Interacting with friends, colleagues and other fans ("Social Interaction");
10. The competition between historically competitive teams; often between teams from the same geographic location e.g. Arsenal and Tottenham Football teams ("Rivalry"); and
11. An individual's continued support for a particular team ("Commitment").

2.5. BRAND IMAGE

The brand image is defined as consumer perception of a brand as reflected by the brand association held in consumers' memory. The Knowledge model described by Keller (1998) will be adapted to Starbucks case. Keller's (1998) model proposes that brand knowledge is comprised of brand awareness and brand image. Brand image is detailed to a greater extent within the model because of its more complex nature. Brand image is said to result from the favorability, strength, uniqueness, and types of brand associations held by the consumer. Within the model, Keller (1998) depicts various types of brand associations such as attributes (product-related and non-product related), benefits (functional, experiential and symbolic) and attitudes.

According to Hsieh, Pan, and Setiono (2004), "a successful brand image enables consumers to identify the needs that the brand satisfies and to differentiate the brand from its competitors, and consequently increases the likelihood that consumers will purchase the brand" (p. 252). A company or its product/ services which constantly holds a favorable image by the public, would definitely gain a better position in the market, sustainable competitive advantage, and increase market share or performance (Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986). In addition, several empirical findings have confirmed that a favorable image (i.e. brand, store/retail) will lead to loyalty (e.g. Koo, 2003; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 1998), brand equity (Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001; Biel, 1992; Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), purchase behavior (Hsieh et al., 2004) and brand performance (Roth, 1995).

Reynolds (1965) noted that "an image is the mental construct developed by the consumer on the basis of a few selected impressions among the flood of the total impressions; it comes into being through a creative process in which these selected impressions are elaborated, embellished, and ordered" (p. 69). Kotler (2001) defined image as "the set of beliefs, ideas, and impression that a person holds regarding an object" (p. 273). On the other hand, Keller (1993) considered brand image as "a set of perceptions about a brand as reflected by brand associations in consumer's memory" (p. 3). A similar definition to Keller's was proposed by Aaker (1991), whereby brand image is referred to as "a set of associations, usually organized in some meaningful way" (p. 109). Biel (1992) however defined brand image as "a cluster of attributes and associations that consumers connect to the brand name" (p. 8).

Brand image has been conceptualized and operationalized in several ways (Reynolds & Gutman, 1984; Faircloth et al., 2001). It has been measured based on attributes (i.e. Koo, 2003; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000); brand benefits/ values (i.e. Hsieh et al., 2004; Roth, 1995; Bhat & Reddy, 1998); or using Malhotra's (1981) brand image scale (i.e. Faircloth et al., 2001). Measuring image based on the above definition would help marketers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their brand as well as consumers' perceptions toward their product or services.

Zooming into Keller's (1993) conceptualization of brand image, it is considered a perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumers' memory. He suggested that "brand associations" comprise of brand attributes, brand benefits, and overall brand attitudes. To Keller (1993), attributes are "descriptive features that characterized a product or service – what a consumer thought the product or service is or has and what is involved with its purchase or consumption". Attributes can be classified into product-related attributes and non-product-related attributes (i.e. price, packaging or product appearance information, user and usage imagery). Product-related attributes refer to the ingredients necessary for performing the product or service function sought by consumers while non-product-related attributes refer to the external aspects of the product or services that relate to its purchase or consumption. As for benefits, these are considered "the personal value consumers attach to the product or service attributes – that is, what consumers think the product or service can do for them" (p. 4).

Keller (1993) described that this image benefits can be classified into functional, experiential and symbolic benefits, which was originally derived from the work of Park et al. (1986). Here, the functional benefits are related to the intrinsic advantages of product or services consumption and usually correspond to the product related attributes. For example, experiential benefits refer to "what it felt like to use the product or services and usually correspond to the product related attributes", while symbolic benefits were associated with the underlying needs for social approval or personal expression and outer-directed self-esteem and basically corresponded to non-product related attributes.

Overall, image can generate value in terms of helping customer to process information, differentiating the brand, generating reasons to buy, give positive feelings, and providing a basis for extensions (Aaker, 1991). Creating and maintaining image of the brand is an important part of a firm's marketing program (Roth, 1995) and branding strategy (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). Therefore, it is very important to understand the development of image formation and its consequences such as satisfaction and loyalty.

According to Keller (1993), there are specific benefits which a company will obtain from a strong brand image: Premium prices can be obtained, the product will be demanded, competitive brands will be rejected, communications will be more readily accepted, the brand can be built on, customer satisfaction will be improved, the product will be pulled through the distribution network, licensing opportunities can be opened up, the company will be worth more when it is sold.

Impact of Brand Image on Customer's Attitude toward the Brand:

Keller came up with the concept "customer-based brand equity (CBBE)" in 1993, which refers to the various reactions to the branding campaign from consumers who have knowledge of the brand in varying degrees. In other words, brand image and brand awareness are the basis and sources of brand equity. According to Keller (1993), positive brand image could be established by connecting the unique and strong brand association with consumers' memories about the brand through marketing campaigns. In this regard, the brand knowledge should be built and understood before the consumers could respond positively to the branding campaign. If consumers have knowledge of a brand, the company could spend less on brand extension while achieve higher sales.

Following Keller (1993), Lassar *et al.* (1995) held the opinion that brand equity came from the customers' confidence in a brand. The greater the confidence they place in the brand, the more likely they are willing to pay a high price for it. Specifically, this confidence stems from five important considerations: first, the brand performs its functions as designed; second, the social image is associated with purchasing or owning the brand; third, consumers' recognition and sentimental attachment with brand; fourth, the balance between the brand's value and its functionalities; fifth, consumers trust in the brand. Netemeyer *et al.* (2004) also approved the dominant impact of brand equity on customer response toward the branding campaign.

Impact of Brand Image on Consumer's Behavioral Intention:

Brand image has a significant impact on customer satisfaction especially across the E-banking, landline, mobile phone, bank and supermarket industries. Chang *et al.* (2005) identified store infrastructure, convenience, store service and sales activities as the four components of store image, and they all impact customer satisfaction directly. Chitty *et al.* (2007) also empirically proved the dominant role of brand image in predicting customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Moreover, the congruence between the brand image and customers' self-image would enhance customer satisfaction and customers' preference for the brand. Customer loyalty could be recognized as the extension of customer satisfaction. Earlier studies define customer loyalty as repeated purchasing behaviors in a narrow sense. Generally, customer loyalty stems from customers' approval of a brand, which leads to their continuously purchasing behavior of the brand and thus generates profits for the company. In the brand image literature, brand image is perceived as an important driving force of customer loyalty. For the supermarket industry, favorable store image is very helpful to foster customer loyalty. Even in the virtual context, the impact of brand image on customer loyalty remains significant.

Brand Image in Sport:

Sports constitute an interesting market always. According to Morgan and Summers (2005), the activity of people watching or listening sports is called 'sports consumption'. "Sport can be consumed directly – through watching a game played live or by participating in a sport – or indirectly – through watching a game on television, listen to it on the radio or reading about it in a newspaper or magazine" (p. 15). Sportive clubs tend to adopt professional management practices to take advantage of fans loyalty and to improve their brand performance (Bauer, Sauer & Schmitt, 2005).

Team image can be understood as the result of management efforts to build a common view of team reality among a social or cultural group (Bauer *et al.* 2008), and its image tends to be more favorable during the time the team succeeds in high level competitions than during the falls (Garcia, Pérez & Rodríguez, 2008). Abosag, Roper & Hind (2012) shows that supporters accept their club as a brand, what supports brand extension assumption, since there is a clear link between this acceptance of branding activity and supporters' emotional involvement within the club. Santini, Ladeira & Araujo (2013) confirmed that the club's image increases the possibility of a fan's purchase intention of their sports products what indicates that marketing tools can be used to motivate the fan base to support the team's competitiveness in many ways: buying and/or using club's original products and symbols; patronizing club's services (i.e. fitness, beauty parlors, dieting); cheering for the team during the games; etc.

Sportive management challenges must go beyond the team itself: besides the team performance, it is imperative to care about the club brand (Bauer et al., 2005), and to explore the fan base emotional attachment to improve confidence and loyalty (Holt, 1995). Sportive clubs must improve brand's wealth since strong brands intensify fans attachment with the club (Zunino, 2006) and therefore contribute to the club prosperity.

2.6. BRAND LOYALTY

In the competitive marketplace, the ultimate aim of brands results in gaining customer loyalty. The construct of brand loyalty has been a top topic for over 40 years. Aaker (1991, p.39) identifies brand loyalty as "the attachment that a customer has to a brand" and regards customer loyalty as one of the critical dimensions to build a strong brand (Aaker, 1992). In line with this perspective, loyalty has been defined as an integral component or consequence of customer-brand relationships (Fournier et al., 1998; Fullerton, 2003; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002). Mahony (1995, Unpublished), additionally, used brand loyalty as a method of examining team loyalty, particularly in professional football teams.

Brand loyalty is generally classified into two dimensions - behavioural and attitudinal (Day, 1969; Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). Before the late 1960's, researchers tended to emphasise the behavioural dimension when they conduct market studies and collect data. It is stimulated by a view that brand loyalty is necessary to encourage repeated purchases of the same brand over time. In particular, sports management and psychology research have emphasised the behaviour of spectators, such as attendance and television viewing. (DeSchraver and Jensen, 2002; Funk, Mahony, and Ridinger, 2002; Hansen and Gauthier, 1989).

However, this ignores the significance of attitudinal loyalty which differentiates spurious from real loyalty. Spurious loyalty is the kind of loyalty implied by a spectator who does not have a strong feeling about the outcome of the match, but still constantly attends matches (Backman and Crompton, 1991). Hence, it is important to lay stress on the emotional attachment to the team, even though constant attendance is one indicator of true loyalty (Mahony, Madrigal, and Howard, 2000). This perspective is especially reflected on the sports field. A number of the earliest studies of team brand regard loyalty as an individual attitude toward a sports team.

Since the 1970's, not only behaviour, but also attitude has been utilised for efficient organisational constructs (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978; Jacoby and Kyner, 1973; Jacoby and Olson, 1970). Researchers propose that loyal fans would likely hold both a favourable attitude toward a specific team and regular support behaviour (Mahony, Madrigal and Howard, 2000), and, they have developed a composite perspective of team loyalty in the sports context (Gladden and Funk, 2001; Hill and Green, 2000; Mahony, Madrigal, and Howard, 2000; Pritchard, Havitz, and Howard, 1999). Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) stress that neither behaviour nor attitude criteria alone can completely describe the true extent of the loyalty concept. Murrell and Dietz (1992) was the first to append an index which took into consideration both dimensions to analyse team support and loyalty. Funk and Pastore (2000) use both attitudinal and behavioural concepts to define team loyalty as the correspondence between attitude to reflect high structural support and a personal willingness to demonstrate loyal behaviour.

<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Jacoby and Chestnut (1978)	The overt act of selective repeat purchasing based on evaluative psychological decision processes
Rossiter and Percy (1987)	Repeated purchases of the same brand over time and a favourable attitude towards a brand
Aaker (1991)	The attachment that a customer has to a brand
Aaker (1992)	One of critical dimensions to build a strong brand
Oliver (1997)	A profoundly held commitment to rebuy or repatronise a favourite product or service constantly in the future, in spite of situational influences and marketing efforts having potential to incur switching behaviour
Fournier et al. (1998)	An integral component of customer-brand relationships
Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001)	A degree of dispositional commitment considering unique value related to the brand
Yoo and Donthu (2001)	The tendency to be loyal to a focal brand, which is demonstrated by the intention to purchase the brand as a primary choice

Table 2.5: Definitions of Brand Loyalty

Loyalty in sport:

Sportive marketing can be understood as an exchange process that encompasses a set of activities specially conceived to satisfy sportive consumers (Contursi, 1996). According to Morgan and Summers (2005, p. 25), “similar to services encounters in other industries, consumers’ satisfaction with sporting events is largely determined by the quality of their experiences”, and these experiences are impacted by other consumers, by the physical surroundings (servicescape) and by the consumers’ mood or feelings. Besides some recent improvements, loyalty in sports still requires some advances (Kaynak et al., 2008). Brazilian soccer, for example, is famous for the players’ talent and competitiveness; the “national sport” is very popular among people of all ages and social classes. But besides the recognition and pride that people assign to soccer in Brazil, marketing strategies are still scarce among clubs across the country. Loyalty in sports can be conceptualized as an allegiance or devotion to a team based on the spectator’s attachment to that team over time (Sumino & Harada, 2004). “Sports fans are emotionally committed to consumers of sporting events” (Mahony et al., 2000, p. 15), displaying a much greater propensity to watch and attend games.

Loyalty to sportive organizations may differ from loyalty to other type of business, since fans do not necessarily depend on any objective reward. Fans are unique consumers because their interest in a brand is self-sustaining (Pimental and Reynolds, 2004); “they voluntarily engage in behaviors beneficial to the relationship he or she shares with the brand, such as spreading positive word-of-mouth, protecting the brand, and ensuring the brand’s continued existence and legacy” (Chung, Farrelly, Beverland & Quester, 2005, p. 43). But for exploring sports fans’ brand loyalty, rational factors are not sufficient to explain their attitudinal and behavioral brand loyalty. The phenomenon needs to be explored from the aspect of “fans’ emotional attachment”. Factors influencing fans’ brand loyalty have a more psychological dimension, such as habits and long history, social and emotional identification, brand symbolism and self-image (Lin & Lin, 2008).

2.7. FAN BASE LOYALTY

Customer loyalty is claimed to be a crucial aspect of firm survival as repeat customers cost less to retain than new customers, they participate in positive word of mouth and they stand for a repeat and stable income for companies (Reichheld, 1996). Loyalty research in team sport has suggested that loyal fans have both strong, positive attitudes towards a certain team and practice repeat purchase behavior (Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000). Sport organizations should however always be on the lookout for consumers with negative perceptions about the provided services. These customers are likely to spend their discretionary income and time with competitive offerings but also participate in negative word of mouth that can make sport association’s also loose potential new customers (Grönroos, 2007).

Beech & Chadwick (2007) discusses how to define the sport consumer in today’s business. Yesterday’s consumer is the live spectator who was attending the games and saw them live. During time the televised audience has outgrown the live spectators most people watches sport events through their television. Aspects that are becoming more and more important are sponsors and advertisers (Beech & Chadwick, 2007).

Beech & Chadwick (2007) argues that different spectators are motivated by different aspects, depending on which level of spectatorship the individual is at. There are three different stages; *aficionados* or *diehard fans*, *fair-weather fans* and *theatre goers* or *spectacle whores*. Shank (2005) also divides fans into three different groups, the author uses the terms *low identification*, *medium identification* and *high identification*. According to Beech & Chadwick (2007) the aficionados-fans are very committed to the sport and to one specific team, the passionate supporter. Furthermore Shank (2005) explains that the high involvement fan often recruits new supporters to the team. This type of supporter is also likely to attend the games both home and away. The high involvement-fan thinks of the club as an important part of the community and invests a lot of money into it (Shank, 2005). The fair-weather fans can change their interest and even change teams depending on results, nevertheless this type of supporter enjoy the event almost as much as the aficionados fans. This fan usually show pride in the glory of the team and cuts of in case of failure (Beech & Chadwick, 2007). This is something that Shank (2005) agrees with but calls this type of fan the medium identification-fan. They often identify themselves with a team or a player but for a short period of time. When the teams or the player drops in status the medium identification-fan will probably shift their focus to other players or teams (Shank, 2005). The theatre goers often attends or watches sport because of benefits they can gain for themselves, the music, comradeship and such are more important for these types of fans (Beech & Chadwick, 2007). According to Shank (2005) this fan type goes to the games most likely for the promotions or events that occur during the game. The low identification-fan or social fan, as Shank (2005) calls them, can become more interested in the game if they see what possibilities they gain by being involved.

2.8. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

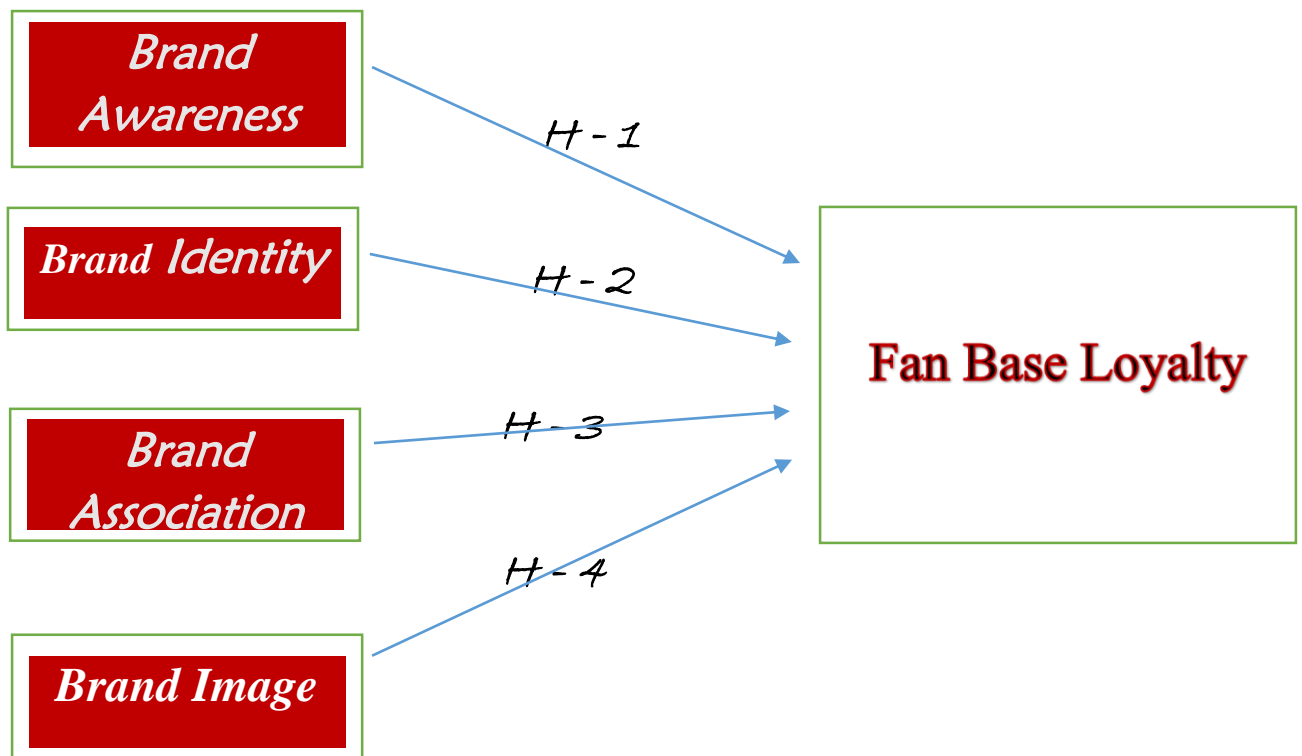


Figure 2.5: Conceptual Model

2.9. HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis - 1: Brand awareness has positive effect on fan base loyalty.

Hypothesis - 2: Brand identity has a positive influence on fan base loyalty.

Hypothesis - 3: Brand association has positive effect on fan base loyalty.

Hypothesis - 4: Brand image has a positive influence on fan base loyalty.

CHAPTER 3- METHODOLOGY

In order to understand and find out the elements influencing a certain phenomenon, an investigation is needed. In this thesis, the research is organized by collecting, analyzing and summarizing data needed for investigation. As the purpose of this thesis is to investigate the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of selected football clubs, it is important to explain the methodology chapter. In order to present the thesis, the methods introduced and justified. It bring stability through the whole investigation and create certain outcomes and conclusions of the thesis.

3.1. RESEARCH APPROACH

The survey research may be basically concerned with relationships between variables, thus the survey research could be an appropriate strategy to discover the relationships which are assumed in this research (Glock, 1967). Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993) indicate three different distinctive characteristics of the survey research. First, the purpose of the survey research is to quantitatively describe the partial phenomenon in a population. According to Glock (1967), survey analysis is usually utilised to clarify the relationships between variables or to produce results via a predetermined population. Survey research, as a quantitative research methodology, needs standardised information concerning research subjects. Second, survey data are mainly collected through asking structured and pre-determined questions to research subjects, such as individuals, groups, organisations or communities. The responses of the questions are utilised as data for quantitative analysis. Lastly, data is generally collected from a sample, a part of a research population. A researcher obtains findings through analyses of the collected data from the sample, and, in turn, these findings are generalised to results of the population.

The research method used in this study is a mixed research which involves both quantitative and qualitative methods. Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study. Thus, it is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data; it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The questionnaire surveys aim to offer the data for the statistical tests conducted for the study, summarising and weighing the results to reflect the overall perception of the respondents. In this study, the questionnaire research is conducted to understand the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty. Additionally, prior to the survey approach, the literature review is executed in order to create questions and grasp the research issues. Therefore, the items in the questionnaires are based on the literature review. The qualitative question is an interview with football experts regarding brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty. This is because when using qualitative research we can look at specific variables in depth and therefore gain a better understanding how brand management practices affects fan base loyalty.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Explanatory survey research is used to test a theory or a causal relationship (Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993). The study offered a theoretical foundation regarding how variables are connected with each other and why they are linked to others, since the objective of explanatory survey research is to discover the underlying relationships between variables. A theory intended to be tested through explanatory survey research contains a variety of variables and assumes the direction of the relationship as well as the relationship between variables. In addition, the study make use of the explanatory survey research method to establish a causal relationship, and then find an answer as to why the relationship between the variables exists.

Because of the vast nature of the research, the limitation stated and the explanatory and descriptive nature of the research, the study use cross sectional survey in the sense that all relevant data is being collected at one point in time.

3.3. TARGET POPULATION

The target population is defined as “the total group to be studied, the grand total of what is being measured” within a defined area (Burns & Bush 2003). The target population in this study is restricted to the fans (specifically those selected club fans) and football experts.

3.4. SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE FRAME

A probability sampling method is used for the questionnaire survey. A probability sampling method is any method of sampling that utilizes some form of random selection (McDaniel & Gates 2002). The four methods (simple, stratified, systematic and cluster) are the simplest random sampling strategies. In most real applied social research, we would use sampling methods that are considerably more complex than these simple variations. The most important principle here is that we can combine the simple methods mentioned earlier in a variety of useful ways that help us address our sampling needs in the most efficient and effective manner possible. When we combine sampling methods, we call this multi-stage sampling (Trochim, W., 2000). For the purpose of this study multi-stage sampling is used, since the survey take place in the stadium during Saint George F.C. and Ethiopian Coffee F.C. football matches the study used multi-stage sampling based on time interval up on the club fans arrival to the stadium. A non-probability sampling technique is used for the interview. In non-probability sampling, the chances of selection for various elements in the population are unknown (McDaniel & Gates 2002). These techniques help to select the elements that are within the required age and population groups.

Sample size:

Hair (1998) indicated criteria for determining a proper sample size. When the maximum likelihood estimation is used as in this research, a minimum sample size of 100 to 150 is recommended. In addition, the sample size should be at least five times the number of parameters estimated. In this study, a total of 384 fans of the selected football clubs was selected to fill the questionnaire in order to measure to what extent brand management practices affect fan base loyalty.

For the purpose of this study, since the population is very larger and the sampling frame is unknown, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling size estimation was used as shown below:

$$N = \frac{Z^2(p * q)}{e^2}$$

Where:

Z= is the value from z tables (1.96) at 95% confidence level

p= the population proportion (assumed to be 0.5), since this would provide the maximum sample size

q= 1 – p (0.5)

e= the desire level of precision (0.05)

Therefore;

$$n = \frac{1.96^2(0.5 \times 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = \underline{\underline{384}}$$

For this study, a total of 384 questionnaire was distributed to the fans. Since the two football clubs namely Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football clubs have a lot fans and well known by the people, the sample size was divided equally among the two football club fans as follows:

	Saint George F.C.	Ethiopian Coffee F.C.	Total
<i>Fans</i>	192	192	384

3.5. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS AND INSTRUMENT

This survey was done to find out to what extent brand management practices affects fan base loyalty. A well-structured questionnaire was handed to the selected football fans, to find out their opinions on the topic as it is easy and better to gather information from different people on different topics than a qualitative interview to specific fans, it was also safe and avoid deviation of answers from fans on particular topics. The questionnaire and interview questions was well structured in accordance with the theoretical framework created for that purpose, these are questions about the brand management practices related to club brand awareness, club brand identity, club brand association and club brand image. The information gathered from the questionnaire and interview answered the research problem.

3.6. RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The reliability of the questionnaire is related to the degree to which measures are free from random error and therefore yield consistent results (Zikmund 2000:375). One way to assess the reliability of the study is with an internal consistency reliability technique (McDaniel & Gates 2002:298). A cronbach alpha of 0.70 was used to establish the reliability of the scale.

3.7. VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Validity can be examined from a number of different perspectives, including face, content, criterion-related, and construct validity (McDaniel & Gates 2002). Construct validity refers how well a test measures what it asserts; it refers whether a scale or test measures the construct adequately. Construct validity is measured through convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity shows that measures that should be related are interrelated in reality. On the other hand, discriminant validity shows that measures that should not be related are not interrelated in reality. Low correlation values (range from -1, 00 to +1, 00) demonstrate that items are not interrelated to the same construct (Bagozzi, 1993). Internal validity refers if the right sources and valid information have been obtained or not. In addition, it also pertains to trustworthiness of the information that was collected from respondents (Bell and Bryman, 2003). In order to decrease random error (different interpretations), the survey was translated into Amharic in order to minimize linguistic barriers with football fans. Therefore, the survey was created in English and then translated to Amharic in order to make it easier to understand for respondents and to minimize linguistic barriers.

3.8. ETHICAL ISSUES

According to McDaniel and Gates (2002) ethics are moral principles or values generally governing the conduct of an individual or group. Ethical behaviour is not, however, a one-way relationship. The study maintained research integrity by avoiding misinterpretation, omission of pertinent research data and by treating respondents fairly. In addition, respondents were not forced to participate in the study and assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The data gathered is analyzed in aggregate and responses is not ascribed to any particular respondent.

3.9. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Multiple regression is used to analyze the composition of the sample. Statistical techniques employed in multiple regression were included, central tendency (mean, mode and median), distribution (frequency of distribution). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to establish the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

$$Y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + b_4 x_4 + e$$

Where:

Y= Fan base loyalty

b_1 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand awareness

x_1 = Brand awareness

b_2 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand identity

x_2 = Brand identity

b_3 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand association

x_3 = Brand association

b_4 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand image

x_4 = Brand image

e= Sampling error

CHAPTER 4: RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Chapter three provides an overview of the research design undertaken for the study and the statistical procedures to be applied to analyze the findings, this chapter discusses the results of the statistical analysis proposed in chapter three. Descriptive analysis are used to present the result from the main survey. The empirical findings are cross-referred with the literature relevant to the study. This chapter analyzes and present the data collected from questionnaire and interview regarding the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs.

4.1. SAMPLE AND RESPONSE RATE

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs fans. Out of the total respondents 347 which is (90.36%) of them was properly filled the questionnaire and returned to the researcher, while 37 of the respondents i.e. (9.64%) was not able to return the questionnaire due to various reasons.

Football Clubs	Sample proportional questionnaires Distributed	Collected questionnaires
<i>Saint George F.C.</i>	192	165
<i>Ethiopian Coffee F.C.</i>	192	182
	384	347

Table 4.1: Sample and response rate

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

4.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.2.1. RESPONDENTS PROFILE

The questionnaire distributed have three sections. In section one, the demographic data of the respondents are collected. Questions in section two are designed to understand the respondents experience of the football clubs and questions in section three are designed to capture variables under brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty.

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Less than 18	42	12.1
18-29	206	59.4
30-40	78	22.5
41-54	20	5.8
55-65	1	.3
Total	347	100
Gender		
Male	315	90.8
Female	32	9.2
Total	347	100
Academic Qualification		
Less than high school	52	15
High school	144	41.5
Diploma	53	15.3
1st Degree	85	24.5
Masters and above	13	3.7
Total	347	100

Table 4.2: Respondents Profile

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

As shown above in table 4.2, (12.1 %) of the respondents were in the age group of less than 18, 59.4% of the respondents were in the age group o 18-29, (22.5%) of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40, (5.8%) of the respondents were in the age group of 41-54 and only one respondents were in the age group of 55-65. When we look at the age group of the respondents many of the respondents fall in the age group of 18-29, while the least respondent found in the age group of 55-65.

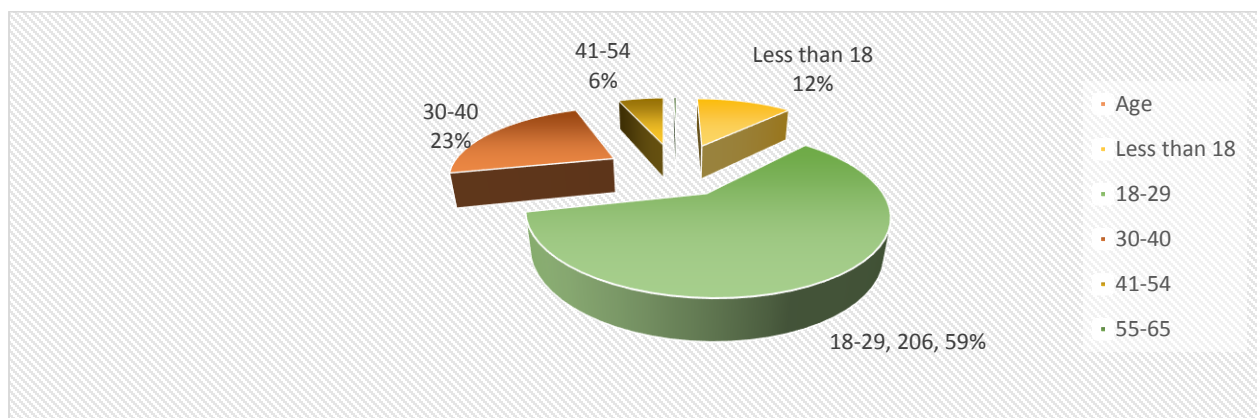


Figure 4.1: Age of respondents

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Out of the sample of 347 respondents, 315 which are (90.8%) were males & 32 respondents representing (9.2%) of the total respondents were females. As presented in table 4.2, male respondents are greater than female respondents.

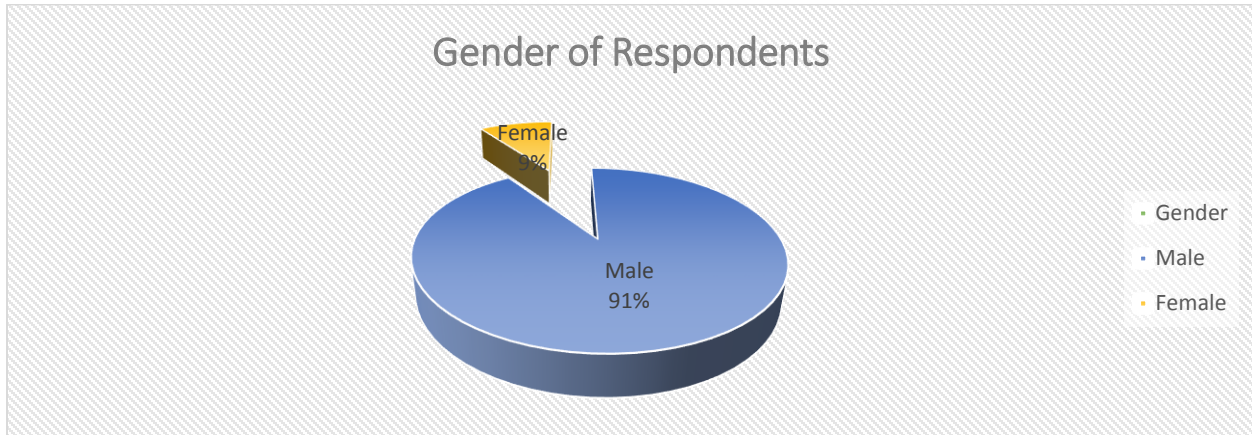


Figure 4.2: Gender of respondents

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Table 4.2 also shows the educational level of the respondents, i.e. about (15%) are fans which are less than high school, (45.5%) of the respondents are in the category of high school, (15.3%) of the respondents were diploma holders, (24.5%) of the respondents were degree holders and only (3.7%) of the respondents are masters’ holders. When we look at the academic qualification of the respondents, many of the respondents fall in the category of high school. While the least respondents found in the category of masters and above.

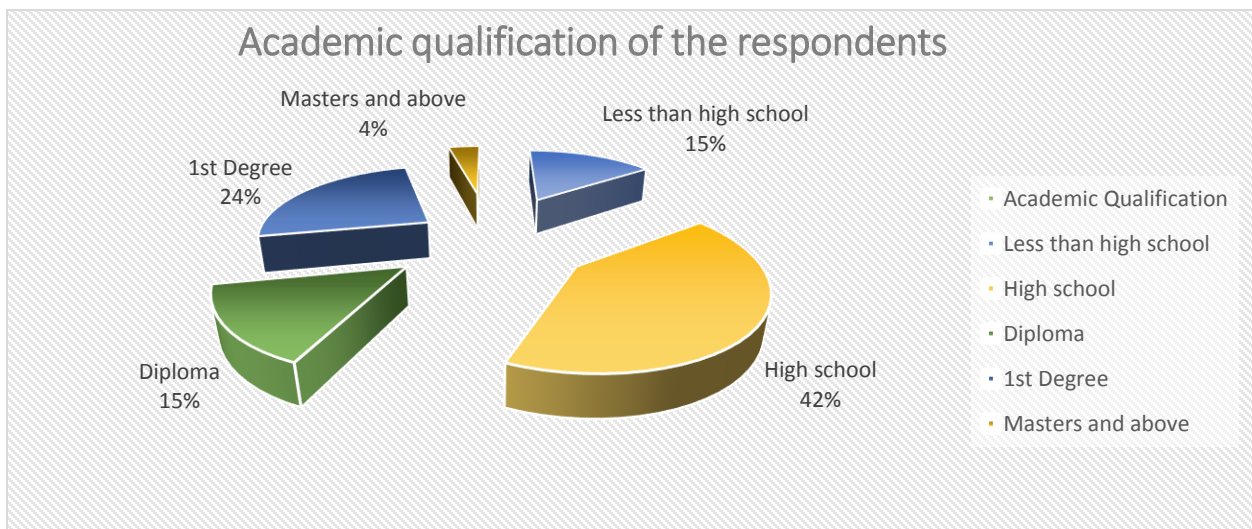


Figure 4.3: Academic qualification of the respondents

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

From the total respondents, 46 respondents were supporting their favorite football club for the last five years, which is represented by (13.3%) of the total respondents, 45 (13%) respondents were supporting their favorite football club for the last eight years, 41 respondents (11.8%) for the last six years. And only one respondent were supporting his favorite football club for the last 35 years (see Annex 3A). From the total respondents, 205 respondents were registered fans with their favorite football club, which is represented by (59.1%). And the rest of the respondents which is represented by (40.9%) are not registered with their favorite football club (see Annex 3B).

4.2.2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES

There are four independent and one dependent variable. These variables are brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty. All the five variables have seven questions each. Respondents were asked to rate their perception on a five point Likert type scale ranging from 1 being strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. Totally, the five variables have thirty five questions, under this section each variables describes every question with their statistical values.

Brand Awareness					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My team is very popular.	347	1.00	5.00	2.9741	.78418
I am aware of the history of my team.	347	1.00	5.00	2.5706	.76222
I am aware of the ideals and values that my team stands for.	347	1.00	4.00	2.5245	.71431
I am aware of the squad of my team.	347	1.00	5.00	2.8069	.76041
I usually check the team's website.	347	1.00	4.00	2.2939	.70098
I follow my team on social media (Facebook, Twitter ...)	347	1.00	5.00	2.4697	.77986
The uniform of my team is distinctive from other teams.	347	1.00	5.00	2.9568	.72994
Valid N (listwise)	347				

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics for questions under brand awareness

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

The mean square of fan's brand awareness to their favorite football clubs for all the seven dimensions range from 2.2939 to 2.9741 indicating that fan's brand awareness about their favorite team is less than average. Comparison of means of dimensions indicating that question no. 1 (My team is very popular) has got the highest mean score (2.9741) with std. deviation= .78418, whereas question no. 4 (I usually check the team's website) has got the least mean score value (2.2939) with std. deviation= .70098.

Brand Identity					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My favorite team has a distinctive and unique identity.	347	1.00	4.00	2.8300	.66055
My favorite team enhances my self-esteem.	347	1.00	5.00	2.4841	.70642
My favorite team is a first-class, high quality sport team.	347	1.00	4.00	2.2882	.71155
I like what my favorite team stands for.	347	1.00	4.00	2.3343	.58700
My favorite team has an attractive identity.	347	1.00	4.00	2.5965	.70407
When I talk about my favorite team, I usually say "we" rather than "they".	347	1.00	4.00	2.5274	.67680
My favorite team stands out from its competitors.	347	1.00	4.00	2.6023	.69081
Valid N (listwise)	347				

Table 4.4 Descriptive statistics for questions under brand identity

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Brand identity is also divided in to seven attributes. The mean scores have been computed for all the seven attributes of brand identity. The result is presented in table 4.4, the mean score of brand identity for all the seven attributes range from (2.83), for the attribute (My favorite team has a distinctive and unique identity) to (2.2882) for the attribute (My favorite team is a first class, high quality sport team). Overall, brand identity has a mean score of 2.52, which is below average.

Brand Association					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I could associate “star player” with my football team.	347	1.00	4.00	2.6427	.73258
I could associate “group experience” with my football team.	347	1.00	4.00	2.5360	.68066
I could associate “stadium atmosphere” with my football team.	347	1.00	5.00	2.7118	.77382
I could associate “success” with my football team.	347	1.00	5.00	2.4467	.86312
I could associate “sponsor” with my football team.	347	1.00	4.00	2.6888	.73395
I could associate “logo” with my football team.	347	1.00	5.00	2.6282	.78836
I could associate “color of the shirt” with my football team.	347	1.00	4.00	2.6715	.83033
Valid N (listwise)	347				

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics for questions under brand association

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Brand association is further divided into seven attributes. The mean scores have been computed for all the seven attributes of brand association. As it can be seen from table 4.5 (I could associate “stadium atmosphere” with my football team) was the highest rated dimension relative to others with a mean score of (2.7118) with the std deviation of .77382. (I could associate “success” with my football team) was perceived as the lowest by the respondents with a mean score of (2.4467) and std deviation of .86312. The overall mean for brand association is 2.62, which is below average.

Brand Image					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My team is a great club.	347	1.00	5.00	2.2824	.85734
My team has a good squad.	347	1.00	5.00	2.2795	.85322
My team is an ambitious club.	347	1.00	5.00	2.3314	.82042
My team is well managed.	347	1.00	5.00	2.2219	.86337
My team players could demonstrate combative character.	347	1.00	5.00	2.3228	.78249
My team management is competent.	347	1.00	5.00	2.1412	.83990
My team has a reputable name.	347	1.00	5.00	2.2968	.83705
Valid N (listwise)	347				

Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics for questions under brand image

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Brand image is further divided in to seven attributes. The mean scores have been computed for all the seven attributes. As it can be seen from table 4.6, question no. 3 (My team is an ambitious club) was the highest rated dimension relative to others with a mean score of 2.3314 and with std. deviation of .82042 and question no. 6 (My team management is competent) was perceived as the lowest by respondents with a mean score of 2.1412 and std. deviation of .83990. The overall mean for brand image is 2.27, which is below average.

Fan Base Loyalty					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am a real and committed fan of my favorite club.	347	1.00	5.00	3.17867	.920106
There is nothing that could change my commitment to my favorite club.	347	1.00	5.00	2.4467	.75984
The long term success of my favorite team is important to me.	347	1.00	5.00	2.6340	.83375
I purchase some merchandising products of my favorite team in a specified time period.	347	1.00	5.00	2.5908	.81866
I regularly attend games of my favorite team in a specified time period.	347	1.00	5.00	2.5476	.73313
I strongly promote my team to my friends, colleagues...	347	1.00	5.00	2.5130	.71864
I have often followed reports about my favourite team's players, coaches, managers etc.	347	1.00	4.00	2.4957	.68583
Valid N (listwise)	347				

Table 4.7: Descriptive statistics for questions under fan base loyalty

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

Table 4.7 shows seven attributes of fan base loyalty. The mean scores have been computed for all the seven attributes. The mean score of fan base loyalty for all the seven attributes range from 3.17862 (I am a real and committed fan of my favorite club) to 2.4467 (There is nothing that could change my commitment to my favorite club). The overall mean for fan base loyalty is 2.63 which is below average.

4.3. RELIABILITY TEST

The purpose of this stage is to describe in the reliability of the measuring tools employed in this research. This is important because reliability shows whether or not an instrument's measures are free from error, thus yielding reliable outcomes. The most common technique used in the literature to assess the scales reliability and stability in use of cronbach alpha statistic, which identifies to what extent items hang together as one set (Sekaran, 2015). Low cronbach alpha value mean items don't capture the same construct, but high values of cronbach alpha indicate that items very well measures and reflects the construct. The result showed that brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty scales are all reliable.

Variables	Valid Cases	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Awareness	347	7	0.719
Brand Identity	347	7	0.743
Brand Association	347	7	0.733
Brand Image	347	7	0.734
Fan Base Loyalty	347	7	0.828
Overall Cronbach's Alpha	347	35	0.778

Table 4.8: Reliability statistics

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

4.4. CORRELATION

This study employs the correlation analysis, which investigates the strength of the relationship between the studied variables. Pearson correlation analysis was used to provide evidence of convergent validity. Correlation are perhaps the most basic and useful measure of association between two or more variables (Marczyk, Dematteo and Festinger, 2005). Based on general guidelines, correlations of 0.10 to 0.30 are considered small, correlation of 0.3 to 0.7 are considered moderate, correlation of 0.70 to 0.90 are considered large and correlation of 0.90 to 1.00 are considered very large. Correlation are the most basic and most useful measure of association between two or more variables. Expressed in a single number called a correlation coefficient 'r', correlation provides information about the direction of the relationship, either positive or negative. If two variables tend to move in the same direction they would be considered to have a positive or direct relationship.

Correlations						
		BRAND AWARENESS	BRAND IDENTITY	BRAND ASSOCIATION	BRAND IMAGE	FAN BASE LOYALTY
BRAND AWARENESS	Pearson Correlation	1	.393**	.151**	.129*	.318**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.005	.017	.000
	N	347	347	347	347	347
BRAND IDENTITY	Pearson Correlation	.393**	1	.222**	.202**	.345**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	347	347	347	347	347
BRAND ASSOCIATION	Pearson Correlation	.151**	.222**	1	.323**	.395**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000		.000	.000
	N	347	347	347	347	347
BRAND IMAGE	Pearson Correlation	.129*	.202**	.323**	1	.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	.000	.000		.000
	N	347	347	347	347	347
FAN BASE LOYALTY	Pearson Correlation	.318**	.345**	.395**	.661**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	347	347	347	347	347
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Table 4.9: Correlation analysis

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

As per table 4.9 the coefficients shows that four of the factors affecting fan base loyalty were all positively related with fan base loyalty within the range of 0.318 to 0.661, all of the factors (brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image) are significant at $p < 0.01$ level. A further look in to each variables indicates that the four factors i.e.: brand awareness ($r=0.318$), brand identity ($r=0.345$), brand association ($r=0.395$) and brand image ($r=0.661$) are important determinant of fan base loyalty.

Regarding the relationship of the independent variables, Table 4.8 clearly shows that each of the factors are significantly correlated with each other at a significant level of $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$. The correlation between brand awareness and brand identity is the highest ($r= 0.393$), followed by brand association and brand image ($r= 0.323$). The rest of independent variables correlation with each other fall under the r value range i.e. 0.318.

4.5. ASSUMPTIONS TESTING FOR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

4.5.1. MULTI-COLLINEARITY

Hill et al. (2003) explained that economic variables may move together in systematic ways when the data are the result of an uncontrolled experiment, such variables are believed to have problems with collinearity and multi collinearity when several variables are involved. Before the regression analysis, multicollinearity of variables was tested. The commonly used cut off point as (Pallent, 2005) mentioned for determining the existence of multicollinearity among independent variables are Tolerance Value and Variance Inflation Factor value. The rule is that where tolerance value is less than 0.2 and VIF exceeds 10; it is a signal of multicollinearity, which could lead to misleading and or in accurate results. With refer to collinearity statistics shown below, the tolerance and VIF showed that there was no multicollinearity because VIF of all variables were less than 10.

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
BRAND AWARENESS	.841	1.190
BRAND IDENTITY	.807	1.239
BRAND ASSOCIATION	.867	1.154
BRAND IMAGE	.876	1.141

Table 4.10: Multicollinearity problem test of VIF and Tolerance

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

4.5.2 LINEARITY

The linearity of the relationship between the dependent and independent variable represented the degree to which the change in the dependent variable is associated with the independent variable. In other word, linear models predict values falling in a straight line by having a constant unit change (slope) of the dependent variable for a constant unit change of the independent variable.

The scatter plot of standardized residuals versus the fitted value (see Appendix 3C) for the regression models were visually inspected. The plot didn't reveal any systematic patterns, thus providing support for the specified linear relationship.

4.5.3. NORMALITY

Based on this assumption, a check for normality of the error term is conducted by a visual examination of the normal probability plots of the residuals or histograms. (Malhotra et.al, 2007) proposes that normality of probability plots are often conducted at an informal means of assessing the non-normality of a set of data. In this study, the normality probability plots or histograms were used to assess normality (see Appendix 3D). Accordingly, the residuals were deemed to have a reasonably normal distribution.

The skewness value value provides an indication of the symmetry of the distribution. Kurtosis on the other hand, provides information about the 'peakedness' of the distribution. A positive skewness value indicates positive (right) skew, a negative value indicates negative (left) skew. The higher the absolute value, the greater the skew. Similarly, a positive kurtosis value indicates positive kurtosis, a negative one indicates negative kurtosis. (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001, 174). Accordingly, the residuals were deemed to have a reasonably normal distribution.

Statistics						
		Brand Awareness	Brand Identity	Brand Association	Brand Image	Fan Base Loyalty
N	Valid	347	347	347	347	347
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness		.955	.739	.799	.180	.142
Std. Error of Skewness		.135	.135	.135	.135	.135
Kurtosis		1.421	2.939	.418	.909	.014
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.269	.269	.269	.269	.269

Table 4.11: Skewness and Kurtosis

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

4.5.4 NO AUTO CORRELATION

To determine the autocorrelation between observations, Durbin-Watson test was used. The Durbin Watson statistic ranges in value from 0 to 4. A value near 2 indicates non-auto correlation; a value toward 4 indicates negative auto correlation; a value toward 0 indicates positive autocorrelation (Durbin Watson, 1950). According to this study, the Durbin Watson value is 1.547 which is closer to 2; it can be confirmed that the assumption of independent error has almost certainly been met.

4.6. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Albaum (1997) noted that regression is a technique used to predict the value of a dependent variable using one or more independent variable. (Malhotra et.al, 2007) showed that regression analysis is a statistical tool for the investigation of relationships between variables. In order to ascertain the casual influence of one variable upon another, researcher assemble data on the underlying variables of the causal variables upon the variable that they influence.

In order to understand the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty, multiple regression analysis was employed. Fan base loyalty was used as the dependent variable, while brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image was used as independent variables.

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.730 ^a	.533	.527	.33154	1.547
a. Predictors: (Constant), BRAND IMAGE, BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND ASSOCIATION, BRAND IDENTITY					
b. Dependent Variable: FAN BASE LOYALTY					

Table 4.12: Model Summary

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

The regression model presents how much of the variance in the measures of fan base loyalty is explained by the underlying factors of fan base loyalty. The model or the predictor variables have accounted for 53.3% (Adjusted R square of 52.7% with estimated standard deviation .33154) of the variance in the criterion variable (fan base loyalty) can be explained by brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image. The remaining 47.3% of variation on fan base loyalty are explained by other variables.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.848	4	10.712	97.455	.000 ^b
	Residual	37.592	342	.110		
	Total	80.441	346			
a. Dependent Variable: FAN BASE LOYALTY						
b. Predictors: (Constant), BRAND IMAGE, BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND ASSOCIATION, BRAND IDENTITY						

Table 4.13: Anova table

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

The Anova table shows the overall significance or acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective. As the significant value of f statistics shows a value of 97.455 and p-value (.000), which is less than $p < 0.05$, the model is significant. This indicates that the variation explained by the model is not due to chance.

Thus the strength of each predictor (independent) variables in the predictor of the dependent variable can be investigated via standardized Beta coefficient. The regression coefficient explains the average amount of change in dependent variable that is caused by a unit of change in the independent variable. The larger value of beta coefficient that an independent variable has, the more support to the independent variable as the more important determinant in predicting the dependent variable.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.266	.164		1.623	.106		
	BRAND AWARENESS	.194	.046	.171	4.245	.000	.841	1.190
	BRAND IDENTITY	.181	.058	.129	3.137	.002	.807	1.239
	BRAND ASSOCIATION	.167	.042	.159	3.994	.000	.867	1.154
	BRAND IMAGE	.421	.030	.562	14.221	.000	.876	1.141
a. Dependent Variable: FAN BASE LOYALTY								

Table 4.14: Coefficients table

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

When you see the extent to which each independent variables influence the dependent variables; brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image found to be the determinant factors which are perceived to be important on fan base loyalty.

According to the table the regression standardized coefficients from the four independent variables, i.e. brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image are 0.171, 0.129, 0.159, 0.562 and their significance levels are .000, .002, .000 and .000 respectively.

The prediction equation for “fan base loyalty” is given as;

$$Y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + b_4 x_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Fan base loyalty

b1 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand awareness

X1 = Brand awareness

b2 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand identity

X2 = Brand identity

b3 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand association

X3 = Brand association

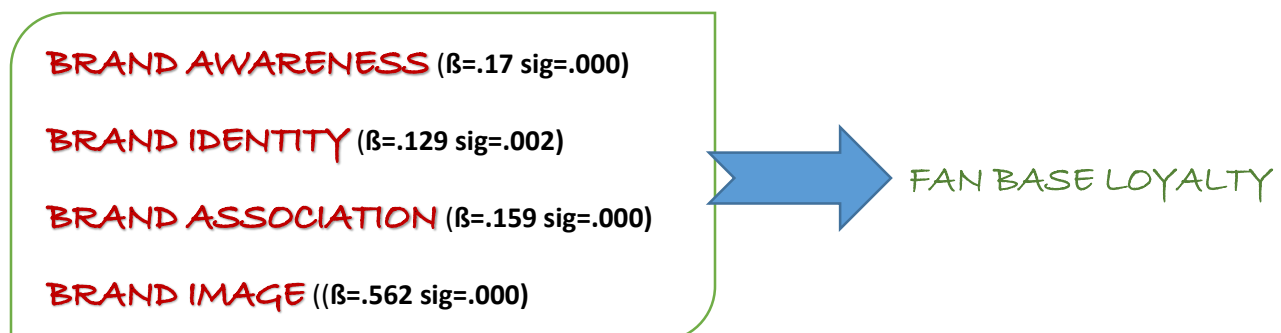
b4 = beta weigh or regression coefficient of brand image

X4 = Brand image

e = Sampling error

$$\text{Fan Base Loyalty} = 0.194X_1 + 0.181X_2 + 0.167X_3 + 0.421X_4 + 0.266$$

All the independent variables measures have positive effect on fan base loyalty. Among which brand image has the highest effect on with coefficient 0.421, followed by brand awareness (0.194), brand identity (0.181) and brand association (0.167). The t-tests were used to test the significance of the coefficient of each independent variable. The t-values of the variable are given by brand awareness (4.245), brand identity (3.137), brand association (3.994) and brand image (14.221) with significant level of .000, .002, .000 and .000 respectively. This implies that the regression coefficients of the independent variables are statistically significant.



4.7. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis	Independent variables	Hypothesized sign and significance	Result from multiple regression model	Reason
<i>H-1</i>	Brand Awareness	Positive & Significance effect on fan base loyalty	<i>Supported</i>	$\beta = 0.171$, $p < 0.05$
<i>H-2</i>	Brand Identity	Positive & Significance effect on fan base loyalty	<i>Supported</i>	$\beta = 0.129$, $p < 0.05$
<i>H-3</i>	Brand Association	Positive & Significance effect on fan base loyalty	<i>Supported</i>	$\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.05$
<i>H-4</i>	Brand Image	Positive & Significance effect on fan base loyalty	<i>Supported</i>	$\beta = 0.562$, $p < 0.05$

Table 4.15: Hypothesis testing

Source: Questionnaire survey finding (2016)

H-1: Brand awareness and fan base loyalty

As shown from table 4.12 brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs. From the predicted model this hypothesis is supported at 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance.

Ross (2006) suggests that brand awareness is an important part of spectator-based brand equity because when fans would think about a product category (sports, football, ice hockey etc.) it is crucial that customers recall and identify the specific brand (Manchester United, New York Rangers etc.). Gladden & Funk (2002) states however that this problem is less important for regional clubs as the competition among local teams usually are less fierce.

H-2: Brand identity and fan base loyalty

As shown from table 4.12 brand identity has a positive and significant effect on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs. From the predicted model this hypothesis is supported at 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance.

In the modern society, a sports team may be regarded as an organisational brand, and, as such, the identity of the brand is strongly linked to a consumer's knowledge of the team (Brown and Dacin 1997). Research suggests that identification with an organisation derives from the way the

characteristics or identity of the organisation are perceived. (Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail 1994). This perceived identity is linked to the organisation's enduring objectives, structure, administration and ethos (Kunda 1999; Scott and Lane 2000) that are integral and fundamental to the organisation, and distinguishes the organisation from others like it (Albert and Whetten 1985). To this end, a sports team's brand identity should reflect to fans or potential fans the sum of all the team has to offer (Urde, 2003). Brand identity takes on a more specific meaning when relating to sports team brands thanks to the degree to which individuals tend to identify with their favorite teams. This might include the teams' most attractive and core attributes and values which the team represents, potential benefits to the supporter, and the significance of the experience of viewing that team in action (Bennett and Rundle-Thiele, 2005). Attached to this brand identity are a number of brand associations in the mind of the supporter which are linked to following that team. (Aaker, 1997).

H-3: Brand association and fan base loyalty

As shown from table 4.12 brand association has a positive and significant effect on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs. From the predicted model this hypothesis is supported at 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance.

Gladden and Funk identified sixteen dimensions of brand association as potentially contributing to the foundation of brand associations in sport. These were conceived out of the three categories proposed by Keller (1993), and point to the significance of emotional identification with a team, and the exhilaration felt when watching that team play live. Gladden and Funk (2001) also measured 13 attributes and benefits which can be associated with a sports team's brand and found that vicarious achievement based on the successes of the team, nostalgia for previous experiences of watching the team play, peer group acceptance of emotional attachment to the team, the 'escapism' of becoming immersed in the game, tradition, product delivery and star players were reliable predictors of loyalty to a team. Similarly, Funk (2002) reported that six of these associations (star player, vicarious achievement, nostalgia, product delivery, success and escape) categorized consumers by their membership of three groups; casual, moderate and loyal.

H-4: Brand image and fan base loyalty

As shown from table 4.12 brand image has a positive and significant effect on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs. From the predicted model this hypothesis is supported at 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance.

Sports constitute an interesting market always. According to Morgan and Summers (2005), the activity of people watching or listening sports is called 'sports consumption'. "Sport can be consumed directly – through watching a game played live or by participating in a sport – or indirectly – through watching a game on television, listen to it on the radio or reading about it in a newspaper or magazine" (p. 15). Sportive clubs tend to adopt professional management practices to take advantage of fans loyalty and to improve their brand performance (Bauer, Sauer & Schmitt, 2005).

4.8. ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

The method used in this study is mixed which involves both quantitative and qualitative methods and the use of both approaches in tandem, so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research. In this section, the qualitative data which was collected by interview with football experts regarding club brand awareness, club brand identity, club brand association and club brand image is analyzed and summarized as follows:

4.8.1. BRAND AWARENESS

“What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club’s brand awareness toward the fans and the community?” And “How club brand awareness affects fan base loyalty?”

Ross (2006) suggests that brand awareness is an important part of spectator-based brand equity because when fans would think about a product category (sports, football, ice hockey etc.) it is crucial that customers recall and identify the specific brand (Manchester United, New York Rangers etc.). Gladden & Funk (2002) states however that this problem is less important for regional clubs as the competition among local teams usually are less fierce.

According to the interviewees:

Firstly a football brand is directly linked to on field performance. Secondly, in addition to on field performances there are also outfield performances which are not directly linked to field performance. Since its football, there must be a strong bond to the community, a community that the football club originally based. In Ethiopian football industry, the work performed in creating a strong bond with the community is very low or in other word there is no blue print in creating a strong bondage with the community, things are coming by default.

Football clubs who are active participants in social works have strong bondage with the community rather football clubs who are weak participants in such community work have a brand value which is very low. For example, in Catalonia, F.C Barcelona in addition to its success on the field it have a strong linkage in social and political issues. Therefore the community of Catalonia, because of this linkage in political and social issues they have a strong bondage with the football club or in other word they can easily aware the football club brand. By seeing this strong bondage and loyalty with the football club companies can easily entered in to that sphere and they become partners with the football club.

In order to bring a strong brand awareness among fans and to build their brand, football clubs must concentrate firstly on their performance which is on the field that means football clubs must develop a strong and high quality sport team. By using the field performance as a stepping stone, clubs can easily practices other branding aspects. Secondly, even if football clubs didn’t achieve success on the field, they must entered in to the mind of the fans and the community to bring high level of brand awareness and strong fan base loyalty in many different mechanisms:

- By being active participant in community works.
- By participating in charity works

- By preparing radio and television programs in order to create a strong brand awareness among fans and the community.
- By participating in exhibitions and bazars.
- By opening different outlets across the country to provide club's merchandising items and to increase awareness across the community.
- By using social media (Facebook, Twitter..)
- By using official websites

A sport like football has a worldwide following and sports fans are scattered across the globe. As a result, football teams may have fans in far off and remote regions, sometimes in different nations and continents. These fans only have the options of following the matches on their television sets or following the sports news in the papers. For such a public that is not available at the field, and which cannot have access to promotional material or merchandise due to its location, the internet provides a potential media of reach (Beech et al., 2000).

The football teams can make use of the internet by, not only providing the latest coverage concerning their games and schedules to their fans, but also by creating a positive brand awareness by developing a website that the fans can relate to. There are several ways in which a website can help provide a positive brand awareness for the team. The web sites' content, design, presentation and the frequency at which it gets updated provide useful cues to the readers concerning the quality and competence of the clubs. In addition, the webmasters for these sites should realize the emotional attachment that the fans have with the teams and capitalize on it by providing content related to the off-field actions and achievements of the team and the players. These cues are then associated with or projected upon the team that owns the web site.

By doing this and other different mechanisms, football clubs can easily create a strong bondage with the community and gain a high degree of brand awareness from the fans and the community.

4.8.2. BRAND IDENTITY

“What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club's brand identity?” And “How club brand identity affects fan base loyalty?”

According to Richelieu (2003) the identity of the sports team consists of two central elements: *the attributes of the team* and the *value the team represents to its fans*. The attributes of the team refers to the core values of the team, meaning what the team wants to be associated with and recognized for (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The intention is for sports organizations to identify key elements they want the team to represent (ambition, solidarity, fighting spirit, etc.) to send a message of meaning to the team and at the same time provide direction to the brand (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005). The history of the team and its presence in the community are often used as assets in order to trigger an emotional response and a sense of belonging with its fans (Kapferer, 2001). Also the stadium or arena can withhold a great part of a clubs identity (memories of championships or dreadful defeats) and be something to help build and strengthen the identity of a sports team (Schilhaneck, 2008).

According to the interviewees:

In order to create a strong brand identity, the football clubs should be community based not corporation based. In Ethiopia there are a lot of corporation based football clubs which are funded and bankrolled by the government development organizations. Corporation based football clubs have bondage with the employees of the development organization not with the community which is very difficult to create a strong identity and sense of belongingness with the community and also a bottleneck on fan base development. There is still the structure of communism in Ethiopian football industry, in communism any development organization should participate in sport activities. For example in Russia, Locomotive Moscow is owned by the Locomotive Company.

For example Muger Cement F.C can attract the employees' of Muger Cement Company not the other community. Because of this and the impact of globalization things are very difficult in creating a strong brand identity and fan base development. During the Derg regime, there was an army based football club called 'Mider Tor' or 'Mechal' the fans were soldiers of the country, it is a kind of a team which have military spirit and the identity of the team is expressed by fighting spirit and there was many injuries on the field.

In order to bring a strong brand identity and fan base loyalty football clubs should be community based not corporation based. In professional football world, football clubs who are supported by white collar fans are their own identity (example: Real Madrid, Chelsea, Manchester United) and football clubs who are supported by blue collar fans have also their own identity (example: Liverpool, Dortmund, Atletico Madrid). In our country there is no such kind of bondage with the community. Because of that their brand identity is very low.

Stadium, particularly if it is owned by the team, can play an important role in building a brand identity for the team. The stadium can provide a historical or traditional value by its meaningful background and history. If the stadium is remembered for staging significant games in the past, then it can bring the identity of having a glittering past over to the team that owns it. Another way in which the stadium can be used for creating positive team identity is by maintaining the stadium facilities to a high standard and integrating unique and additional features to the stadium building. For example, the stadiums seating segregation, color scheme, and unique features that can be incorporated in the stadium design, can be used as brand strategies for the team identity.

4.8.3. BRAND ASSOCIATION

“What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club’s brand association?” And “How club brand association affects fan base loyalty?”

For some individuals, viewing a sporting event is an opportunity to enjoy the excitement of watching their favorite team playing live, while, for others, it is simply a chance to spend time with their family and friends, or even to network with business connections. This can alter depending on the sport in question; some sports (e.g., Amateur Football League) tend to attract audiences who see the game as an opportunity for social interaction, whereas others (e.g., Major Professional Football League) attract audiences who are more committed to concentrating on the

actual game (James and Ross 2002). Given the number of different motivations spectators at sports games can have, there is a wealth of different associations that marketers must take into account when devising strategies. Ultimately, marketers will have to combine both tangible and intangible attributes to create an effective brand identity that appeals to a wide spectrum of consumers. This has been referred to as the "unique set of brand associations that a brand strategist aspires to create or maintain," (Aaker 1996, p.68).

According to the interviewees:

In order to bring strong brand association among fans and the community, there must be rules and regulations and the management of the football must be strategic thinkers. In professional football world, financial capacity without institutional knowledge is nothing. This institutional knowledge is expressed by strategic thinking. Strategic thinking in terms of techniques, strategic thinking in terms of marketing, strategic thinking in terms of human resource management etc.

In Ethiopian football industry there is no such a thing as a strategy, when we see the contract of star players and head coaches is not more than two years, which are the most important brand association aspects. And also some football clubs in Ethiopian premier league is administered with budget deficit. These and other problems are obstacles in creating a strong brand association with fans.

In order to create a strong brand association with the fans, football clubs must do surveys regarding head coaches and star players that the fans want to join their football clubs. Based on the survey result, the football club must hire the head coach and the star players by media hype and by giving press conferences. By doing this and other practices the football club can easily increase the degree of brand association and then increases the fan base loyalty.

The other important brand association aspect in football is logo and color. In order to take the maximum advantage of the logo, a team's logo should be proactively developed and then efforts made to associate it with the team's name and image. Care should be taken that the logo is of colors that are either popular or appealing or are the ones that reflect certain desirable characteristics.

The benefits of using a colour to associate with a team are that people tend to attribute certain qualities to a particular colour. Thus, if a person thinks of black he may recall the team that uses this color and also assumes that that team's members are bold and powerful – attributes largely associated with this colour. In addition, to assigning certain colour encouraged attributes to the teams, colors can also provide a visual package to the public. As colors are more attention catching than written words, this visual memory produced by the colour identity is more easily recalled. Colours are able to stimulate human senses more and can provide a quicker bonding with the attribute that is desired by the team, or the quality that the team wants to be associated with it.

4.8.4. BRAND IMAGE

“What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club’s brand image?” And “How club brand image affects fan base loyalty?”

Team image can be understood as the result of management efforts to build a common view of team reality among a social or cultural group (Bauer et. al. 2008), and its image tends to be more favorable during the time the team succeeds in high level competitions than during the falls (Garcia, Pérez & Rodríguez, 2008). Abosag, Roper & Hind (2012) shows that supporters accept their club as a brand, what supports brand extension assumption, since there is a clear link between this acceptance of branding activity and supporters’ emotional involvement within the club. Santini, Ladeira & Araujo (2013) confirmed that the club’s image increases the possibility of a fan’s purchase intention of their sports products what indicates that marketing tools can be used to motivate the fan base to support the team’s competitiveness in many ways: buying and/or using club’s original products and symbols; patronizing club’s services (i.e. fitness, beauty parlors, dieting); cheering for the team during the games; etc.

According to the interviewees:

In order to build the brand image or performance of a football club. There must be a competent head coach and different kinds of team building strategies. On field performance is vital in football club branding. After all the bondage of the community is due to the field performance, without it that tribalism will never have existence. Because on field performance is the epicenter of any football clubs. On field performance can be affected by different factors; head coach selection, players transfer policies, human resource management etc.

Head coaches are identified as an integral part of the overall sports product and hence prove to be an important antecedent condition that affects the overall marketability of the team. In addition to the star players, the teams are also known for the coaches that they have. Team coaches play a significant role not only in developing and training the team members for better physical performances, but also in creating an overall attitude for the players which the teams get associated with and increasing the brand image of the football clubs.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter aims to review the problem of the research and conclude the findings with regard to the objective of the study. The researcher tried to assess the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs. Recommendation that focuses on how the problem is identified could be addressed is included in this chapter; limitations and suggestions for future research, theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

5.1. SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The demographic background of the respondents shows that; from the total respondents, 59.4% of the respondents were in the age group of 18-29, 22.5% of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40 and only one respondent were in the age group of 55-65. Majority of the respondents are males which is 90.8% and the rest were females which accounts for 9.2%. 45.5% of the respondents were in the category of high school, 15.3% of the respondents were diploma holders and 24.5% of the respondents were degree holders among the whole respondents. From the total respondents, 205 respondents were registered fans with their favorite football club, which is represented by 59.1% and the rest of the respondents (40.9%) were not registered with their favorite football club.

The empirical result from correlation and regression analysis shows that; all of the factors (brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image) are significant at $p < 0.01$ level. A further look in to each variables indicates that the four factors i.e.: brand awareness ($r=3.18$), brand identity ($r=3.45$), brand association ($r=3.95$) and brand image ($r=0.61$) are important determinant of fan base loyalty. Regarding the relationship of the independent variables, each of the factors are significantly correlated with each other at a significant level of $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$. The model or the predictor variables have accounted for 53.3% (Adjusted R square of 52.7% with estimated standard deviation .33154) of the variance in the criterion variable (fan base loyalty) can be explained by brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image. As the significant value of f statistics shows a value of 97.455 and p-value (.000), which is less than $p < 0.05$, the model is significant. The regression standardized coefficients from the four independent variables, i.e. brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image are 0.171, 0.129, 0.159, 0.562 and their significance levels are .000, .002, .000 and .000 respectively. Brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image have a positive and significant effect on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee football clubs. From the predicted model the four hypothesis are supported at 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance.

The qualitative analysis shows that; football clubs who are active participants in social works have strong bondage with the community rather football clubs who are weak participants in such community work have a brand value which is very low. In order to create a strong brand identity, the football clubs should be community based not corporation based. In Ethiopia there are a lot of corporation based football clubs which are funded and bankrolled by the government development

organizations. In order to bring strong brand association among fans and the community, there must be rules and regulations and the management of the football must be strategic thinkers. In professional football world, financial capacity without institutional knowledge is nothing. In order to build the brand image or performance of a football club. There must be a competent head coach and different kinds of team building strategies.

5.2. CONCLUSION

Nowadays, many sport clubs are acting like commercial firms, this has strongly influenced the adoption of marketing competencies and practices. According with Keller et al. (2002) in an increasingly competitive world populated with millions of marks, it must be taken into account not only the differentiation of the brand but also the benchmark market and what it has in common with the other competitors. In this vein, each football club is a brand like other sectors of economic activity. Sport managers are beginning to view their teams as brands to be managed. The aim of professional sport teams is to create a strong brand, which influence the behavior of actual and potential fans and which create brand extension across merchandising categories and geographical boundaries. Therefore, a stable fan base as an imperative driver of a club brand competitive advantage.

The study was initiated to investigate the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football clubs. More specifically in this study four factors (brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image) were assumed to be important factors in affecting fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football clubs.

The study tried to meet its objectives addressing the raised research questions by employing different analysis techniques so as to address its objectives the research through analysis of different prior studies and theories come up with four variables (brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image) through regression analysis all the factors prevail to be significant in affecting fan base loyalty. It can be concluded that the four variables (brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image) are significant in affecting fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs.

The objectives was met through an analysis of regression. Before doing so a correlation analysis was made so as to check whether the studied independent variables have association with the dependent variable. The result showed that there is significant relation between them. The correlation table also prevailed that there is a moderate correlation among the independent variables, showing that it's possible to undergo further analysis. Regression analysis was then made and it came to show that the most significant factors in affecting fan base loyalty of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football Clubs can be brand awareness, brand identity, brand association and brand image. So, one can conclude that degree of club brand awareness among fans and the community, a strong brand identity of a football club, fans high degree of association with their favorite football club and a strong club brand image or team performance have a strong and unwavering influence and effect on fan base loyalty and have significant effect in fan base development.

This study extends the concept of branding beyond the domain of the product or service industry into the football industry. Moreover the study strives to have an insight into the football fans' inner world from the aspect of brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty. Provide empirical validation that they have strong and positive consequences on fan base loyalty. An understanding of these points may be particularly important for sports teams that do not retain strong fan bases and do desire to gain fan base that is loyal to them.

Theoretically, the methodology that is used in this research can be applied in other domains. Basically the research model can be directly adapted for various organizations which desire to develop a new brand management strategy based on the relationships between brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and loyalty with the method for analyzing multivariate data. This study suggested a new approach of brand management for professional football teams by examining the relationships between brand awareness, brand identity, brand association, brand image and fan base loyalty. Accordingly the most meaningful implication of the study would be identifying a process where a sport teams' brand management practices affects fan base loyalty. The research contributes to the brand management literature in a certain context.

Practically, the construct of brand management could be a tool for the management of sports teams in Ethiopian sport industry to measure their fan base loyalty across many other team sports, and it could enable a better understanding of brand management practices with a particular sports team. Thus, they can gain an insight into the fans' perception of their teams' awareness, identity, association and image through its construct. The management can create and grow their team loyalty by managing the brand between fans and their teams. The research suggests that football teams should build and develop brand management strategy with appropriate team awareness, identity, association, image and loyalty. The management should endeavor to provide better experiences at the stadium and form better alliances with their sponsors who can share the benefit with fans. In addition, they need to enhance the quality of the club to make fans feel prestigious.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Football is undoubtedly one of the most globally significant sports. In last few decades, the sports industry has grown to one of the most important industries and branding in team sports is seen as one of the dynamic and new developments of the marketing discipline. Since professional team sports are the most visible and extensive example of sports, professional clubs need to be managed as brands in order to have commercial success (Bridgewater, 2010) and long-term viability (Bauer et al., 2005). This development in football industry has brought a dramatic shift in the role and scope of marketing, and made strategic brand management a crucial aspect in the management of a football club.

Based on the analysis of this study, the following recommendations have been forwarded:

- In order to bring a strong brand awareness among fans and to build their brand, football clubs must concentrate firstly on their performance which is on the field.

- Clubs need to clearly define who they are, how they want to be perceived, who they want to attract and how they want to be positioned.
- Football clubs must build a strong bond with the community by using different mechanisms; by being active participants in community and social works, by using social media (Facebook, Twitter..), by using official websites etc.
- Football clubs should improve the team's marketability by creating merchandise – in terms of stickers, cards, stationery and football balls, and toys - that is reflective of the team's history and traditions. By promoting an appropriate image in the media and press releases, and by associating with sponsors who may be viewed as similar to the team's tradition.
- The teams should also prepare positive profiles of their players and then highlight these in the media so that the fans get a sense of familiarity with these star performers and also feel inclined to support the team.
- The football teams should make use of the internet by, not only providing the latest coverage concerning their games and schedules to their fans, but also by creating a positive brand identity by developing a website that the fans can relate to and be aware of the club.
- To create a strong brand identity and an efficient identification management strategy, football teams must articulate and communicate their identities clearly, coherently, and in a persuasive manner. A well designed and executed identity strategy is essential. The management must completely control and monitor the identity dimensions such that their consumers are likely to perceive them as distinctive, prestigious, and similar to their own in a durable manner. Football teams will benefit from going beyond satisfying fans' basic utilitarian needs, such as sporting success and star players, to fulfill a higher degree of brand identity.
- In order to bring a strong brand identity and fan base loyalty football clubs should be community based not corporation based and stadium, particularly if it is owned by the team, can play an important role in building a brand identity for the team.
- A strong brand identity can be formed for the home city by capitalizing on the emotional attachment that the locals have with their region. By promoting the football team as having being representative of the region, the team managements and marketers should install a sense of pride among the locals.
- Football clubs should have a record of good performances and victories which is necessary for a team to get associated with the image of success and for building an international sports team brand.

- In order to bring strong brand association among fans and the community, there must be rules and regulations and the management of the football should be strategic thinkers.
- A team's logo should be proactively developed and then efforts made to associate it with the team's name and image, care should be taken that the logo is of colors that are either popular or appealing or are the ones that reflect certain desirable characteristics.
- The football teams should highlight their sponsors' vision and achievements in a bid to associate themselves with the same. The sponsors, in turn, can make their team's logo or colours more visible so that the sponsor's brand and the team are quickly recognized as linked to one another.
- There must be a competent head coach and different kinds of team building strategies in order to increase brand image.
- Coaches could be advised to conduct themselves in front of the public in a manner that makes them appear as positive, confident and capable personalities. This will form a similar image in the minds of the fans for their teams. Coaches could also be encouraged to participate in community related events or start writing their own columns so that they maintain their visibility in the public eye and continue to act as a reminder of their team's names
- Football clubs should create a positive environment by promoting one on one interaction with the fans on and off the field. These and other similar acts generate a feeling of goodwill among the fans and improve their loyalty.

5.4. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A key limitation of this study relates to generalizability. The context tested in this research provides a view of a single sport. Although the nature of brand management practices in professional football would be similar to that of a number of other team sports, such as baseball, cricket, and rugby, the research model might not be applicable to many other team sports. Therefore, it is necessary to examine this model in the context of other team sports. In addition, the nature of brand management practices with football teams would be distinguished between different countries due to cultural differences. Thus, future research is recommended to test the research model in various countries with diverse fan groups. Furthermore, it is reasonably recommended for future research to develop the more general model of identification that would be applicable across a wider range of team sports and cultural differences.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Questionnaire (English and Amharic)

Questionnaire Survey

Welcome to this survey about **the effect of brand management practices on fan base loyalty: the case of Saint George and Ethiopian Coffee Football clubs**. I am a student of Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce and your answers will be a major help for developing my master's thesis.

This survey only takes about **5-10 minutes** and you will be entered in to a drawing for winning the football shirt of your favourite team, your answer will be anonymous.

Your response will be strictly confidential. The answer on your questionnaire is for survey administration purpose only. If you are supporting football, I hope you will take the few minutes required to complete this questionnaire.

If you would like a summary of my research results, please put your email address here:

.....

If you have any questions, please contact the address as follows:

Mob. +251913617228

Email: Ameabay@yahoo.com

Part 1: General Information

1. Your age (in years): **A) Less than 18 B) 18-29 C) 30-40 D) 41-54**
 E) 55-65 F) over 65
2. Gender: **A) Male B) Female**
3. Academic Qualification:
 A) Less than high school B) High school
 C) Diploma D) 1st Degree E) Masters and above

Part 4: The questions in this part are related to the brand identity or your identification with your football team. Please rate the item which is in accordance with your opinion.

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My favorite team has a distinctive and unique identity.					
2. My favorite team enhances my self-esteem.					
3. My favorite team is a first-class, high quality sport team.					
4. I like what my favorite team stands for.					
5. My favorite team has an attractive identity.					
6. When I talk about my favorite team, I usually say "we" rather than "they".					
7. My favorite team stands out from its competitors.					

Part 5: The questions in this part are related to your association with your football team (brand association). Please rate the item which is in accordance with your opinion.

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I could associate "star player" with my football team.					
2. I could associate "group experience" with my football team.					
3. I could associate "stadium atmosphere" with my football team.					
4. I could associate "success" with my football team.					
5. I could associate "sponsor" with my football team.					
6. I could associate "logo" with my football team.					
7. I could associate "colour" with my football team.					

Part 6: The questions in this part are related to your team image (Brand image). Please rate the item which is in accordance with your opinion.

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My team is a great club					
2. My team has a good squad.					
3. My team is an ambitious club.					
4. My team is well managed.					
5. My team players could demonstrate combative character.					
6. My team management is competent.					
7. My team has a reputable name.					

Part 7: The questions in this part are related to your loyalty to your football team (Fan Base Loyalty). Please rate the item which is in accordance with your opinion.

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am a real and committed fan of my favorite club					
2. There is nothing that could change my commitment to my favorite club					
3. The long term success of my favorite team is important to me.					
4. I purchase some merchandising products of my favorite team in a specified time period.					
5. I regularly attend games of my favorite team in a specified time period.					
6. I strongly promote my team to my friends, colleagues....					
7. I have often followed reports about my favorite team's players, coaches, managers etc.					

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

- 1. What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club's brand awareness toward the fans and the community? And how club brand awareness affects fan base loyalty?*
- 2. What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club's brand identity? And how club brand identity affects fan base loyalty?*
- 3. What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club's brand association? And how club brand association affects fan base loyalty?*
- 4. What are the mechanisms and techniques in order to increase club's brand image? And how club brand image affects fan base loyalty?*

Appendix 3: Statistical Output

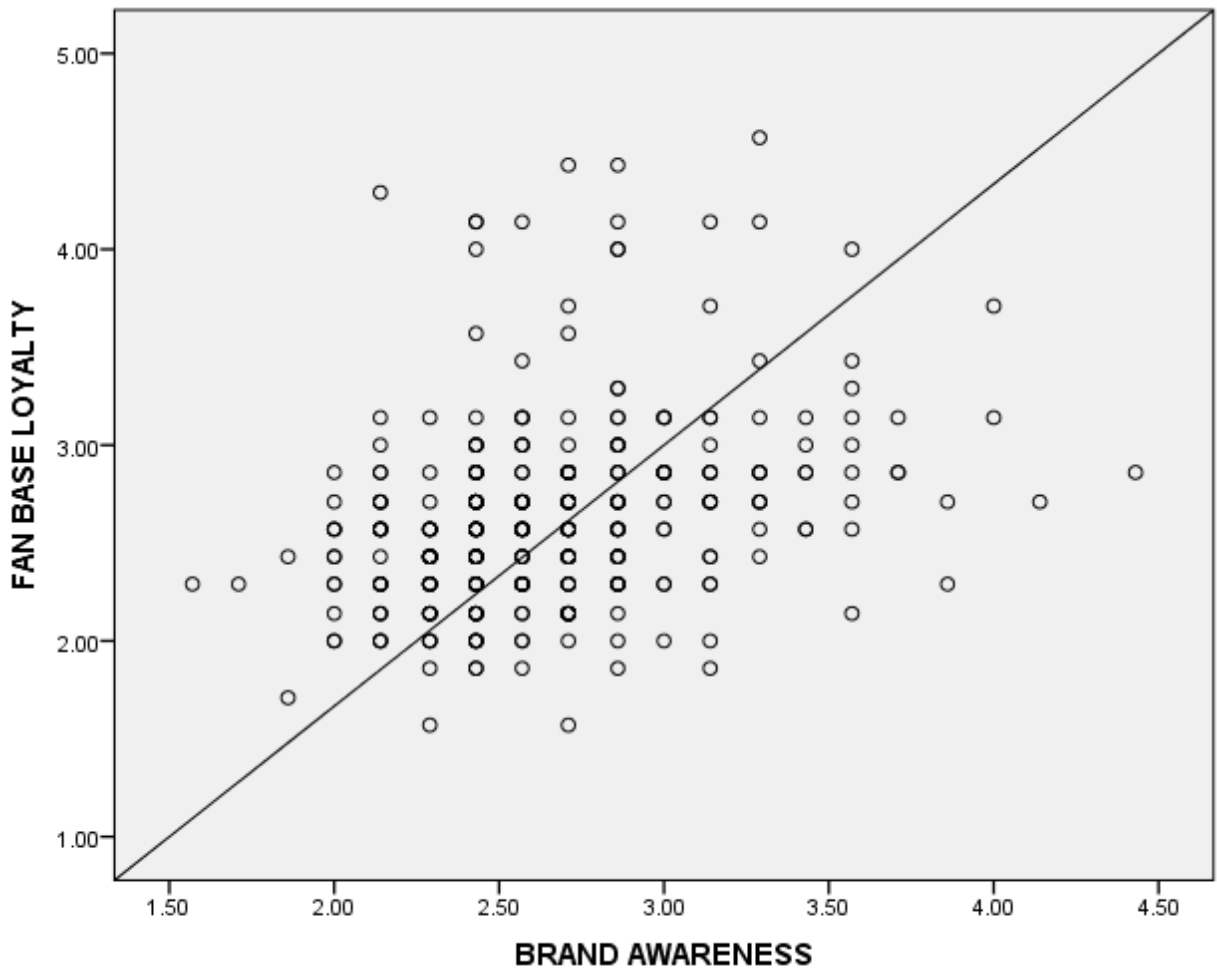
Appendix 3A: Football club fans experience

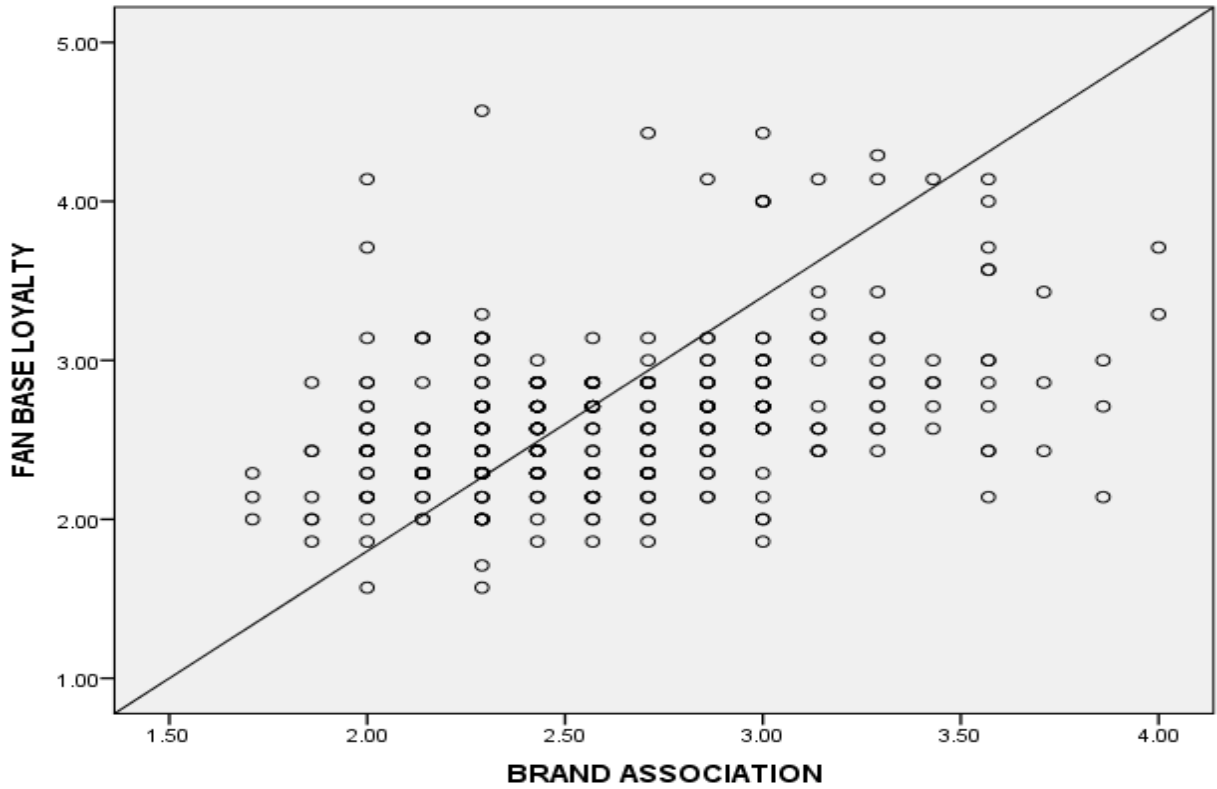
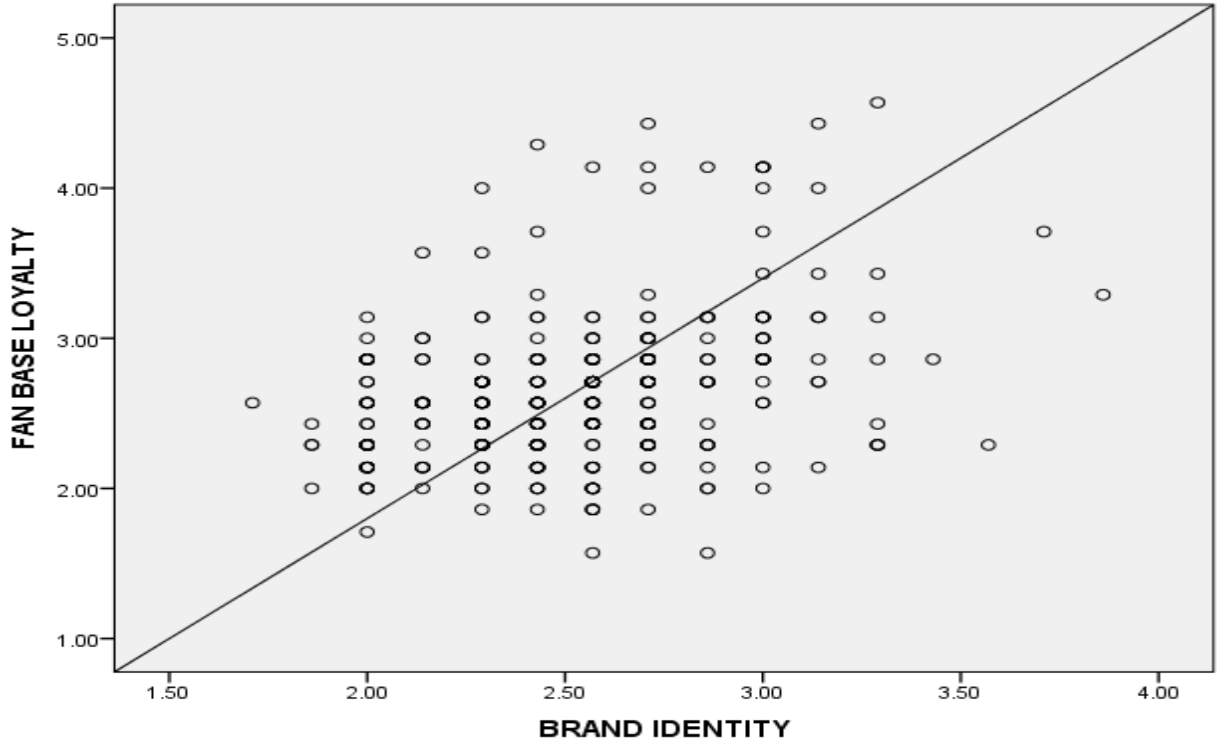
How long have you supported the football team?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	1.2	1.2	1.2
	2.00	12	3.5	3.5	4.6
	3.00	29	8.4	8.4	13.0
	4.00	40	11.5	11.5	24.5
	5.00	46	13.3	13.3	37.8
	6.00	41	11.8	11.8	49.6
	7.00	39	11.2	11.2	60.8
	8.00	45	13.0	13.0	73.8
	9.00	23	6.6	6.6	80.4
	10.00	11	3.2	3.2	83.6
	11.00	14	4.0	4.0	87.6
	12.00	13	3.7	3.7	91.4
	13.00	2	.6	.6	91.9
	14.00	3	.9	.9	92.8
	15.00	6	1.7	1.7	94.5
	16.00	3	.9	.9	95.4
	17.00	2	.6	.6	96.0
	18.00	4	1.2	1.2	97.1
	20.00	6	1.7	1.7	98.8
	21.00	1	.3	.3	99.1
25.00	2	.6	.6	99.7	
35.00	1	.3	.3	100.0	

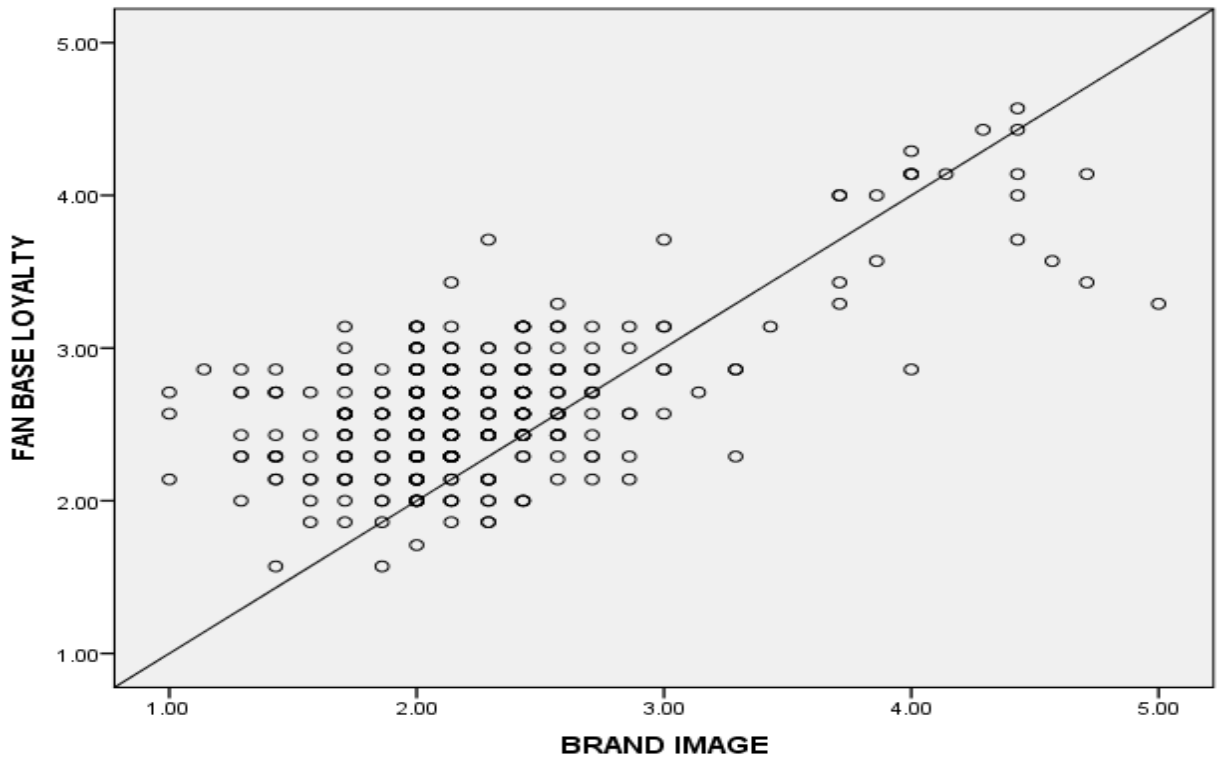
Appendix 3B: Registered fans

Are you a registered fan?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	205	59.1	59.1	59.1
	No	142	40.9	40.9	100.0
	Total	347	100.0	100.0	

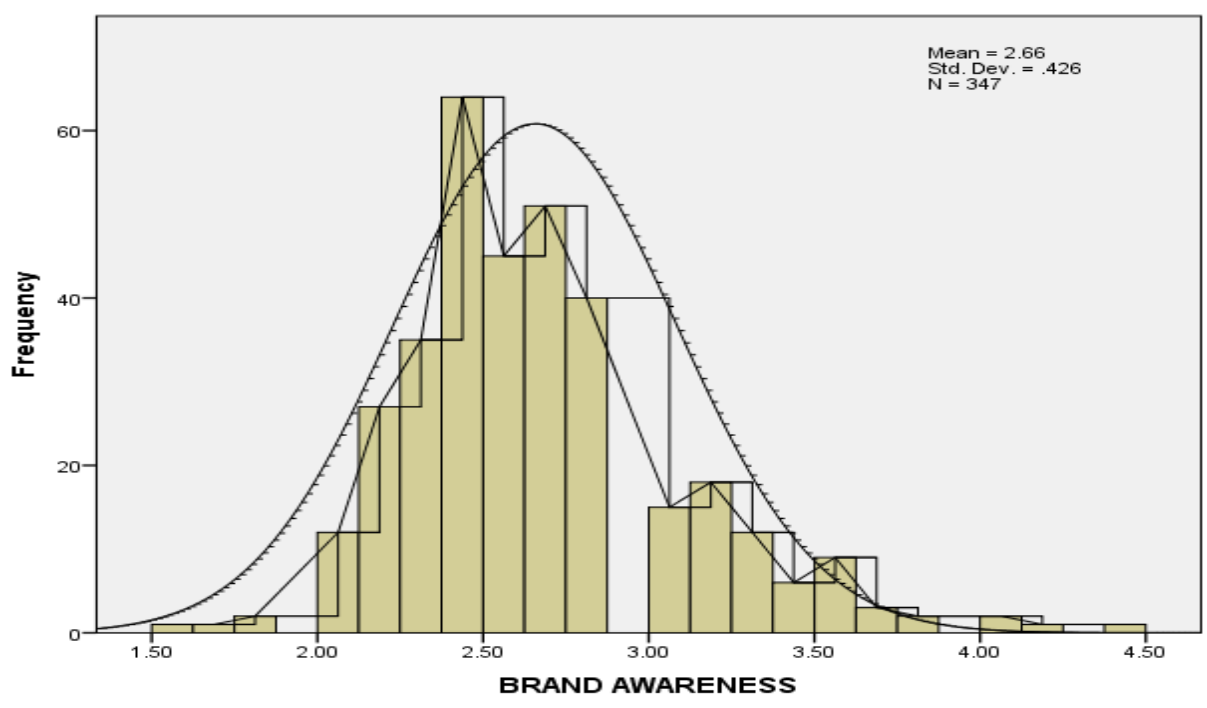
Appendix 3C: Linearity

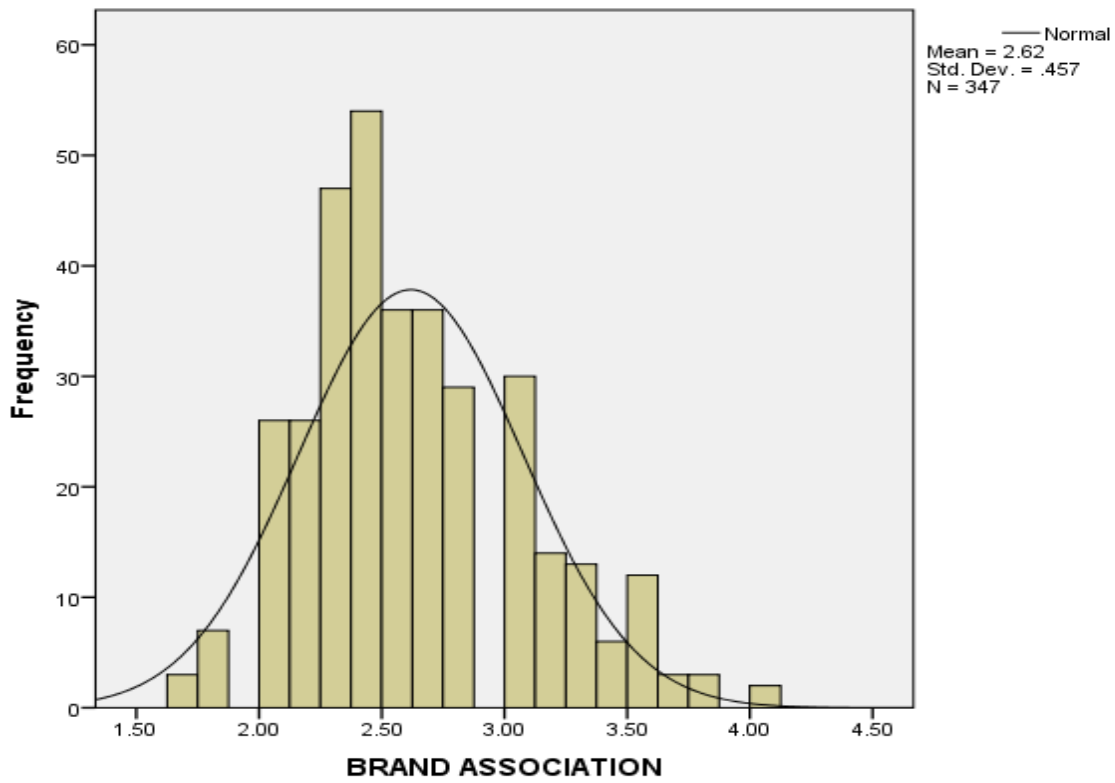
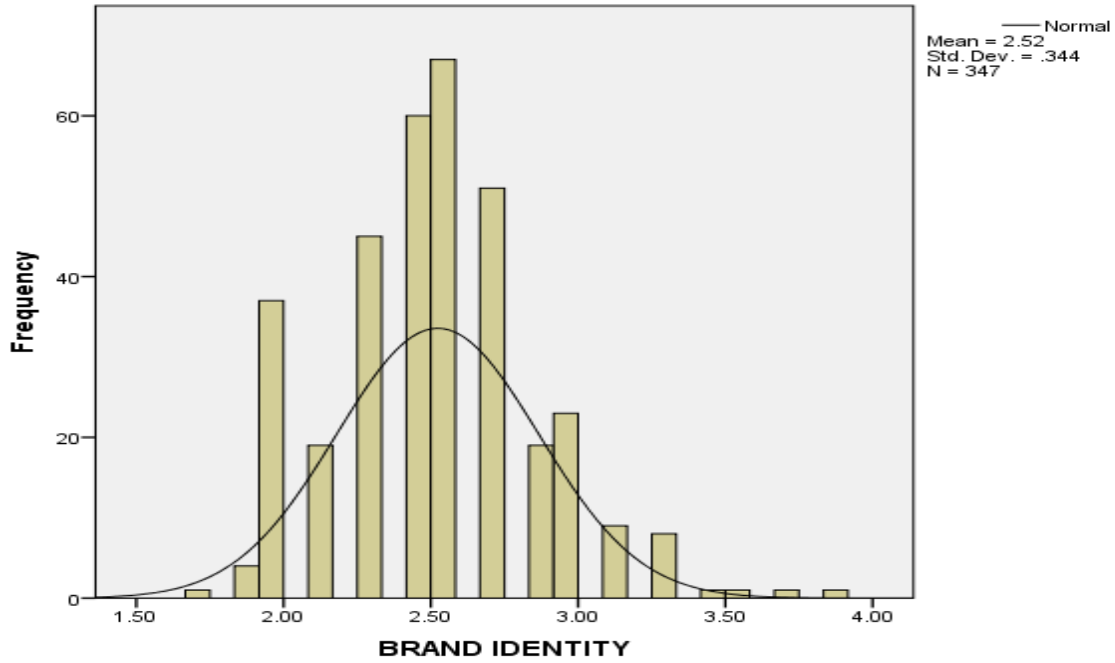


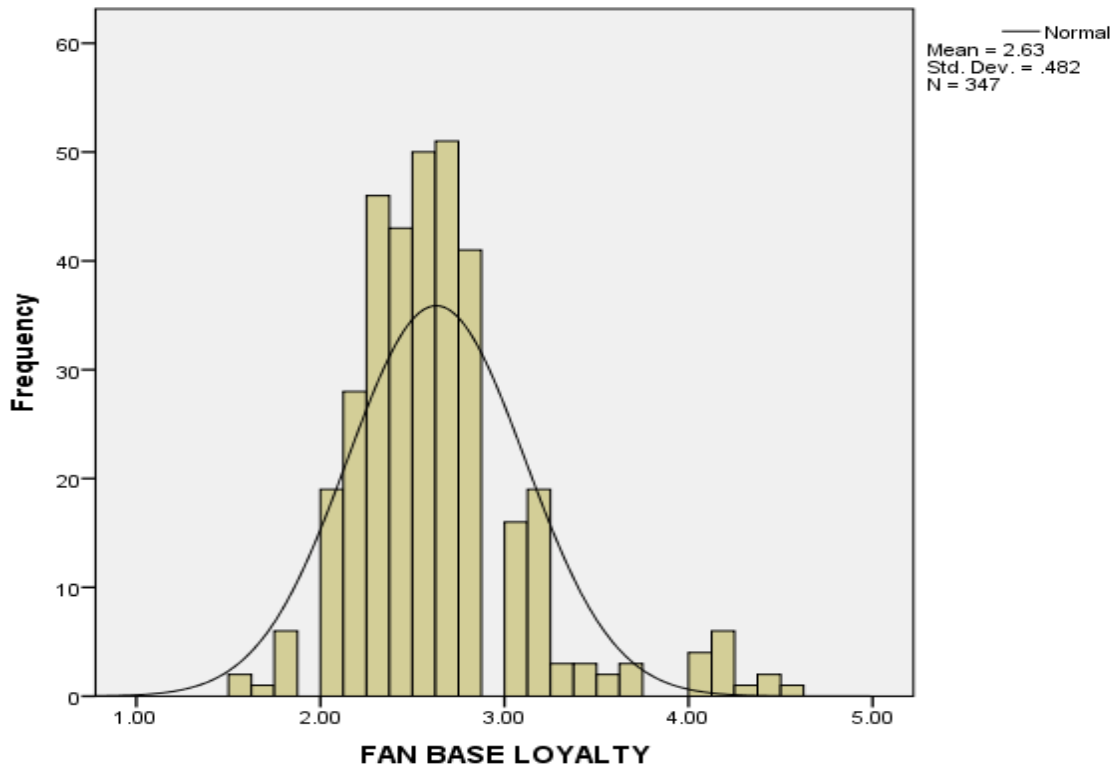
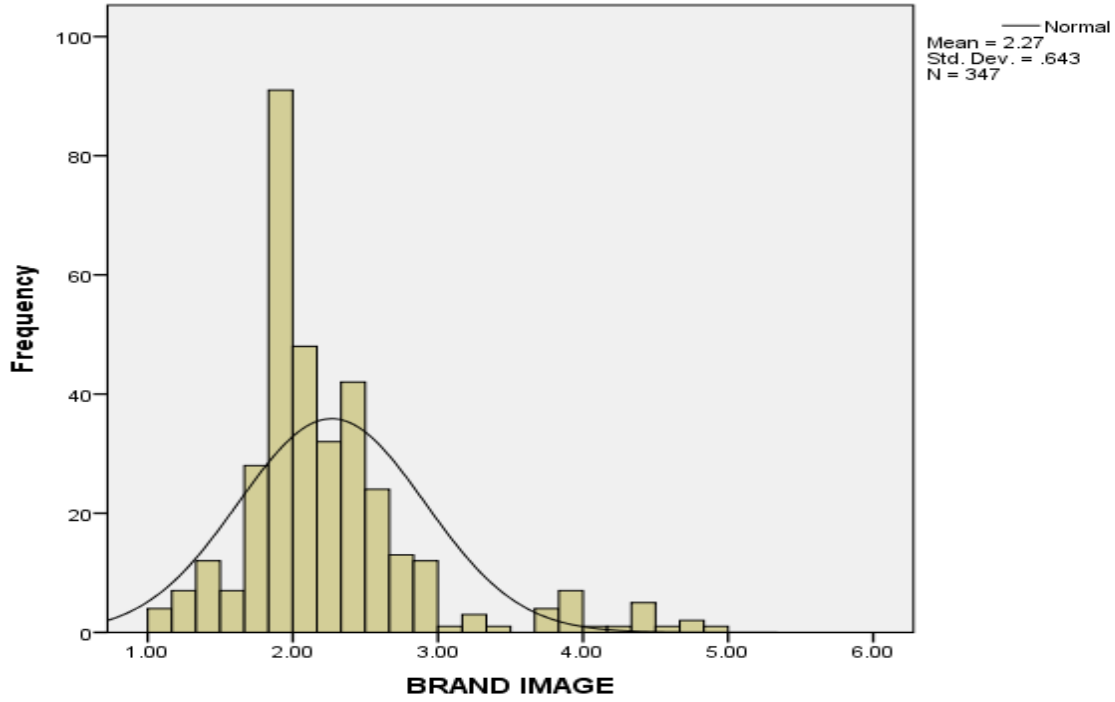




Appendix 3D: Normality







Appendix 4: Logo

