



INSTITUTO
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THE IMPACT OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP ON BRAND EQUITY

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Master of Science in Marketing

Supervisor:

Prof. José Pedro da Cunha Catalão Dionísio, Marketing, Operations and General Management, ISCTE Business School

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**BUSINESS
SCHOOL**

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RESUMO

Objetivo: O Patrocínio Desportivo visa construir uma relação entre a marca patrocinadora e o patrocinado, beneficiando do impacto na percepção do consumidor. O objetivo principal é investigar o impacto do patrocínio desportivo nos ativos de brand equity: Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality e Brand Associations. Em paralelo, estudou-se a relação entre apoiantes e entidade desportiva como mediadora dessa relação por meio da escala de amor à marca.

Metodologia: Foi realizada uma revisão de literatura focando-se em Marketing Desportivo, Patrocínio Desportivo e Brand Equity. Em seguida, foram desenvolvidas e testadas hipóteses através de um estudo exploratório centrado em duas marcas portuguesas e três equipas de futebol. Por fim, os dados foram examinados para confirmar as hipóteses propostas.

Resultados: Todas as hipóteses foram aceites e os objetivos alcançados. Existe evidência de que o patrocínio da Sagres/Super Bock ao FC Porto, SL Benfica e Sporting CP tem impacto nas variáveis de brand equity. Além disso, a relação patrocínio-ativos de brand equity justifica-se por meio do mediador, o amor à marca. Este estudo revelou que Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality e Brand Associations tinha significativamente melhores resultados entre os grupos que reconheciam o patrocínio, confirmando que brand equity é impactada positivamente pelo patrocínio desportivo. Foi ainda demonstrado que o amor à marca dos torcedores por sua equipe é um mediador entre o efeito do patrocínio esportivo e cada ativo de brand equity. Assim, o patrocínio desportivo impacta de forma positiva os ativos de brand equity nos apoiantes que têm mais amor à entidade patrocinada.

Palavras-chave: Patrocínio Desportivo; Ativos de Brand Equity; Escala de Amor à Marca;

Sistema de Classificação JEL: M30 – Geral, M31 – Marketing

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Sports Sponsorship aims to build a synergic relationship between the sponsor brand and the sponsored entity. Knowing that these partnerships benefit from impacting consumer perception, the dissertation's main objective is to investigate sports sponsorship's impact on consumer-based brand equity assets: Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality and Brand Associations. As a parallel objective, the relationship between supporters and the sports entity was studied as a mediator of the sponsorship and brand equity relationship through the brand love scale.

Methodology: first, a literature review focused on retrieving pertinent academic contributions for Sports Marketing, Sports Sponsorship and Brand Equity was conducted. Next, hypotheses were developed and tested through an exploratory study focused on two Portuguese brands and three football teams. Finally, the retrieved data was examined to confirm the proposed hypotheses.

Finding: All hypotheses were accepted, and the objectives were accomplished. There is statistical evidence that Sagres and Super Bock's sponsorship of FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP impacts brand equity variables. Furthermore, the linear relationship sponsorship-brand equity assets are justified through the mediator, supporters' brand love for their team. The study revealed that Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality and Brand Associations had significantly better results among the sponsorship-aware groups, confirming that brand equity is positively impacted by sports sponsorship. Additionally, it was demonstrated that supporters' brand love for their team is a mediator between the sports sponsorship effect and each brand equity asset. Hence, sports sponsorship impacts the consumer-based brand equity of supporters with higher brand love for the sponsored entity.

Keywords: Sports Sponsorship; Brand Equity assets; Brand Love Scale;

JEL Classification System: M30 – General, M31 - Marketing

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1 INTRODUCTION

The following paragraphs will introduce the motivation, general overview, contextualization, objectives, and research problem of the study in question. The goal is to contextualize the theme and explain the research issue. Sports marketing and sponsorship will be presented, described and associated in the context of the marketing subject.

1.1 Motivation

According to the Cambridge dictionary (2020), interest is “the feeling of wanting to give your attention to something or of wanting to be involved with and to discover more about something”. Interest is how I would describe my feeling about sports and football. Football is an industry that involves millions of resources and moves billions of people around the globe.

Additionally, understanding what is so special about the industry and what makes it so profitable is a topic that fascinates me since I worked on a Real Madrid case study about The Galáticos Era during my bachelor's. Football is a phenomenon attracting the attention of many investigators, investors, and brand managers. Also, through the case study, I understood that winning games no longer describes successful and profitable teams. Creating a concrete brand and marketing strategy is the key to high Returns on Investments.

On the other hand, marketing, branding, and sociology are the topics that I would define as my academic passions. Understanding consumer habits, the new trends and the intriguing preferences and behaviour of people has fascinated me since I was young.

After reading Martin Lindstrom’s book, “Brandwashed”, I started to understand the power of a brand in the consumer’s everyday life. People consciously and unconsciously feel attracted by everything a specific brand represents, from the image, name, colour, logo, and message to its values. This attraction often exceeds logic, leading people to love something intangible, like a brand’s product or service. The meeting point between marketing and football is the passion it generates in people, leading them to be loyal to an entity that cannot love them back. People often associate themselves with brands/ teams, defending them as if they were an extensive part of themselves, which is fascinating.

Moreover, people are passionate about the team they support, often acting according to its values. Therefore, it raises the question of how it can benefit from the supporters' passion. For example, a brand that links with a football club will be able to mirror supporters’ desire for itself, leading football fans to consume the brand which connects to their team over its competitors.

1.2 General Overview

In the age of technology and globalization, companies are becoming more competitive and centring their strategy on optimising their resources to meet the market demand for change while finding other ways to communicate effectively (Wang, 2017; Melovic et al., 2019).

Therefore, brands must display specific attributes that allow them to distinguish themselves from competitors. Since brand qualities are intangible and linked to its reputation, image, and merchant value, when a customer buys a product/ service from a brand, they must feel that they are acquiring both material and immaterial goods. Thus, the brand is the symbolic representation of the company's assets from the consumers' perspective (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Kim et al., 2015).

Nowadays, the secondary association is one of the brands' most used communications tools to create value and build meaning. It links a brand with another entity to transfer positive attributes (Lin & Bruning, 2020). Likewise, endorsed marketing is a tactic for increasing recognition in the marketing mix (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Melovic et al., 2019). It uses an external entity as a communication channel to exploit the benefits and form a synergetic strategy between both entities. Finally, sponsorship is a potent and well-known endorsement communication tool (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Melovic et al., 2019). Using Sponsorship is no longer a strategy for awareness. Instead, it is an integrated strategy of transferring value from the Sponsored to the Sponsor by having consumers and their perceptions as the main focus of influence (Park & Sihombing, 2020).

Sports Sponsorship is considered an industry within the sports industry due to its meticulousness and the monetary value invested by companies in this field (Aissa & Matar, 2016; Jensen & Cobbs, 2014). As a result, sports represent companies' significant Return on Investment (ROI). However, it is increasingly important to recognize all the consequences investing in this field has, especially its impact on Brand Equity (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012).

Brand Equity is used in all markets since it emphasises what a brand represents to its customers and how they perceive it (Biscaia et al., 2013; Keller, 1993; Yoo & Donthu, 2001). For example, in sports sponsorship, a consumer-based brand equity study is helpful to understand how the consumer cognizes the concrete benefits of buying the sponsor products or services and if the partnership impacts the brand through the sports entity (Cornwell et al., 2001; Keller, 2001; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

Therefore, this study will focus on how Sports sponsorship impacts Consumer-based Brand Equity, focusing on a specific case and evaluating all the possible factors contributing directly and indirectly to its success.

1.3 Objectives

The current dissertation is focused on the Sports Marketing topic, analysing one of the most common communication strategies used in this field: Sponsorship. It can present itself in many forms,

most commonly the association of a brand with a sports entity, which through financial investment or applying resources, supports the sponsored, getting a tangible return or an intangible benefit of some kind. That benefit can be exposure, awareness, image transfer or other intangible assets.

The main objective of this dissertation is to investigate the sponsorship importance for sports while identifying the repercussions it has on the inventor brand's consumer (supporter) perception.

On that account, the main objectives of the study conducted are:

- ⇒ Identifying what defines an efficient sports sponsorship strategy by analysing state of the art (Literature Review).
- ⇒ Defining Consumer-Based Brand Equity and identifying the best metrics when evaluating it (Literature Review).
- ⇒ Study the supporters' relationship with the sponsor through the brand equity metrics. At the same time, identifying possible mediators (Quantitative Research).
- ⇒ Test sports sponsorships' impact on supporters' perceptions using the Brand Equity metrics (Quantitative Research).

1.4 Research Problem

Concerning sports sponsorship or partnership between brands and sports entities, many types of research, studies or investigations focus on evaluating the success of the alliance between both parties. Literature on sports sponsorships identifies an apparent increase in partnerships in the sports paradigm. Brands feel a constant threat and need for an update, seeking the approval of their consumers by trying to adapt the best they know to their preferences. Most articles focus on Sponsorship's return on investments, which mirrors the focus researchers put on numbers rather than the intangible benefits sponsorship can bring to a brand (Biscaia et al., 2013; Jensen & Cobbs, 2014).

Brands expect a profitable industry like sports to bring more advantages than disadvantages when having a partnership. However, many studies concerning this topic showed that when a brand endorses a sports entity, it does not always mean that it will combine its best qualities and form a powerful alliance (Biscaia et al., 2014; Wang, 2017). An effective sponsorship strategy depends on more variables than the amount of exposure or the increase in awareness (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014).

Furthermore, it is possible to identify flaws in sponsoring a sports entity. For example, it is not easy to calculate by what means the brand benefits from the partnership or how to study the effect of the sponsor on supporters' perceptions (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012).

Although several studies have examined quantifying brands' sponsorship profit, the focus is rarely on developing a consumer-based brand equity measure of sports sponsorship. However, when developing that measure, it is possible to define what consumers value when choosing between two or more brands, one of them the sponsor of the sports entity (Biscaia et al., 2014).

Moreover, there is a lack of consumer behaviour analysis in the sponsorship studies. There is a poor effort to understand the impact sponsorship relationship has on the consumer/ supporter's subjective

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opinion about the brand (sponsor) (Tsiotsou, 2016). Consumers' opinion defines whether the brand is an asset or liability to an organization, which is where the definition of Brand Equity comes from (Aaker, 1991).

Brand Equity is related to the consumer's perspective on the tangible and intangible characteristics of the brand (Aaker, 1991). For example, when a brand sponsors a sports entity, they form a relationship which aims to transfer the consumer's positive image from the sponsored to the sponsor or the other way around (P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005).

Therefore, a question comes to mind: "what is the impact on the sponsor brand equity when the sports sponsorship strategy is efficient?" This question scoped the main objective of this dissertation, which is to analyse the impact sports sponsorship of a football entity has on the sponsor brand's value. As a basis for the study, consumer-based brand equity models and metrics will be used to identify the assets and liabilities of the sponsoring brand identified by the consumer.

Furthermore, supporters' sponsorship recognition, sports involvement level, interaction with the team and response to the sponsorship are critical variables in studying sports sponsorship.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter will present a framework that defines critical concepts for understanding the study. Firstly, there will be a definition of marketing as a general topic and sports marketing in more detail. Secondly, there is a brief contextualization of sponsorship highlighting sports sponsorship. Furthermore, according to other authors' findings, Brand Equity will be defined as a critical marketing notion and, based on models studied, will be presented definitions for the consumer-based brand equity concepts such as Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality and brand associations, among others. Finally, the Portuguese beer market will be studied as well as the sponsorship of the three most prominent football clubs in Portugal.

The essential matter in this chapter is to retain the theoretical definitions offered by other authors and contextualize the three objects under study: sports sponsorship, sports consumers and brand equity. Therefore, the main emphasis will be on the consumer and their behaviour, which is distinguished into two facets: consumer of a brand and supporter of a sports entity.

2.1 Sports Marketing

The fundamental marketing objective is to identify and satisfy the needs of all agents involved with the company. Its role is to disseminate a good, service or idea for the organisation's target audience to purchase. Also, to optimize their communication and image, companies use a representative symbol of easy association with their characteristics. That symbol is known as a Brand (Smith, 2008).

As a result, from the beginning, the organization's objective was to build a Brand with a significant heritage so that consumers could identify a series of benefits and easily link them to the symbol in question –Brand Image (Keller, 1993, 2001).

Hence, the company would benefit from the brand by increasing its sales, the visibility of its products/ services, and the Consumers' loyalty. Therefore, generating more significant margins and applying communication efficiency by certifying opportunities and brand expansion. Correspondingly, a strong brand makes it possible to reduce the vulnerabilities to which the company is exposed, such as the high level of competition, the threats of substitution and the crises in the market in which it operates (Keller, 2001; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

Likewise, the sports marketing objective is to identify and meet the needs of sports consumers, including all entities involved in sports. Either an internal participant (athlete, coach, owner of a team) or an external entity (a fan, a viewer, a listener, or a buyer). Therefore, an active sports entity in marketing may be seen as a brand. That way, it has its strategic approach and management qualities, and the sports external entity is the target audience (Shannon, 1999).

In the following subchapters, sports marketing is presented, starting with a chronological background on the topic, followed by a more detailed analysis of the Portuguese context and a description of sports marketing consumer behaviour and its particularities. Additionally, there is an

outline of the sports business characteristics to understand why sports marketing is presented as a distinguished marketing subject. Finally, Sponsorship in sports will be studied, defined and contextualized to understand its importance as a marketing tool for modern brands, as well as its benefits and harms.

2.1.1 Sports Marketing Background

The first sports event to have any marketing-related evidence goes back to ancient Rome when the patriarchs sponsored gladiatorial games for the first time (Shannon, 1999). However, evidence regarding sports sponsorship of a current event can only be found in the 1950s when the Mutual of Omaha and Union Oil sponsored the first presidential physical fitness program in the US (Lavack, 2003).

The authors disagree with the entity that "invented" the Sports Marketing term, some assign the tobacco industry as the benchmark for sports marketing, and others are sure that The Home Depot, Inc. and Pepsi Co. founders were visionaries regarding this subject. However, every author agrees that the passion that the owners of large companies had for sports connected to the benefits they found on the market was the starting point (Lavack, 2003; Shannon, 1999; Smith, 2008).

Sports marketing as an independent academic subject is somewhat debatable. However, an increasing number of authors seek to publish on this subject (Shannon, 1999). Its establishment as an individual subject dated to the 1970s when it suffered a significant boost in popularity. At that time, companies shifted part of their advertising investments from TV and Radio to sports events when the first sports broadcast events occurred. Those events broke audiences' records. Thus, attracting more industries (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998).

In 1984, with the Los Angeles Olympics, sports sponsorship was introduced on a formal basis, where the first ever Olympics depending only on private money occurred. Companies were no longer sponsoring events only. Starting to invest in sports organizations, teams and even athletes or items (e.g. F1 cars and equipment) (Schlossberg, 1992). Furthermore, the sports passion increased among spectators making companies more interested in its visibility. Nowadays, it represents one of the big companies' most powerful marketing strategies, involving billions of dollars (Shannon, 1999).

The literature review emphasises the parallelism between the fan relationship with their preferred sports teams and the consumer relationship with their favourite brand. The common ground of both is based on trust since they support an intangible, unpredicted, and subjective entity (Biscaia et al., 2014). Nevertheless, sports entities' performance depends on uncontrollable variables to succeed, unlike most industries. For example, the consumer is motivated by positive performances to consume the products (watch or support the team/ event/ athlete). Also, the competition among sports entities is fierce, and there is no way of predicting if other entity will outperform the other (Schlossberg, 1992).

Sports marketing may be categorized in several different ways. However, the most classic division is into two categories, the marketing of sports, which encompasses sports events and equipment for both spectators and participants; and the marketing through sports, which involves the promotion of non-

sporting products at sporting events and the use of athletes to endorse non-sporting products (Shannon, 1999). Studying these two categories is crucial to understand the range of ways in which companies can invest in the world of sports aiming to benefit from it. However, when focusing too much on retrieving benefits, companies may show more of what they want to sell instead of considering why it benefits the supporters (Burton & Chadwick, 2019). Also, there is a demand for a strategic approach when brands invest in endorsed marketing. The benefit of this investment cannot only be apparent to brands. It also has to be transparent for the sports entities since nowadays they are seen as a corporation which also aims to profit (Shannon, 1999).

Finally, the sports marketing subject depends greatly on sports culture. Therefore, it is essential to interpret and adapt the theory when evaluating different cultures. Furthermore, how the audience lives the sports and the money invested in the sports industry vary greatly between continents, countries and even cities. Hence the need to analyse the Sports Marketing topic inserted into Portugal culture, focusing on understanding its importance for the population and its customs.

2.1.2 Sports Marketing in Portugal

Sports marketing, like any topic related to sports, is highly influenced by culture and supporter habits, meaning it is crucial to analyse the particularities in the study of Portugal. In the Book *Sports Marketing - As novas regras do Jogo* (in English, "Sports Marketing - the new rules of the game"), the authors analyse and expose the new paradigm of the Portuguese sports market since the evolution of society's habits affected it greatly, at the turn of the century (Sá & Sá, 2008).

In 2008 in Portugal, there were more than 480 thousand federated athletes distributed by more than 9 thousand teams, clubs or associations in 80 different sports (Sá & Sá, 2008). According to PODATA's federated athletes' report, ten years later, in 2020, more than 580 thousand federated athletes were distributed in almost 11 thousand teams, clubs or associations. Regarding football, in Portugal, there are 190 thousand of federated athletes. These values demonstrate sports strength in Portugal (POORDATA, 2020). However, although there is a growth in the number of sports practitioners, Portugal is among the less active countries in Europe (Eurostat, 2019). Only 45% of adults in Portugal practise a sport regularly.

However, Portugal has always been a sports enthusiast since it is integral to its culture (Sá & Sá, 2008). In 2021, there were more than 20 Portuguese sports channels on national and cable TV, 15 exclusively for live and repeated broadcasts of sporting events. In addition, the three leading sports teams in Portugal also have their channel, which transmits, among other programs, the broadcast of their sporting events. According to Meios & Publicidade, in 2021, all the top 20 most-seen TV programs in Portugal were football games, showing the importance sports have for Portuguese people's daily routine (Meios & Publicidade, 2021).

Additionally, the sports written press is essential in Portugal. Among the five most widely read newspapers in 2021, there was a sports newspaper with an average of 30,000 readers per day. The record

was the 4th most-read paper in Portugal. Following the topicality, newspapers *Correio da Manhã*, *Expresso* e *Jornal de Notícias*. Moreover, the written press is on ongoing adaptation to online media (APCT, 2021). In 2020, more than half of the total visits per day to the 23 primary information, sports and economic websites corresponded to sports media, according to CISION, showing that the visibility that sports have in Portugal is remarkable (Faustino, Ana. 2020).

Portuguese consume sports daily. It is important to understand how, why and what they consume to describe their behaviour and characterize patterns companies have identified in the field when investing in this activity (Aissa & Matar, 2016; Biscaia et al., 2013). The next chapter will focus on analysing Sports Consumer behaviour, particularly Portuguese supporters' conduct towards their preferred sport, football.

2.1.3 Sports Consumer Behaviour

It is impossible to understand the importance of the Portuguese sports market without analysing its consumers' behaviour. The Portuguese supporter is, on average, fervent and participative. The average attendance at the top three football clubs in Portugal illustrates it. Benfica is top of the list regarding the number of spectators, with an average of 53.8 thousand spectators per game in the 2018/2019 season, just 13 thousand less than the average annual spectators in National American Football games, which is the sports league with the highest average attendance in the world (Transfer Market, 2019; Gough, 2021).

Furthermore, Portuguese football supporters have proven to be a central part of the club over the years. A study by Grupo Marktest/ TGI in 2017 shows that 4 million 871 thousand Portuguese people over the age of 15 are said to be active members or supporters of a football club. Meaning 54% of Portuguese people are football consumers. Most football club supporters are the upper middle class and men (Grupo Marktest, 2017).

The high visibility of football in Portugal and Europe generates excitement among fans since it stimulates the spectators' emotional side and deep connections with their beloved teams (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). Therefore, many authors focus on the emotional uniqueness of football fans, comparing its identification to an addiction/attachment (Biscaia et al., 2013; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020; Velicia Martín et al., 2020; Vieira & Sousa, 2020). Although there are many similarities between an average consumer and a sports fan, authors argue that a sports fanatic's devotion goes significantly beyond the classic definition of loyalty (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Schlossberg, 1992).

Portuguese fans are no exception. Their passionate behaviour towards their team is felt and affects their behaviour as buyers. Furthermore, the level of attachment between clubs and supporters increases trust, satisfaction, loyalty and commitment (Biscaia et al., 2013; Vieira & Sousa, 2020). Therefore, sports entities that focus on business profit and successful management of their assets should impact the supporter's relationship with the club. Finally, by positively impacting the supporters' image of the team, the business will become more profitable, meaning it will attract many investors who seek to mirror that

effect towards their products by associating them with the sports entity (Sá & Sá, 2008; Vieira & Sousa, 2020).

Thus, sports teams depend on three entities for their subsistence: the fan, the show and the sponsor, comparable to the companies' reliance on the consumer, the market and capital. First, the Fan is seen as a consumer at its peak of loyalty, having a passion for the sports world or a particular sports entity. Fans can either have an active role (practitioners) or a passive one (spectators/ supporters). Secondly, the show includes all sporting events where the fans come together to watch or participate and is organised by a sports entity (federation, association or even a team). Finally, the sponsor, the capital investor, invests in human, monetary or material resources (Sá & Sá, 2008).

Although a fan definition involves the word passion, there are different levels of identification among fan bases (P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Velicia Martín et al., 2020). Therefore, several authors have deepened the subject and developed a scale to measure fan identification levels. Results showed that the higher the level of identification, the more involved the fans are. Furthermore, higher identification is impacted by the team's success, meaning the higher it is, the higher the expectation deposited on the team. Also, the more identified the fan is, the more willing they are to invest time or money in the sports entity activity (Branscombe & Wann, 1993; Velicia Martín et al., 2020).

Furthermore, fans tend to attribute to their preferred team human characteristics with which they develop holistic thoughts, feelings, and actions. Therefore, the authors define this relationship using the marketing term "Brand Love". According to Martín, Toledo and Palos-Sanchez (2020), Brand love applied to football teams has five dimensions: passion, connection to the brand, intrinsic rewards, emotional attachment and thinking and, finally, frequent use. Furthermore, studies proved those brand love characteristics positively impacted fan loyalty, wiliness to invest and word-of-mouth communication (Velicia Martín et al., 2020).

By understanding how the sports market behaves and what impacts the sports actors, the next step is outlining the strategy under the market performance. The next chapter will examine how Sports as a business often resorts to traditional marketing ideas or incorporates new theories and models, specifically in the sports market (Tsiotsou, 2016). Also, the subchapter will detail the importance of sponsorship in sports by carefully analysing its growth over the past decades and underlying the marketing tool specifications.

2.1.4 Sports Sponsorship

Sports encompasses all forms of physical activity that aim to develop and improve physical and mental well-being. In this subchapter, the indeterminacy and spontaneity of sports products as the central singularity of this industry will be under focus.

In the 20th century, it was common to associate sports with passion, pleasure, competition, and training. However, today, words such as merchandising, image rights, professional leagues, season tickets, television audiences or sponsorships are further associated with the sports industry (Tsiotsou,

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2016). Due to its specificities, Sports usually become an individual industry with unique characteristics. According to Sá and Sá (2008), those unique characteristics relate to four distinct levels: the market, the product, the price and the promotion.

The sports market is unique because each organization has their fan base. Therefore, they are not competing for consumers; the focus is on the industry's performance and how they can all benefit from it. Another unique characteristic is related to the fans' performance demand. Since they consider themselves specialized in the sports they follow, they expect more from the sports product (Sá & Sá, 2008; Schlossberg, 1992). The sports product is intangible, uncertain, temporary, practical, and subjective, making it impossible to predict the result or performance. Also, its production and consumption occur simultaneously, most of the time. Furthermore, customer satisfaction and consumer loyalty are distinct concepts that may not impact each other (Tsiotsou, 2016).

Additionally, sports started as an industry that functioned without the main objective being profit, but good sports results. Today, reality has changed. The focus switched to indirect revenues, such as television rights, sponsorships or merchandising, which are more profitable than direct revenues from ticket offices (Dickenson & Souchon, 2019; Herrmann et al., 2016). Due to the high visibility, countless companies from other industries wish to invest or be an active part of the sports market to reach better or more influential audiences. Each sport attracts different brands and companies since their targets distinguish from each other (Sá & Sá, 2008; Vieira & Sousa, 2020). However, sports sponsorship is the most common form of investment in sports entities.

For Cornwell, Weeks and Drennan (2005), Sponsorship is “the act of using collateral marketing communications to exploit the commercial potential of the association between a sponsee and sponsor” (Weeks et al., 2008. Page 639.). The authors suggest that sponsorship's effective use is a great communication tool for companies.

Since 2007, sponsorship investment has been growing concisely. According to Guttman, in 2017, the global sponsorship spending was around 63 billion U.S. dollars. Additionally, the author discovered that the great majority of spending came from North America, totalling 22.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2016. Europe came next, investing 16 billion U.S. dollars, followed by the Asia Pacific, with a total investment of 14.8 billion U.S. dollars in 2016. Guttman also specified that out of the total spending on sponsorship in 2016. North America spent 15.7 billion U.S. dollars on sports, representing the most expensive industry (Guttman, 2019).

Although there was an expectation for the sponsorship spending growth to be continuous, due to the coronavirus pandemic going on since the beginning of 2020, sports events were cancelled, restricted or isolated from the public/ media and fans, and the spending suffered immensely. Therefore, the estimation is that in 2020 the spending worldwide was around 57 billion U.S. dollars (figure 2.1).

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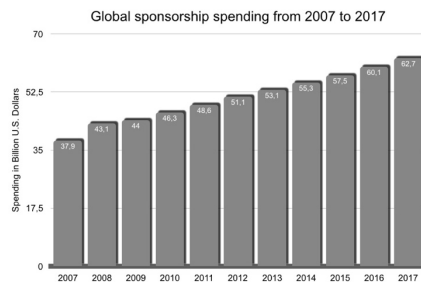


Figure 2.1 - Global sponsorship spending worldwide (2007 - 2017) Source: Statista

The two primary forms of sponsorship are providing financial or non-monetary assistance to other entities, usually an event (P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005). The financial support strategy is appropriate when the sponsor aims to be intrinsically associated with a specific individual. Usually, the brands use their name/logo to be recognized as an official partner and to transfer the image and awareness of the sponsored entity (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012).

On the other hand, when sponsors provide products or services in trade for advertising, they offer non-monetary assistance. In some cases, the sponsor who financially supports the sponsored entity also offers materials or services (Burton & Chadwick, 2019). Therefore, the two types of Sponsorship are used in those cases.

Sponsorship is mainly used in sports since sports entities no longer see it as a one-way industry. Many stakeholders actively participate in the sports organization activity, meaning it depends on more than the number of fans to succeed. Sports marketing is now focusing on sports as a service industry which focuses on its holistic and co-creative characteristics. Sports products are now produced by many and target more than just fans (Tsiotsou, 2016).

Moreover, due to the current market saturation and consequent fragmentation, aligned with the technology and innovation advancement, marketing traditional communication tools, like advertising on television, radio and other mass media, lost their effectiveness (Melovic et al., 2019). Therefore, there is a current demand for innovative strategy implementation to reach the target group and ensure its trustworthiness. It is why sponsorship is gaining recognition in the brands' marketing mix (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020; Melovic et al., 2019).

In addition, sponsorship has the power to overcome cultural barriers, being an appealing opportunity for multinational companies which aim to improve image, attitude, and loyalty and increase awareness—at the same time, impacting Purchase Intentions and consumer decisions (Melovic et al., 2019). The strong relationship between sports and supporters attracts many brands that aim to have the same bond as their consumers (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). According to Research and Markets (2022), the Sports industry will be worth 501 billion U.S. dollars in 2022, being one of the richest globally, having great media exposure and attractiveness (Research and Markets, 2022).

The growth of sports spectators and its brand attractiveness justify the sports industry's growth. More brands understand the impact sports sponsorships have on sales, meaning more companies from

all sectors are trying to bid for a space under the spotlight (Ko et al., 2017). The brands' most common sponsorship goal is to impact brand recall and recognition, which will generate Brand Awareness and influence Purchase Intentions among sports spectators (Biscaia et al., 2014; Burton & Chadwick, 2019; Chebli & Gharbi, 2014).

Despite understanding the benefits of sponsorship, it is difficult to quantify this strategy's concrete return on investments (ROI) for the sponsor (Jensen & Cobbs, 2014). A study by Nielsen estimated that in Europe alone, in 2021, brands and advertisers spent close to 35 billion U.S. dollars on sports sponsorship. Moreover, on average, 15% of expenses associated with the Marketing Mix are allocated to sponsorships. However, brands still neglect the study of this strategy's impacts on brand equity. Most studies focus on direct impacts rather than on long-term ones, which are said to represent more than 45% of ROI (Nielsen, 2020).

In addition, Sponsorship ROI depends on other essential variables. Sponsees and sponsors can form an effective partnership by sharing common ground and similar values. Meaning the degree of congruence needs to be perceptible. Also, the target audience should be the same or have common characteristics, and the reasoning behind the partnership should be understandable for everyone, especially consumers. The goal is to focus on salience. A company will only stand out in a sponsorship strategy if the communication benefits the receiver (sports consumer) (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020).

Finally, Brands usually depend on the trust, loyalty and attitude that come from the consumer experience, which is exceptionally accurate for the football industry since the core product is mainly intangible, unpredictable, and subjective (Herrmann et al., 2016). Today, managing sports entities as regular brands is a growing concept, and many European football teams are perfect examples of how to manage successful companies (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020).

In the football industry, entities involved in Sponsorship are becoming more aware of the benefits of having a well-thought strategy that simultaneously welfares supporters, their market value and their reputation (Biscaia et al., 2013, 2014; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). Moreover, this industry is among the richest in the world (Biscaia et al., 2014; Herrmann et al., 2016). Usually, companies find a successful partnerships with football entities due to fans' identification level with the sport and their team (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). Portugal is not an exception, having numerous companies investing in this industry for its benefits. In the next subchapter, the topic is heightened.

2.2 Portuguese beer market and sponsorship of the three leading football clubs

To understand how to successfully implement a sports sponsorship strategy, it is necessary to consider the particularities of each sports culture. These particulars can change from country to country. As mentioned before, Portugal is known for the fervent fans' football experience (Biscaia et al., 2014).

Therefore, Portuguese brands highlight many benefits of associating their image with football teams. In the beer sector, brands have been linked to sports for more than two decades through sponsorship or presence in sports venues (Costa, 2017).

The beer market links to culture, sports, education and entertainment. In 2018, Duarte & Brinca, (2018) concluded that the market represented more than 1.5% of Portuguese GDP. Also, the beer market is crucial for the Portuguese economy, having one of the most consumed and cherished Portuguese brands. In the next subchapter, the importance of the market in Portugal is detailed.

2.2.1 Portuguese beer market

A Nielsen Sports & Entertainment study confirms that the sponsorship impact on intangible value has grown to 35%. Intangible value is related to qualitative aspects of the sponsor assets rather than the financial return on investments. That growth was due to the sponsored property and its attractiveness to global sports performance. The study disclosed how brands increasingly benefit from sponsorship, impacting values such as Brand Awareness, proximity to the consumer and loyalty.

In Portugal, several brands understood the benefits having an active sponsorships strategy gives to the brand. Nowadays, both entities communicate the sponsorship. The sponsored entity often also sees advantages in promoting the sponsor and associating its values with the club. The strategy went from an advertising technique to a partnership, where both entities support each other in more areas than communication and capital investment (Costa, 2017).

An investigation made by Pinto (2019) in *Distribuição Hoje*, a Portuguese magazine focused on a market analysis of the distribution and promotion sectors, concluded that in 2019, the beer category was expected to be the most present at sporting events, which includes the 2016 to 2019 Champions League(s), Uefa Euro 2016, FIFA 2018 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. Furthermore, beer brands are highly associated with sports events because of the target similarity between supporters and *beer drinkers*.

Portuguese beer brands are also highly associated with the sports industry. Either as sponsors or as a usual presence at the consumption moment. Wherever there is a sporting event in Portugal, there is a beer brand. Through market analysis, it is possible to highlight two Portuguese brands. Super Bock and Sagres. Which belong to the Super Bock Group and Heineken corporations, respectively.

In 2020, Sagres was the most consumed beer brand in the country, representing 43.9% of consumption, followed by Super Bock, with 39.4%. However, regarding brand preference, Super Bock surpasses Sagres with 44% of all preferences, surpassing 34% of the Heineken Group's Portuguese brand (Jorge, 2020).

2.2.2 Sponsorship of Portuguese Football teams Background – “Os três Grandes”

Sagres is known for having solid marketing, distribution, and communication strategy. The brand has a Familiarity association rate of 81,8% (customers' brand recognition from a list of competitors) (Study

by Multidados *in* Jorge, 2020). It also has a solid connection to Portuguese football since it has sponsored the Portugal national team for the last 28 years and Sports Lisboa Benfica for the past 18 years. Sagres is also sponsoring the Portuguese football national league - Primeira Liga, since 2008 (Ferreira, 2017). In 2017, the brand represented 12% of the total sports sponsorship in Portugal (Jorge, 2020).

On the other hand, Super Bock's marketing strategy is more related to the perception of quality, focusing on digital and traditional marketing. After collecting many fans on social media, their Familiarity rate is 81,2% (Study by Multidados *in* Jorge, 2019). Over the last decade, Super Bock has joined Sagres' strategy by sponsoring the other “two big” Portuguese football teams, FC Porto and Sporting. Therefore, it is also a brand associated with Portugal's football, connecting with fans while enhancing notoriety nationally and internationally (Jorge, 2020).

Many Portuguese researchers emphasize sponsorship and its success. Focusing on understanding Portuguese supporters' acceptance of the sponsorship, many concluded there is general approval of the supporters to sponsorship (Magalhães Oliveira, 2019). Furthermore, in 2021, a study by Abreu (2021) revealed that football fans are likely to buy a brand that sponsors their team even if they do not like the taste. The study also stated that the influence of the brand on their consumption decisions is enormous.

Also, a study by UEFA in 2018 focused on investigating European football teams' primary income sources. In the case of Portugal, 32% of revenues come from Television Rights, 24% from Sponsorships and commercial revenue, followed by UEFA's revenue from participation in European competitions, which represents 20% of total revenue. Finally comes box office revenues representing an average of 15% of the Portuguese teams' profits.

Additionally, in 2017 Portugal was the 10th European championship with the highest attendance, having an average of 11 945 supporters per domestic league game, according to the UEFA's Club licensing benchmarking report for the financial year 2017. Even though the number is considerable for the country's population size, the big three, FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP football teams, represent the most significant slice of the Portuguese average attendance per game. (UEFA, 2018).

Regarding sponsorship and commercial revenue, 17% of all sponsorships in Europe come from the Retail industry, followed by the gambling industry, which has been growing incredibly. In Portugal, the Sponsorship and Commercial revenue grew by 12% in 2018, and this industry represented around 107 million euros of Primeira Liga Portuguesa club's profit (UEFA, 2018).

Furthermore, the three big Portuguese clubs have several factors in common, one of them having as sponsors competitor brands. Super Bock sponsors the FC Porto and Sporting CP football team, and Sagres sponsors the SL Benfica football team. Those three teams are called big due to the number of titles, supporters, and historic rivalry. Super Bock and Sagres invest in the teams to profit from the clubs' assets. Many authors argue that the main reason for investment in a football entity is to benefit from their brand image, reputation, experience, perception and consumption behaviour are positively affected (Aissa & Matar, 2016).

Furthermore, the authors defined intangible variables such as image, congruence, identification and perception as critical determinants for a prosperous partnership. However, as mentioned by Nielsen in 2017, the impact on brands' intangible assets is growing. However, brands focus on the number of exposures. Thus, it is crucial to understand the impact sponsorship has on brand value (Burton & Chadwick, 2019). Consequently, the following subchapter will focus on defining brand equity and scoping the best metrics to evaluate brand value from the consumer perspective.

2.3 Brand Equity

Kotler (1991) defines the brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors"(Kotler 1991; p. 442). Meaning all the components of the brand form its identity.

Brand equity is regarding the added value to a specific product or service by a particular brand and is measured by the comparison of two similar products/ services performance, which was scoped under the same strategy, being one branded and another with no regard to a brand (Jensen & Bettina Cornwell, 2018; Wang, 2017).

Biscaia, Correia, Ross and Rosado, in 2013, specified that Brand equity has two different perceptions: financial-based and consumer-based. From the financial perspective, brand equity is defined by the number of cash flows which result from the comparison of the two Products/ Services (the branded and the anonymous). In contrast, the consumer-based perspective focuses on the brand name or symbol's strengths and weaknesses and verifies the value-added or subtracted from the user's perspective (Biscaia et al., 2013). Also, brand equity can be defined regarding marketing effectiveness, focusing on specific outcomes of the marketing strategy defined by a company (Biscaia et al., 2013).

Additionally, Brand equity is defined as a core aspect of brand management since understanding the value a brand adds to a product/ service in the market is a crucial step to defining strategies centring on optimising consumer perception (Biscaia et al., 2013). Therefore, the authors defend the importance of having a brand equity scale which allows individuals, companies and organizations to measure the concrete effects of brand equity. It would be necessary to understand the point of view of the consumer concerning existing brands (Biscaia et al., 2014; Cornwell et al., 2001).

Most authors consider brand equity to depend on six central values: Brand Awareness, brand image, brand experience, brand identity, brand association and Perceived Quality. However, this definition is not congruent among investigators, meaning some authors do not use all those parameters to study brand equity, and others even practice different ones (Biscaia et al., 2013; Jensen & Bettina Cornwell, 2018; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

In the next subchapters, two brand equity approaches are analysed. The first one is presented by Aaker in 1991, defining a set of assets or liabilities. The second approach is the Consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) Pyramid presented by Keller in 1993, which guides how to build a strong brand. The

analyses will focus on understanding the different steps to shape the customers' mindset and feel the brand.

2.3.1 Brand Equity Assets or Liabilities

The literature review supports the motivations behind studying brand equity. Most studies focus on the financial perspective, trying to estimate the tangible monetary value of a brand and, in contrast, investigating the accounting purposes and concentrating their efforts on bringing direct profit to the company through the brand (Biscaia et al., 2013). The number of studies trying to understand the consumer perspective, finding out what shapes the consumer mind when directly exposed to marketing strategies or characteristics of specific brands, is substantially lower (Wang, 2017).

Additionally, the applicability of brand equity scales to analyse different brands' performance has not been unanimous. Some research neglect the customers' experiences and brand image in creating a brand equity scale since those two measures are hard to delineate, being subjective (Biscaia et al., 2013; Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

However, to be more in agreement regarding Consumer-based brand equity, most authors use as theoretical background the models created by Aaker (1991; 1996) and Keller (1993; 2001; 2003). The first author, Aaker (1991; 1996), started by outlining that customer-based brand equity is defined by a set of assets or liabilities, Figure 2.2. Later those are presented as five dimensions: Perceived Quality, Brand Awareness, brand associations, Brand Loyalty and other proprietary brand assets (competitive advantage). Aaker's (1991) aim was to investigate what brand variables are affected by the customer's Perceived Value of the brand (Aaker, 1991).

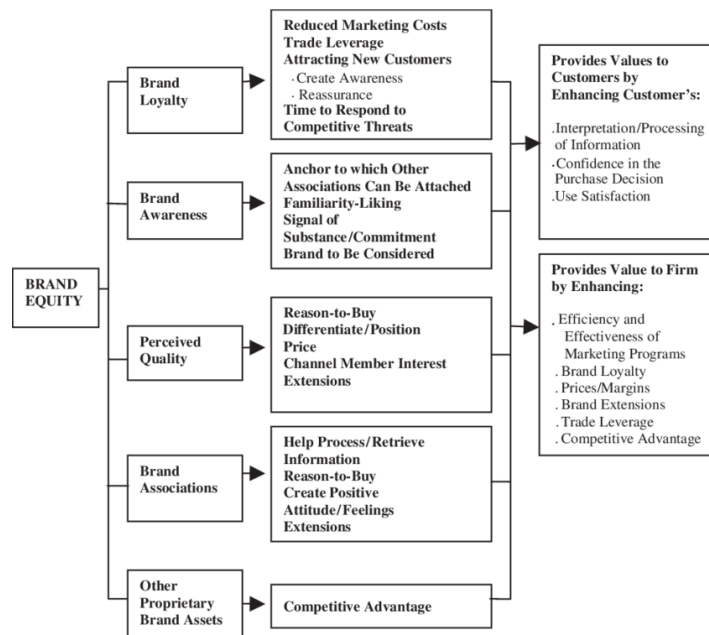


Figure 2.2 – Aaker's Brand Equity Model – 1991

Source: (Aaker, 1991)

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The model above details the main dimensions where the brand can add value to the customer and company. It also specifies concrete actions that may lead to value creation, impacting brand equity. It is essential to understand that the model and set of actions are adjustable. This model provides a starting point for analysing any decision that impacts the brand value (Aaker, 1991).

Aaker (1991) recognizes Brand Awareness as a powerful tool, stating that it is impossible to build a relationship if the customer does not recognize the brand. The ideal when having a solid Brand Awareness strategy is to put the brand name on the top of the customer's mind, meaning when thinking about a product or service category, the first thing customers recall is the brand name or characteristics. Moreover, without recognition, it is impossible to be present in the moment of consideration (buyer's journey). A customer who does not recall a brand adds no value to its life (Aaker, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Pappu et al., 2006).

In addition, awareness is the link between brand notoriety and brand associations generated in consumers' minds. Through positive communication, the customer can see the benefits of the brand, meaning the brand associations will most likely be positive (Aaker, 1991; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Pappu et al., 2006).

The strategic value of Brand Awareness (Aaker, 1991):

- Anchors and Associations: to achieve brand recognition, the company communicates brand attributes. Therefore, it generates associations and anchors between the brand name and attributes.
- Familiarity → liking: often, recognition leads the customers to familiarity. Therefore, they will prefer a more familiar brand.
- Substance/ commitment: by noticing a brand, a consumer will form an opinion or review about it, bringing a more substantial value to the brand.
- Brand to Be Considered: awareness means that the brand is present in the consumer's memory, so it will most likely be on the buyer's journey consideration phase, consequently impacting the purchase decision.

Many tools can improve Brand Awareness, such as event sponsorship, publicity, symbol exposure, and brand extensions (extending the brand name to different products) (Biscaia et al., 2013). All of these are used as Sports Sponsorship strategies. A successful sponsorship strategy aims to tell a credible story so effectively that a prospective customer goes from awareness to loyalty.

Brand Loyalty has many definitions, mainly based on two perspectives: behavioural and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioural loyalty analysis is the number of repeated purchases, the frequency and quantity in which customers buy a specific brand's products or services and the choice of a brand over a substitute one (Donlan, 2014; Aaker, 1991). On the other hand, attitudinal loyalty consists of seeing the brand as an extension of oneself, defending it, respecting it, being faithful to it, and developing an outstanding

level of connection. This concept is often described in the literature as brand love (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 2001; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

The strategic value of Brand Loyalty (Aaker, 1991):

- Reduced Marketing costs: there is an opposite relationship between marketing costs and the number of loyal customers. It is argued that retaining a customer is more profitable than looking for a new lead.
- Trade Leverage: loyal customers represent a steady revenue source since they represent repeated and frequent purchases. The stakeholders (distributors), like supermarkets, will be more willing to give space to your brand since it represents profit for them too.
- Attracting new customers: loyal customers generate word of mouth, thus creating Brand Awareness and positive emphasis, representing new customers for the brand.
- Time to Respond to Competitive Advantage: loyal customer allows some space to manoeuvre. If it is necessary to make some changes concerning the brand to gain a competitive advantage, the most loyal customers will remain close by since they usually take time to change to a competitor.

Brand Loyalty is receiving relatively less attention regarding cross-cultural issues and empirical approaches (e.g., Yoo & Donthu, 2001). The rule of focusing more on loyal customers and less on switching customers is changing, meaning switching customers is gaining more attention from brands. However, it is still one of the most critical Brand Equity dimensions (Bryan Sharp, 2019). Brand Loyalty depends on how the brand communicates and consumers' product perception.

Perceived Quality is the customer's judgement about a brand's global excellence or advantage concerning its intended purpose compared to the alternative options (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Aaker (1991) sees Perceived Quality as a significant asset. Quality influences many other brand extensions and brand KPIs. Market share, price, Purchase Intentions, profitability, and ROI are influenced by how consumers perceive the brand's quality. Also, in many investigations, customers' Perceived Quality is the number one reason to justify their choice between two substitute products. It influences the customer's reason to buy, being a point of differentiation which generates interest (Aaker, 1991; Pappu et al., 2005, 2006).

Aaker (1991) identified that companies should identify which quality dimensions the customer value, recognize how a buyer perceives quality, and credibly communicate the quality message to be perceived as a quality brand:

The strategic value of Perceived Quality:

- Reason-to-buy: consumers often lack information about a brand. Therefore, being perceived as a high-quality brand is a sufficient reason for a customer's purchase.
- Differentiate/ Position: brand positioning is fundamental. Being perceived as premium, economy or low-cost influences purchase-decision.

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- Premium price: the competitive price is fundamental to establishing positioning. All the brand information must be congruent with the Perceived Quality, from premium to low cost. Quality also influences the price since the higher the quality the consumer perceives, the more willing they will be to pay a higher (premium) price.
- Channel Member Interest: Perceived Quality is not only important to consumers. All elements in the supply and distribution chain are affected by it. For example, the channel members can have interested in prioritising a quality brand, giving it a more attractive price or even drawing traffic to it.
- Brand Extensions: using quality as an integrated strategy among other brand extensions will benefit the brand. A strong Brand Awareness strategy can mean nothing if the brand is not perceived as having quality.

Perceived Quality is essentially an association that the consumer creates when thinking about the virtues of the product or service offered by a particular brand. Many authors see it as crucial in the customer's decision-making process. However, there are many more associations that the consumer can generate by thinking about a brand.

Brand associations are all the information that comes to the consumer's mind when thinking about the brand. They are intrinsically related to the customers' memory and meaning, indicating the imagery in the consumer's mind respecting the brand. Brand associations are the significance or connotation given to the brand image (Aaker, 1996; Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004). Therefore, the brand positioning is established by adding all the customer's associations with the brand and how it differs from competitors' associations.

The strategic value of Brand Associations (Aaker, 1996; Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004):

- Retrieval of Information: brand association can be seen as a list of attributes the consumer contemplates when thinking about the brand. Associations influence consumer decision-making since they are the path to consumer brand memory.
- Differentiate/ Position: association can be fundamental to differentiating two different brands. On the other hand, substitute brands can be hard to distinguish from each other, associations that can help the consumer make decisions based on what the brand triggers.
- Reason-to-buy: an association can be the reason-to-buy since consumers can instantly think about why they should purchase that brand.
- Attitude/ Feeling: associations can trigger feelings or attitudes. Some brands can recall positive associations with the consumer, leading them to link feelings or attitudes to the brand.
- Brand Extensions: associations give meaning to other brand extensions, like name, logo, colour, and taste, among others.

Since associations are all the thoughts a consumer has when a specific brand comes to their mind, a question arises, "how can a marketer positively influence these associations and make the brand

stronger?’. That is what Keller (1993) developed. A pyramid focused on strategic marketing thinking to build a strong brand from the bottom up. The steps on the pyramid are a set of questions asked to understand what the brand must represent for the market and its target population. It is further explained in the following subchapter.

2.3.2 Consumer-based Brand Equity Pyramid

Keller (1993) presented a different approach to conceptualising, measuring, and managing Consumer-based brand equity, which aimed to organize the dimensions by keeping the brand's construction in mind. The base of Keller’s customer-based brand equity model is that “the power of a brand lies in what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand as a result of their experiences over time” (Keller, 2003, p. 59).

For Keller (1993), the consumer's perception shapes the success of a brand. The better the image the consumer paint in their mind, the more significant the brands are. Also, brand image, reputation and differentiation positively affect consumers' purchase intention (Keller, 2003).

In the article *Building Customer-Based Brand Equity*, Keller (2001) develops a pyramid to help categorize Customer-based Brand Equity into four steps: Identity, Meaning, Response and Relationship, see figure 2.3 (Keller's customer-based brand equity Pyramid). Many authors see that pyramid as the basis for studying and understanding brand equity from the consumer perspective (Kuhn et al., 2008; Świtała et al., 2018; Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

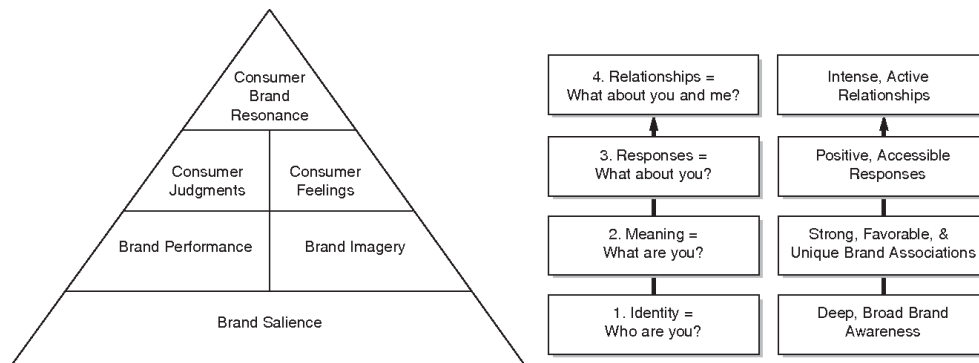


Figure 2.3 - Keller's customer-based brand equity (CBBE) Pyramid

Source: (Keller, 2001).

Each step on the pyramid describes blocks by answering a different question about the brand (Kuhn et al., 2008). The first one is identity. Some authors do the parallelism between brand identity and a human personality since both concepts have the purpose of defining “who you are”.

To build brand equity, brand salience alone is not sufficient. The second step on the pyramid is Brand association, meaning a consumer attributes to a brand element. Keller divides associations between functional and abstract, the first related to the brand performance and the second with the brand imagery (Keller, 2001).

Brand performance is the tangible element of the brand. Keller stated that the strategy goal is to augment positive associations regarding the attributes to have a good positioning in the market (Keller,

2003). On the other hand, brand imagery compacts the intangible properties of the brand, which are related to the psychological or social needs of the customer. Therefore, it is related to the brand's abstract image rather than its function. In addition, brand imagery can sometimes generate the personification of the brand in the consumer, adding human value and emotions (Keller, 2001).

The third step is about the brand response, the opinions, evaluations, emotions, and reactions the customers have of the brand when having one of the brand associations translated to brand meaning. The block divides into brand judgments and brand feelings. There are four main types of brand judgements: quality, credibility, consideration, and superiority. Moreover, the brand can build six main feelings: Warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval and self-respect (Keller, 2001). Some customers' decisions are judgmental, and others sensitive, meaning the brand responses may come from a more rational or emotional perspective. However, the main goal is positive responses, regardless of their reasoning.

Lastly, the final step focuses on brand relationships. The goal is to transform positive responses into an intense, active, loyal customer relationship. Consumer brand resonance is the relationship between the customer and the brand and is the pyramid's peak. It has four main components: behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, a sense of community and active engagement (Keller, 2001).

There are two dimensions: intensity and activity. The first one respects the power of attitudinal attachment and a sense of community, measuring how deeply loyalty is felt. The second focuses on understanding how frequently consumers buy and use the brand and how they engage in other activities unrelated to purchase and consumption (Keller, 2001).

Concluding, the Customer-Based Brand Value model (CBBE) is presented as strategic brand levels, the basis being the establishment of an adequate brand identity, the second level the creation of meaning, the third collection of positive responses, and the fourth, the top, the birth of brand relationships with buyers. In other words, it is necessary to determine the extent and depth of Brand Awareness to create robust, favourable and unique brand associations, leading to positive perceptions about the brand. Consequently, it creates a valid, intense and active bond between the customer and the brand. To reach these four stages, any brand must define which six blocks will be the basis for building the brand, these six blocks being: brand relevance, brand performance, brand image, brand judgments, brand feelings and brand resonance.

Bearing that two significant perspectives address consumer-based brand equity, it is vital to understand their similarities and differences and the need to explore both when investigating the topic, which is what the next subchapter addresses.

2.3.3 CBBE Models Comparison

In table 2.1 below, a comparison between Aaker and Keller's Brand Equity Models is presented in the form of a concept summary of the two primary researchers' principles.

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Table 2.1 - Comparison Between Aaker and Keller's Brand Equity Models (Based on Literature Review)

Author:	David A. Aaker	Kevin Lane Keller
Books or Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing Brand Equity (1991) - Measuring Brand Equity Across Products and Markets (1996); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conceptualising, measuring and managing Customer-Based Brand Equity (1993); - Strategic Brand Management: Building Consumer Based-brand equity (2001); - Understanding brands, branding and brand equity (2003)
Definition of Brand Equity:	<p>“Brand equity is a set of assets and liabilities linked to the brand, its name and symbol, that add or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and to that firm’s customers.” <i>In Managing brand equity (1991) p. 27</i></p>	<p>“Brand equity is defined in terms of the marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand – for example, when certain outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand name that would not occur if the same product or service did not have that name.” <i>in Conceptualising, measuring and managing Customer-Based Brand Equity (1991 p. 1)</i></p>
CBBE Model:	<p>Brand Equity Assets or Liabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand Awareness; - Brand Loyalty; - Brand Associations; - Perceived Quality; - Other proprietary brand assets. 	<p>Building Brand Equity Pyramid:</p> <p>Level 1 - Brand Identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salience (Awareness) - Block 1 <p>Level 2 - Brand Meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance - Block 2 - Imagery - Block 3 <p>Level 3 - Brand Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judgements - Block 4 - Feelings - Block 5 <p>Level 4 - Brand Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resonance - Block 6

It is noticeable the common ground the authors share. Both developed detailed theories related to the brand and its value. Proposing different schools on how one can evaluate, assess and build brand value from the consumer’s perspective. Aaker (1991) focused on defining the brand assets and how a company can benefit from them, while Keller (1993) created a strategic thinking model to help marketers create a strong brand.

Therefore, Aaker's model would be a better fit for the analysis if the goal is to assess and quantify the brand assets while investigating what drives consumer brand perceptions. Nevertheless, to understand the impact those assets have on the brand, and how the brand managers and company stakeholders could take advantage of the consumer insights about the brand to achieve better results, Keller’s CBBE pyramid would be an essential tool.

2.4 Football Sponsorship and Brand Equity

In this subchapter, it will be discussed, based on other authors' studies, how brand equity can be impacted through effective football sponsorship strategies, always considering the two models defined above.

Brand equity is proven to impact customers’ preferences, perceptions and decisions. Meaning brand equity is indirectly impacting Purchase Intentions. Besides, it may also be seen as an opportunity for positive brand associations and creating barriers to competitive entry (Chieng & Lee, 2011).

In the sports industry, managers know how much they depend on consumer-based perception since they need a positive evaluation of their supporters to succeed. Hence, brand equity in sports is a critical measure to assess value and compare different teams within the same competition (Biscaia et al., 2013; P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Melovic et al., 2019). Additionally, an efficient sponsorship strategy

depends on the sponsor's relationship. Therefore, congruence, sharing a common audience, proximity level, and understandable reasoning behind the partnership are essential for success (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014).

Also, a study by Park and Sihombing (2020) showed that an efficient sponsorship strategy might impact brand equity. For the authors, sponsorship's impact on brand equity depends on congruence, supporters' loyalty, awareness, impact on brand image and attitudes towards the brand (Park & Sihombing, 2020). The study confirmed that congruence and brand image positively impact attitudes towards the sponsor brand, which will later positively impact the supporter's Purchase Intentions.

Silva and Veríssimo (2019) proved a relationship exists between team identification, team loyalty, attitudes towards the sponsor brand and Purchase Intentions. However, to be positively impacted, it is necessary to have a certain level of congruence between sponsor and sponsored. Moreover, another study confirms the previous findings that sponsorship communication through exposure levels impacts Purchase Intentions. However, the previous study concluded that Brand Awareness must be impacted for a sponsorship strategy to be efficient (Henseler et al., 2007). If the sponsor brand is not recognised or the supporter does not recall the brand name or symbol or does not have an image associated with it, there is no Sponsorship awareness (Biscaia et al., 2014; Aissa and Matar, 2016). Therefore, sponsorship should be measured through consumer awareness of it.

Before those studies were conducted, in 2005, Chien and Cornwell (2005) had already concluded that "sponsorship can help to associate a brand with a specific event or experience, allowing it to transcend its physical attributes and install new definitions and values" (Chien & Cornwell, 2005. Page 20). The goal is to find the right Sponsored entity which can positively influence brand associations (judgements and feelings), brand image, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty to impact the consumer's Purchase Intentions.

Supporters' affiliation with the team also plays a decisive role in the sponsorship strategy. Although it may be seen as an external factor regarding sponsorship strategy, since the brand (sponsor) does not have the power to control this aspect, it is a critical variable impacting Brand Loyalty. If the supporters are more loyal to the team, they will most likely be more willing to be loyal and invest in its sponsor, thus impacting sponsor Purchase Intentions (Biscaia et al., 2013; Henseler et al., 2007).

A study from 2014 proved that fans of professional football teams recall the sponsors of their team's shirts just by looking at their logos (Biscaia et al., 2014). Also, in the Portuguese context, the fans' identification was proven to have significant positive direct effects on perceived congruence, attitude toward sponsoring companies and purchase intention (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). The level of identification with the team impacts how sponsorship is perceived and how it will affect the fan as a sponsor brand consumer. The higher the identification/ commitment level of the supporters, the higher the exposure and awareness, which will later positively impact the purchase decisions (Biscaia et al., 2014).

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP ON BRAND EQUITY

Sports sponsorship is one of the strategies to build consumer-based brand equity since it is a communication tool with excellent visibility, an opportunity to impact sensible audiences (sports audiences are more willing to be impacted) and build strong relationships. However, it is not guaranteed that the strategy will work. The study concluded that a successful sponsorship contributed to building brand associations, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty. However, to impact purchase intention, the supporter must understand perfectly how the two entities are connected (Donlan, 2014).

Most studies mentioned comprehending consumer purchase intention as a sports sponsorship's goal. Therefore, they recommend having it as a focus of any study on sports sponsorship effectiveness. However, sales are not impacted without first impacting Brand Equity assets while improving consumers' brand impressions (Herrmann et al., 2016). To help determine focus, figure 2.4 summarizes the most mentioned variables of Brand Equity (Brand value) when analyzing Sports Sponsorship strategies.

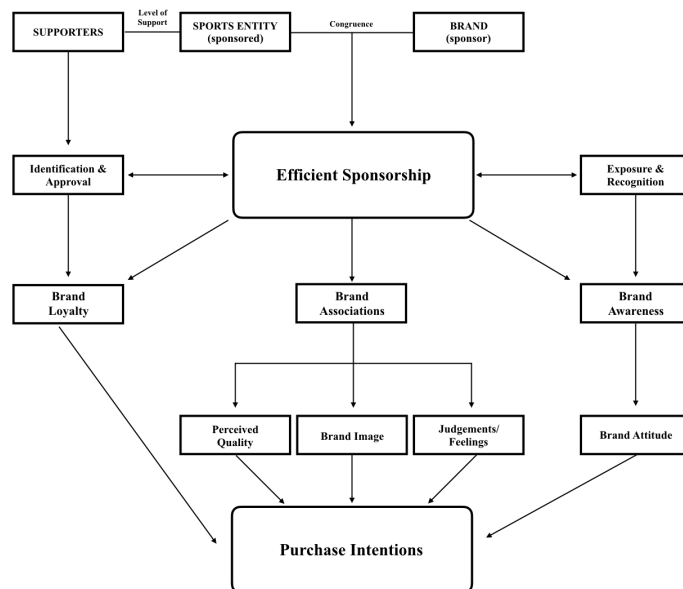


Figure 2.4 - Sports Sponsorship Effectiveness Summary (based on the studies mentioned above)

Source: Developed by the author

Understanding the Literature review conclusions is crucial to develop an analytical framework that focuses on defining the metrics that will be studied to answer the research question. Therefore, in the next subchapter, the conceptual framework is presented.

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Defining specific metrics that will be evaluated, compared and studied for the study is essential. The aim is to test if the predictors positively or negatively influence the variables in the study or if, on the contrary, they do not add any relevant conclusion to the research question (Vilelas, 2021)

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP ON BRAND EQUITY

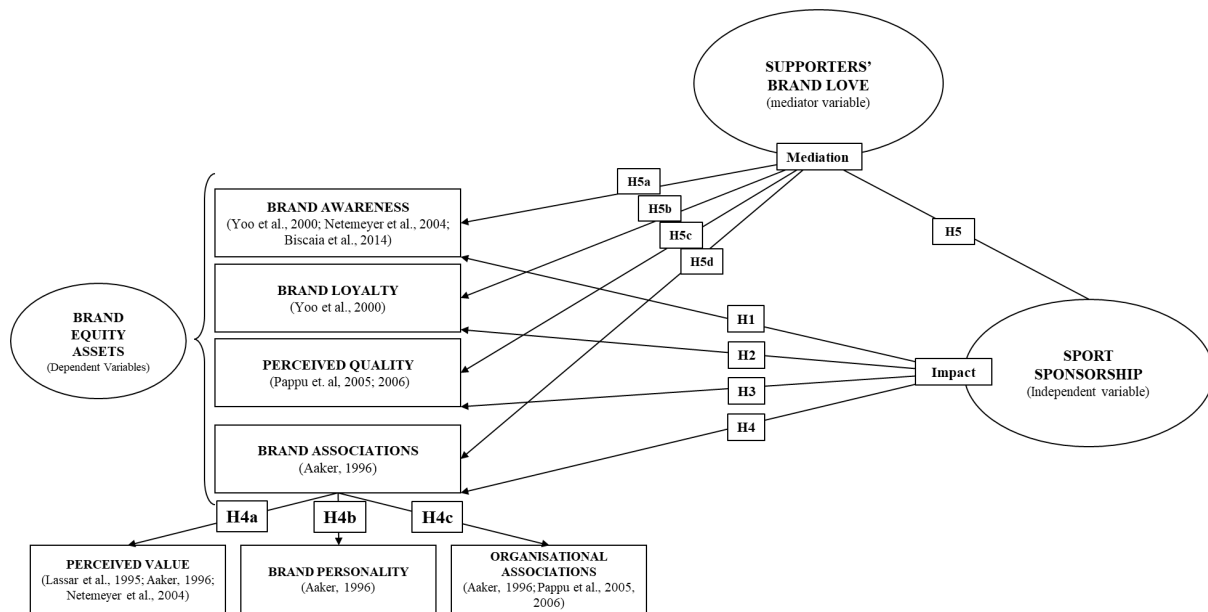


Figure 3.1 - Conceptual Framework (Adapted from the studies Aaker (1996), Buil, Chernatony and Martínez (2008) and Donlan (2014) with the proposed influence of articulation)

Source: Developed by the author

Aaker (1996) defined the brand equity role as the potential to add value for both the customers and the firm. The theoretical background covered several angles on sports sponsorship's effects on brand equity. The development of Brand Equity models and the importance given to the consumer perspective is a growing trend in sports marketing (Biscaia et al., 2014; Cornwell et al., 2001; Wang, 2017).

Keller and Aaker's perspective on Consumer-based brand equity established the metrics most authors focus on when evaluating brand value (Buil et al., 2008). However, the metrics have been changing throughout time, research and applications. Therefore, instigators have been adapting and changing the brand equity assets presented by Aaker's model to their proposed studies (Buil et al., 2008).

The study in question focuses on understanding if Sports Sponsorship impacts brand equity from the consumer's perspective. Therefore, the focus will be to analyse whether the supporters see the sponsor brand of the sports entity they cherish as an asset or liability based on six different variables: Brand Awareness, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Value, Brand Personality and Organisational Associations. In the following subchapter, five hypotheses are presented.

3.1 Research Hypothesis

Aaker (1996) defined Brand Awareness as the consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand among a particular product category (Aaker, 1991). Therefore, the customer must have a recollection of a brand by its name, colour, shape, catalogue or category (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). However, Brand Awareness is also viewed as a scale to analyse the degree to which consumers instantly think about a brand when a particular product category is mentioned (Netemeyer et al., 2004).

Concerning sponsorships, Brand Awareness is considered a crucial metric to pinpoint the sponsor's exposure effectiveness. Without awareness, the sponsorship strategy does not work. Many authors are considering it. This is because recognition plays a significant part when a consumer makes a purchase decision (Biscaia et al., 2014; Świtłała et al., 2018). However, sponsorship also refers to the consumer's familiarity with the brand. Within a certain product category, the consumer is acquainted with the brand.

Also, one of the objectives of the Sponsorship is to influence supporters' ability to recall the name, symbol and logo while impacting their familiarity with the sponsor brand. Therefore, the first research hypothesis presented is:

H1: Brand Awareness is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

Yoo and Donthu (2001) defined Brand Loyalty as “the tendency to be loyal to a focal brand, which is demonstrated by the intention to buy the brand as a primary choice” (Yoo & Donthu, 2001. Page 3.). Loyalty is associated with belief and purchase and is considered the most challenging asset to achieve (P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005). Brand Loyalty divides into two classifications: attitudinal and behavioural. The first consists of consumer commitment to the brand values, and the second respects repeat purchase (Buil et al., 2008).

Furthermore, customer loyalty is an asset associated with buying behaviour. It positively influences Purchase Intentions and attitudes towards a particular brand (Biscaia et al., 2013). Considering the sports paradigm, the link between the consumer (supporter) and brand (sports entity) is important since loyalty plays an essential role in supporters' behaviour. The level of identification and attitudes towards the sports entity and its competitors (rivals) are unique in the sports industry (Biscaia et al., 2014).

Therefore, many studies concerning Sponsorship and Brand Loyalty show scattered results and often, authors do not agree on whether sponsorship positively impacts loyalty (Aissa & Matar, 2016). Most studies proved there is, in fact, a relationship between sponsorship and behavioural Brand Loyalty. However, it focuses on how supporters believe that by buying from the sponsor, they are helping the sponsored entity (Donlan, 2014). Therefore, they are loyal to their favourite sports entity, not the sponsor brand. They are just projecting Brand Loyalty.

A lack of studies focuses on the sponsored entity's values and how sponsorship impacts supporters' identification with the sponsor brand. Therefore, the following hypothesis presents:

H2: Brand Loyalty is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

When defining the consumer-based brand equity pyramid, Keller noted perceived brand quality's importance in the consumer's mind. The better the brand performs, the better the imagery the consumer has of it (Keller, 1993). Perceived Quality is not how the brand products perform nor their actual quality. It is about what is the customer's evaluation (Keller 2003). It connects to the consumer's judgement about the brand's performance. It respects an opinion formed when a brand comes to the customer's mind (Yoo & Donthu, 2001).

This asset could be defined as a simple brand association, considering it is an idea conceived in the customer's mind. It influences them to have a good or bad perception of its function as a product. In

addition, it often links to the level of satisfaction the product or brand has, which is why it is often confused with a product's functionality (Henseler et al., 2007). In short, it is a differentiation asset, being the foundation for a consumer to choose the product of a specific brand over a competitor brand. Authors considered Perceived Quality, price, and distribution as one of the main motivations for consumption (Pappu et al., 2005).

Studies regarding the impact sponsorship have on brand value suggest it may impact the Brand's Perceived Quality association (Donlan, 2014). Hence the formulation of the third hypothesis:

H3: Brand Loyalty is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

Finally, when thinking about a brand, consumers generate a positive or negative connotation of any kind in marketing, called Brand associations (Biscaia et al., 2013; Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Usually, they have linked to the consumer's memory and brand image construction (Aaker, 1996). These associations can vary across different sources or fields of study, impacted by favourability, strength and uniqueness (Keller, 1993). Many authors differ in defining the main brand associations and how to classify them, but three groups are highlighted in the bibliography review: product value, Brand Personality and organization perceptions (Aaker, 1996; Buil et al., 2008; Keller, 1993; Lassar et al., 1995; Pappu et al., 2005).

The product's Perceived Value depends on consumers' perception of its general superiority compared to other brands, perceptions such as performance, social image, value, reliability and attachment. It can be defined based on the consumer opinion of utility versus price. Resuming can be seen as the willingness of the consumer to pay premium prices due to the perception of a higher brand equity (Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004). Exposure and trial of certain brand products impact Perceived Value. Therefore, analysing if sponsorship impacts how the supporter perceives the sponsor's value is relevant.:

According to Keller (1993), a brand's purpose is to transfer meaning to the consumer. Three elements must be precise from the start: good image, strong positioning and construction of congruent and consistent values with the product and its target audience. To do this, the brand must convey an evident personality that is easy to identify. Consumers must clearly understand what it means to consume this brand for them and society (Keller, 1993). Joseph Plummer (1985) defined Brand Personality as the character the brand would have as a person. Therefore, it is a differentiation element based on the brand-as-person perspective (Aaker, 1996; Plummer, 2000).

One of the main goals of sponsorship is to build a favourable image of the sponsor by associating its values with the sports entity ones (Biscaia et al., 2013). However, it is not the best communication channel for complex, detailed brand messages. Therefore, it must use the projection strategy by projecting the sponsored personality to the sponsor's brand image. A study proved that there is evidence that a correct sports sponsorship strategy can contribute to a stronger brand image (Donlan, 2014). However, there might be other conclusions to other markets or brands.

Brand associations also concern the opinion generated when the consumer thinks of the brand as an organization. This dimension of brand associations relates to the brand's people, values and programs (Aaker, 1996). Liking, pride and trust evaluate Organisational Associations (Pappu et al., 2005), which meets previous sports sponsorship studies analysis, which found a relationship between trust and pride in the sponsor organization (Donlan, 2014).

Perceived Value, Brand Personality and Organisational Association are different and have brought relevance to the study. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis, “Sports Sponsorship positively impacts Brand Association”, is divided into three:

H4a: Perceived Value is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

H4b: Brand Personality is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

H4c: Organisational Associations are positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship.

After proving the first four hypotheses, it is important to test the strength of the relationship between Sports Sponsorship and Brand Equity, focusing on identifying a possible player that might justify the impact. In this study, it is essential to understand how sponsorship impact on brand equity differs between real and casual fans since the level of exposure is distinctive. For example, high-involved fans usually quickly identify the sponsors and non-sponsors of their favourite football team while also being more susceptible to the congruence level of the sponsorship (Biscaia et al., 2014; Brochado et al., 2018).

Identification, affinity and involvement are human characteristics. However, previous research proposes that people can attribute those characteristics to brands. That phenomenon is known in marketing as brand love, where consumers see the brand as an extension of themselves. Brand love incorporates characteristics such as identification, involvement, commitment, satisfaction or affection (Velicia Martín et al., 2020; Wang, 2017). Brand love reflects in the sports industry since being a sports fan is often seen as a loyalty relationship taken to the extreme (Andres & Prantl, 2012; Biscaia et al., 2013; Velicia Martín et al., 2020).

Fan involvement is an essential variable in achieving sponsorship effectiveness. Also, it was proven to directly impact sponsorship since it moderates the relationship between sponsor-sponsee congruence and response (Brochado et al., 2018). Therefore, the focus is on assessing the possibility that supporters' brand love justifies sports sponsorship's impact on brand equity assets. Thus, proving sports sponsorship depends on the supporter's love for their team to impact the sponsored entity successfully.

Thus, a fifth hypothesis is created and divided into four for each brand equity asset in the study.

H5: Supporter brand love is acting as a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and the brand equity assets:

H5a: Supporter brand love is acting as a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and Brand Awareness

H5b: Supporter brand love is a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and Perceived Quality.

H5c: Supporter brand love is a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and Brand Loyalty.

H5d: Supporter brand love is a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and brand association.

4 METHODOLOGY

The main objective of academic research is to answer the proposed research question. There are different methods to conduct studies. The method chosen was exploratory for the study to provide a better familiarity with the problem in question while giving a general and close view of the object under study. This method allows researchers to develop a flexible and practical approach to their work (Vilelas, 2021).

This research study will inquire Portuguese fans about their love for their football team and assess their perceptions of the Sponsor's different Brand equity variables. The focus is the sponsorship of the two Portuguese beer brands, Sagres and Super Bock, to Portugal's three most prominent football teams, FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP. Therefore, the universe of the study in question will be SL Benfica, FC Porto and Sporting CP football supporters over 18 years old, the legal age for the consumption of alcoholic drinks in Portugal.

Initially, online video interviews will be conducted with 30 Portuguese fans of the three football teams (Porto, Benfica and Sporting) with different identification levels towards their favourite team to pre-test the factors in the study. The main objective of this step is to understand how identification impacts their perception of the team and the sponsorship while using it as a preview for the approach the exploratory research should have. After the individual interviews, an online survey is conducted to test the hypotheses proposed on a heterogeneous sample of the universe in the study.

4.1 Online qualitative interviews

In the pre-test phase, 30 individual interviews were conducted. The objective of this step was to analyse if the questions were comprehensible and understandable by all the respondents. Additionally, it was helpful to understand whether the scales used were useful for studying the target group or if they should be adapted.

Cognitive interviews with the study's target population help find tricky questions that can be resolved between the testing phase and the release of the final questionnaire. These interviews are helpful for a more qualitative first analysis and to validate whether the respondents understand the scales used and whether they should be kept, changed or withdrawn altogether. In addition, interviews have advantages over the questionnaire test since the process involves respondents' feedback throughout the process (Beatty & Willis, 2007; Collins, 2001; Drennan, 2003; Presser et al., 2004).

In this step, 30 football supporters above 18 were selected based on the Portuguese team they followed the most. The sample chosen was heterogeneous. Among the respondents were ten supporters of FC Porto, ten of SL Benfica and ten of Sporting CP with different backgrounds, ages and interests. The individual interviews were conducted online via Zoom. The respondents were asked orally the questions where they were asked to answer and offer feedback (chapter 9. Appendix A. table 9.1.).

After carefully analysing the interviews, it was possible to design which variables would be essential to proceed to the online questionnaire, chapter 9---Appendix A. Table 9.1. Chapter 9 assesses which questions of the online interview should be portrayed in the online survey.

4.2 Design of Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of eight parts/questions, chapter 9. Appendix B., table 9.2., contains four demographic questions. First, the participants were asked to identify their favourite team (between the three options FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP). After, depending on the answer, there are two groups of questions regarding Sponsor Recall and Recognition to assess their Sponsorship Knowledge. The first question will ask supporters to identify a maximum of three sponsors for their team, and the second will choose between a list of brands they think are their team sponsors.

Secondly, the first scale is presented, the Brand Love Scale, to study how involved the supporter is with their team. The brand love scale was adapted from the one proposed by Palos-Sanchez, P. & Toledo, L. (2020). It contains five questions assessing the supporter's favourite team perception about five factors (Emotional attachment, Passion, Brand connection, Intrinsic reward and thought).

Afterwards, the main frame of the questionnaire containing the Brand Equity Scale is presented, in which the participants should evaluate on a 7-item Likert scale of agreement (1 -Totally disagree to 7 - Totally agree) their accordance with the statements regarding the two brands sponsoring their team or their rivalry team. Seventeen statements are presented to the participants, divided into six different groups (Brand Awareness, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty, Brand associations, Brand Personality and Organizational associations).

Finally, preference questions will be presented to assess the favourite supporter brand between the two-competitor brands in the study. The questions focus on their relationship with the brands. The demographic questions appear only at the end of the survey to prevent participants' attention levels from decreasing. The question will focus on supporters' age, living area, gender and frequency of beer consumption. The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix C. of the dissertation.

4.3 Data collection and Sampling

As explained before, an online survey was chosen to collect the data due to its simplicity and rapid data collection. Researchers see the Internet as a rich channel for conducting surveys since the costs are decreasing while the popularity of the Internet increases. On the other hand, online surveys provide

some disadvantages. The sampling might be untrustworthy since the researcher may have little or poor information regarding the characteristics of people in online communities (Wright, 2005).

Moreover, there is also a self-selection bias occurring with the online surveys. This phenomenon is related to online communities and their behaviour. For example, many internet users do not take the time to answer online inquiries. These people belong to a specific profile that will be poorly represented in the sample, even though they might belong to the study population (Bethlehem, 2010).

Even so, it is possible to conclude that the internet has more advantages than disadvantages. In the case of this study, the advantages of time and cost-saving weighed in the decision.

Moreover, Buil, Chernatony and Martínez (2008) stated that when conducting research, understanding the culture, values and context of the sample and universe under analysis is crucial. When developing hypotheses and later using an assessment scale, both must be adjusted to the country in which they will be applied. In this case, Portuguese football fans were chosen as the universe of the analysis since several studies of the impact football already proved it has on supporters' daily lives (Biscaia et al., 2014; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020).

The sampling method is Sample by quotas, where the data will be gathered from a heterogeneous group. For example, this study had three quotas for a supporter's "big three" team. Thus, to have statistically significant results, the sample had to be representative of the universe (Benfica, Porto and Sporting beer-drinking supporters). A study conducted by intercampus in 2019 stated that around 46% of Portuguese football enthusiasts are Benfica supporters, 24.7% are Porto supporters, and 23.8% are Sporting supporters (Intercampus, 2019). Meaning the three top teams have around 94.5% of Portuguese football supporters.

Therefore, to have a representative sample, the quotas will be 45%-50% Benfica fans, 25-30% FC Porto fans, and 25-30% Sporting fans. The questionnaire was closed for each group of supporters by the time the quota was achieved. Therefore, the first group to achieve the maximum quota was Sporting CP, followed by SL Benfica and FC Porto.

The software used for the online questionnaire was google forms. Before releasing the questionnaire, it was tested under the supervision of ten other football fans. Minor corrections were made. For the data collection, a link for the questionnaire was spread through several social networks (including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and WhatsApp). The questionnaire was also published in social media football supporter groups, where the aim and objective of the study were explained. Data were collected across seven successive days (from August 17th to August 24th, 2021). There were 455 answering the questionnaire, from which 68 were rejected due to not supporting one of the teams in the study or biased answering, thus resulting in 387 valid forms.

The demographic and factor analysis will be conducted with SPSS IBM Version 28. After verifying the qualification of all data and carefully analysing the responses, a socio-demographic profile of the respondents should be established. Also, the appropriateness of the scales will be tested by exploratory factor analysis in principal components with varimax rotation.

The final part of the data analysis will confirm the conceptual framework. Then, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be used to test the first four hypotheses, and multiple linear regression will be performed to test the mediating effect, the fifth hypothesis. Finally, the identified results will be discussed, and conclusions will be outlined.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

The answers to qualitative and quantitative studies will be presented and analysed for the following sub-chapters. First, the qualitative analysis will focus on examining the supporter's answers while investigating the direction the study could have. For that analysis, conclusions are only suggestive, as no analysis is being performed. However, it is beneficial to understand the supporters' minds when asked about their team. For the second part, a quantitative analysis focused on retaining tangible and statistically significant results that could be discussed, compared and dissected in the chapters ahead.

5.1 Online Interviews Analysis

The interviews conducted had four groups of questions. In the first group, the questions were about the different sponsorships that the respondent could identify and their thoughts on the congruence level of the sponsor brand and their favourite football team. In the second group, they were asked about their level of love for sports and their team. The two brands in question were evaluated in the third group through brand equity assets. Finally, in the last group, five sociodemographic questions were asked.

Out of the 30 interviewees, 10 support FC Porto, 10 SL Benfica and 10 Sporting CP. The ages of respondents were between 22 and 68 years old. Nineteen respondents were male, and 11 were female. Most respondents have a bachelor's degree. Twenty interviewees live in Lisbon/Setubal, and the rest are in Portugal's Centre/North region.

The online interviews allow us to understand that the "big three" supporters majority can identify at least 1 of the main sponsors of their club. For example, among FC Porto fans, eight stated that Super Bock is an official sponsor of their team, 7 out of the 10 Benfica identified Sagres as a sponsor and 7 out of 10 Sporting fans acknowledged Super Bock as their team's sponsor. Also, 16 out of the 30 supporters identified the beer brands as their team's top-of-mind sponsor (the first one to be mentioned).

Regarding congruence, most respondents see a common ground between the beer brands and sponsored entity, 25 of all interviewees understood the reasoning for the beer brands to be related to football. Furthermore, the respondents identified similarities between the beer brand and the football teams, the shared audience (21 respondents), the consumption moment - watching a game (19 respondents), and mutual "brand" values - emotion, socialization and friends (18 respondents). Therefore, the congruence level perception of brand image and target audience is relatively high.

Moreover, fans with a higher level of involvement with their club who recognized the sponsorship of the beer brand generally had higher levels of awareness, better quality perception, greater loyalty and

better associations with the brand. Therefore, sponsorship positively impacts the values of the sponsoring brand.

Finally, it was possible to conclude that neither the level of education nor the annual household income impacted the opinions of the 30 interviewees. Therefore, it is proven that the level of support does not vary depending on the person's social status but rather their interests (Velicia Martín et al., 2020).

5.2 Quantitative Analysis

For the next sub-chapter, a characteristic of the sample is offered, and two different analyses were performed to test the hypotheses proposed before. For both analyses, the dependent variables will be the average scores of each Brand Equity asset: Brand Awareness (BA), Brand Loyalty (BL), Perceived Quality (PQ) and Brand Associations (BA) – Perceived Value (PV); Brand Personality (BP); Organisational Associations (OA).

For the first part, the independent categorical variable is the Supporter's level of awareness of their football team sponsor, Super Bock/ Sagres. The sub-groups were created through the Sponsor Recall and Sponsor Recognition questions and were transformed on SPSS based on Aaker's (1991) Pyramid Level of Awareness. Therefore, the different sub-groups will be: Unaware of the Sponsor, Recognize the Sponsor, Recall the Sponsor, and sponsor brand as Top-of-Mind. According to Aaker, recognition is the first level of Brand Awareness, followed by recall and recall as top-of-mind (Aaker, 1991). For the second part, an independent dummy variable was created based on the supporter's sponsorship level of awareness (being 0 for the unaware sub-group and 1 for all the other sub-groups), and the mediator variable will be the PCA score of the supporter's Brand Love for their team construct.

5.2.1 Characteristics of the Sample

The study's main goal was to have a diverse, random and independent sample that would represent the universe in the study. That way, the results would be more accurate and descriptive. From the total valid sample collected (N: 387), there were 182 female respondents (47%) and 205 males (53%). No respondent answered "Rather not say" for the gender question. Concerning the age groups, most of the respondents were between 18 and 35 years old (53%), followed by the group of 36 to 55 years old (36,2%). Both these groups accounted for 89,2% of the total sample. Moreover, most respondents were from the Lisboa and Vale do Tejo geographic area, representing 72,9% of the participant's current location.

Regarding the Portuguese football club supported, 45,7% of the sample were SL Benfica fans, followed by Sporting CP fans (29,5%) and FC Porto (24,8%), therefore meeting the sample by quotas goal. Of all the big three clubs' supporters' samples, 66,7% had high brand love for their favourite club. The original brand love scale was transformed from a 7-point scale to a 3-point scale. High, Neutral and Low brand love were the sub-groups.

Furthermore, most supporters identified Super Bock and Sagres as the sponsor of their football club. Of all respondents, 50,4% recognised between a list of brands or recalled by heart the beer sponsor brand, and 24,3% identified Super Bock or Sagres sponsorship as Top-of-Mind, meaning it was the first brand they thought about when asked about sponsors of their football club.

Finally, 53,5% of all respondents consider themselves to drink beer Often, Very Often or Frequently. Concerning preference questions, Super Bock was the most picked brand since, on average, 62,6% of respondents chose Super Bock over Sagres on all the preference parameters in the study. The detailed data can be found in chapter 9—appendix C.

After describing the participant sample, it is crucial to understand its reliability and validity for the study. Therefore, the focus of the next sub-chapter is to test if the items of the scales fit the study, thus possibly deleting irrelevant elements that could compromise the results of the future analysis.

5.2.2 Reliability and Validity of the Sample

Before proceeding to do a statistical analysis, the sample should be validated. For the study in question, Cronbach's Alpha was the choice to assess the reliability of the constructs. For the Brand Equity Scale, the Alpha had values between 0,925 and 0,959, proving that all the question constructs had Excellent reliability, thus being regular (Ursachi et al., 2015). However, some of the constructs had to suffer changes. There were two items on Brand Awareness and one for each of the other constructs that were eliminated. This decision was based on the "Cronbach's Alpha if an item is deleted" column. See chapter 9—appendix E.

The Alpha of the constructs for the Brand Love Scale is 0,985, which exposes the Excellent reliability of all items. (Ursachi et al., 2015). The item "I often comment on or read news about my team on social networks or the internet" was deleted since it was not adding value to the construct.

An exploratory factor analysis was run to test the validity of all the items in the study. For each construct, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling adequacy) and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used, and components were extracted to test the Variance of all the constructs. (Williams et al., 2012).

For the Brand Equity Scale, the KMO values presented were higher than the minimum requirement of 0,6. Through Bartlett's Test, all the items in the study proved that for each construct, all the questions had a significant correlation since p-values were under 0,05. (Awang et al., 2015). Therefore, a Factor analysis should be performed to ensure the validity of the scales.

The factor loadings and variance extracted proved that all the items are significant for the studies in question. The factor loading fluctuated between 0,598 and 0,963 for the Brand Equity Scale, showing that for all the factors extracted, there is a high variance compared to the initial components under analysis (Awang et al., 2015). The factor loadings prove that all the items kept are helpful for the study, confirming that the study can move to hypothesis testing.

For the Brand Love Scale, a PCA analysis was performed to reduce the construct to one component and obtain a score to perform the Multiple Linear Regression. By obtaining a score based on just one component, 74% of all variance was kept, and the minimum recommendation of 65% was achieved. For the next sub-chapter, the hypotheses will be tested by comparing means of the variables of interest and with a mediator analysis through multiple linear regression.

After analysing the validity and reliability of the constructs, the study can proceed to hypotheses testing.

5.2.3 Hypotheses Testing

An ANOVA will be used to assess the impact sponsorship level of awareness might have on the brand equity assets to test the first four hypotheses. If the ANOVA cannot be performed, the non-parametric test, Kruskal Wallis, will take place.

For an ANOVA to be performed, three different assumptions must be fulfilled (Larson, 2008). a) the independence of the sub-groups of the categorical variable. b) the subgroups need to have a normal distribution or a number superior to 30 (Islam, 2018). c) the subgroups of the categorical variables need homogeneity of variance, meaning that the same squared distance score to the mean is mandatory between all the sub-groups. a) assumption fulfilled; the groups were obtained through a random sample. b) assumption fulfilled, as all groups have at least 59 participants, chapter 9 appendix C. (table 8.4.) assumption was met for only one of the dependent variables, Brand Personality. The Non-parametric test, Kruskal Wallis, was performed for all the other variables, chapter 9 appendix D. table 8-12.

The Kruskal Wallis is a non-parametric test based on rankings. It will focus on understanding if there are sub-groups of the categorical variable with different means of the continuous variable. Therefore, determining if the mean difference between the sub-groups is statistically significant. However, it cannot identify which group has significant differences from the others. Thus, it is crucial to perform a post hoc test. (Ostertagová et al., 2014).

Three assumptions have to be fulfilled to proceed with the test: a) the dependent variables should be continuous (ordinal, following an interval); b) the independent variable should have two or more independent categorical groups; c) the participants should not be in more than one group at the time, meaning that the sub-groups should be observable independent (Ostertagová et al., 2014). All these assumptions are verified since a) all the items of the dependent variables were measured in a 7-point Likert scale, and when computing the average per variable, all the answers were transformed into 1 to 7 responses; b) the independent variable is slipped into four categorical groups; c) the total sample is separated into four independent groups.

The table below resumes the results of the statistical tests performed for the one to four hypotheses. The development of statistical analysis will be developed further ahead. All four hypotheses were accepted.

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Table 5.1 - Hypothesis Testing (H1 to H4)

		ANOVA F		p-	Decisio
		Kruskal-Wallis H	df	value.	n
H1 - Brand Awareness	Kruskal-Wallis	29,293	3	<,001	Accept
H2 - Brand Loyalty	Kruskal-Wallis	67,834	3	<,001	Accept
H3 - Perceived Quality	Kruskal-Wallis	56,162	3	<,001	Accept
H4a - Perceived Value	Kruskal-Wallis	40,620	3	<,001	Accept
H4b - Brand Personality	ANOVA	8,684	3	<,001	Accept
H4c – Organisational Associations	Kruskal-Wallis	63,361	3	<,001	Accept

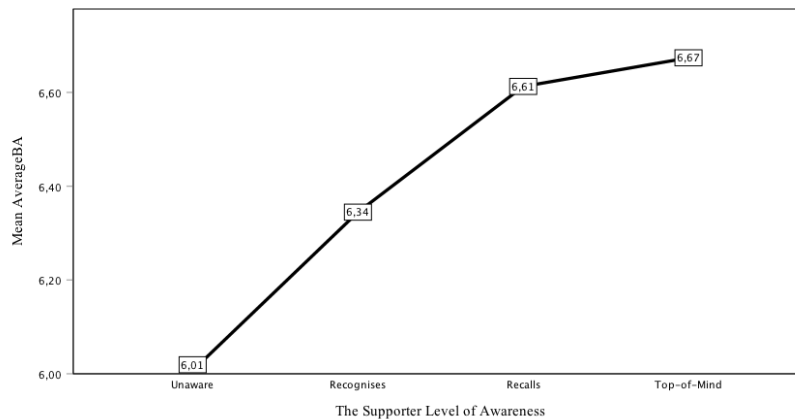
Source: Developed by the author

To further understand how sports sponsorship impacts each one of the dependent variables, a descriptive analysis helps analyse the data retrieved from the tests.

H1: Brand Awareness is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship → accepted

The first hypothesis investigates whether Sponsorship positively influences Brand Awareness of the sponsor brand. The goal was to understand if when a supporter is aware of the sponsorship between the beer brand and their favourite football club, Super Bock for FC Porto and Sporting and Sagres for SL Benfica, it will impact the level of awareness they have for the sponsor brand (Super Bock/ Sagres). This hypothesis was accepted since $H(3) = 29,293$, $p. value = 0,001 < 0,05$.

Simple Line Mean of AverageBA by The Supporter Level of Awareness



Graph 5.1- Average Brand Awareness by the Supporter's Level of Awareness of the Sponsor

Source: Developed by the author

Graph 5.1 shows that the average Brand Awareness varies with the level of supporter-sponsor awareness. For example, when a supporter recalls the sponsor brand or identifies it as top-of-mind, they have a higher Brand Awareness score of the sponsor brand since supporters who recall the beer brand as a sponsor have a Brand Awareness average of 6,61 and those who recall it as top-of-mind have an average of 6,67. On the other side, the average Brand Awareness of Super Bock/ Sagres is 6,01 for supporters unaware that those brands sponsor their team. Still, it can be assumed that Super Bock and Sagres both have a high level of awareness since the average is always more than 6.

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Table 5.2. Post Hoc test - Pairwise Comparisons of The Supporter Level of Awareness – Average Brand Awareness

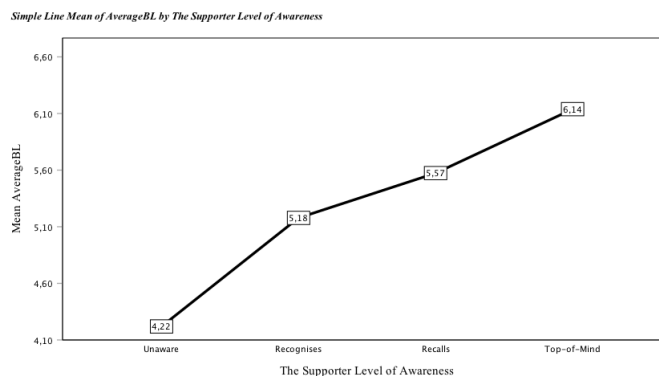
Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Sig.
Unaware-Recognises	-33,674	,035
Unaware-Recalls	-60,264	<,001
Unaware-Top-of-Mind	-65,722	<,001
Recognises-Recalls	-26,591	,078
Recognises-Top-of-Mind	-32,049	,047
Recalls-Top-of-Mind	-5,458	,675

Source: Developed by the author

Additionally, a post hoc test was conducted to assess which groups of variables had significantly different means between the pairs (table 5.2). Through the Dunn post hoc test, there was statistical evidence (sig. <0,05) that supporters unaware of the sponsorship have significantly different levels of awareness from all the others. Therefore, those unaware of the sponsorship have lower Brand Awareness of the beer brands, concluding that Brand Awareness is positively influenced by the Sports Sponsorship between Super Bock and FC Porto/ Sporting CP and Sagres and SL Benfica. It was proved with statistical significance.

H2: Brand Loyalty is positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship → accepted

For the second hypothesis, Brand Loyalty was studied as a dependent variable. The three items of Brand Loyalty focused on assessing the supporters' commitment to the brand. The Kruskal-Wallis test proved significant statistical variability of loyalty between the different groups, $H(3) = 67,834$, p. value is lower than 0,001 (Sig. <0,001 < $\alpha=0,05$). Then, proving that at least one of the supporter's sub-groups has a significantly different mean of Brand Loyalty.



Graph 5.2. Average Brand Loyalty by the Supporter's Level of Awareness of the Sponsor

Source: Developed by the author

Additionally, when analysing Brand Loyalty means per sub-group, it is possible to understand that the higher the level of Awareness, the higher the Brand Loyalty average. Graph 5.2. demonstrates the four sub-groups Brand Loyalty Average towards the sponsor of their team (Super Bock or Sagres), revealing a gap of almost 1 point between the average of the supporters who are unaware of the sponsor brand and the ones that at-least recognise the sponsor brand.

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Table 5.3. Post Hoc test - Pairwise Comparisons of The Supporter Level of Awareness – Average Brand Loyalty

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Sig.
Unaware-Recognises	-62,428	<,001
Unaware-Recalls	-83,749	<,001
Unaware-Top-of-Mind	-127,440	<,001
Recognises-Recalls	-21,320	,213
Recognises-Top-of-Mind	-65,012	<,001
Recalls-Top-of-Mind	-43,692	,003

Source: Developed by the author

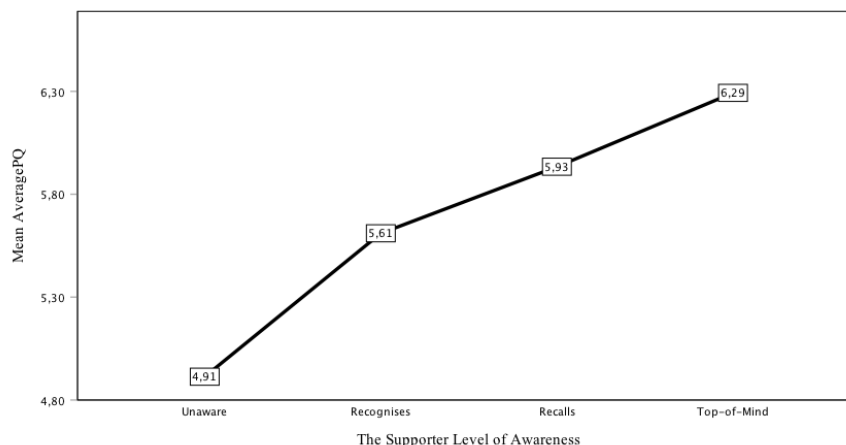
As a complementary analysis (table 5.2), Dunn’s post hoc test confirms that supporters of FC Porto and Sporting CP that were unaware of Super Bock sponsorship and SL Benfica fans who were unaware of Sagres’ had significantly different means from the supporters of the same team with sponsorship awareness. On the other hand, supporters who recalled the brands as top-of-mind have higher levels of Brand Awareness. Therefore, being unaware of the sponsorship impacts the supporters' Brand Loyalty.

Thus, the hypothesis was accepted statistically with significance, concluding that Brand Loyalty is positively influenced by the Sports Sponsorship between the beer brands and the football teams.

H3: Perceived Quality is positively influenced by the Sports Sponsorship → accepted

The third hypothesis had Perceived Quality as a dependent variable. The Kruskal-Wallis test results were similar to the previous hypothesis since it verified the variability of quality perception between the different supporters’ groups, $H(3) = 56,162$, $p. value = 0,001 < 0,05$. Thus, it is proved that at least one of the supporter’s sub-groups has a significantly different mean.

Simple Line Mean of AveragePQ by The Supporter Level of Awareness



Graph 5.3. Average Perceived Quality by the Supporter’s Level of Awareness of the Sponsor

Source: Developed by the author

In graph 5.3, supporters’ perception of quality is higher among the sub-groups aware of the sponsorship, with averages of above 5,5. Also, the supporters who are unaware still have a positive perception of quality. However, the average is considerably lower than the other three sub-groups.

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Table 5.4. Post hoc test - Pairwise Comparisons of The Supporter Level of Awareness - Average Perceived Quality

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Sig.
Unaware-Recognises	-52,694	,003
Unaware-Recalls	-74,459	<,001
Unaware-Top-of-Mind	-115,042	<,001
Recognises-Recalls	-21,765	,200
Recognises-Top-of-Mind	-62,348	<,001
Recalls-Top-of-Mind	-40,583	,006

Source: Developed by the author

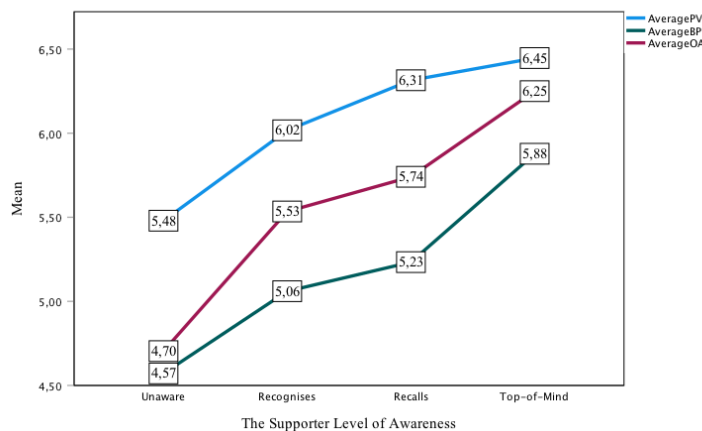
Table 5.4 shows the pairwise comparison between each sub-group. Through Dunn's test, it is possible to highlight that supporters who recall as top-of-mind or who are unaware have different means from the other three groups, indicating that the level of awareness impacts the quality perception. So, there is a positive relationship between sponsorship awareness and Perceived Quality assets.

The third hypothesis is accepted since the Supporter's perception of quality is positively impacted by their awareness of the Sports Sponsorship with statistical significance.

H4(a to c): Brand Associations are positively influenced by Sports Sponsorship → accepted

For the fourth hypothesis, three different variables were studied as dependent variables. First, Perceived Value focuses on evaluating the perception of the quantitative value of the sponsor brand from the perspective of the supporters. The second variable, Brand Personality, focused on assessing respondents' opinions on beer Brand Personality. Finally, the last variable was focused on associations the supporters had with the organisation that owned the brand. A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted for the first and last variables, and an ANOVA analysis was performed for the second. For all, the hypotheses were approved since the p. value is lower than 0,05.

Multiple Line Mean of AveragePV, Mean of AverageBP, Mean of AverageOA by The Supporter Level of Awareness...



Graph 5.4. Average Brand Associations Assets by the Supporter's Level of Awareness of the Sponsor

Source: Developed by the author

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Graph 5.4 represents the means for each sub-group filtered by the three variables in the study. A lower supporter's level of awareness of the sponsorship represents a lower brand equity assets average. The supporter has high Perceived Value and Organisational Associations averages. However, for the third variable, Brand Personality, the averages are relatively lower. It still is possible to see the different averages for all the sub-groups in the study.

Table 5.5. Post hoc test - Pairwise Comparisons of The Supporter Level of Awareness - Average Perceived Value

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test	
	Statistic	Sig.
Unaware-Recognises	-47,628	,006
Unaware-Recalls	-72,772	<,001
Unaware-Top-of-Mind	-88,712	<,001
Recognises-Recalls	-25,144	,125
Recognises-Top-of-Mind	-41,084	,019
Recalls-Top-of-Mind	-15,940	,258

Source: Developed by the author

Table 5.6. Post hoc - Pairwise Comparisons of The Supporter Level of Awareness - Average Organisational Associations

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test	
	Statistic	Sig.
Unaware-Recognises	-62,249	<,001
Unaware-Recalls	-74,015	<,001
Unaware-Top-of-Mind	-124,232	<,001
Recognises-Recalls	-11,766	,492
Recognises-Top-of-Mind	-61,983	<,001
Recalls-Top-of-Mind	-50,217	<,001

Source: Developed by the author

For the H4a and H4c, the post hoc complementary analysis shows significant means difference between all the pairs, except the sub-groups "Recognise" and "Recall". Meaning that supporters who are aware of the beer brand as a sponsor think the brand has more quantitative value and respect the organisation more. On the other hand, the supporter who does not recognise the sponsor brand has lower values of perception about it. (Tables 5.5 and 5.6)

Table 5.7. Descriptive ANOVA - Average Brand Personality

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Unaware	98	4,5714	1,77468	,17927
Recognises	58	5,0603	1,78217	,23401
Recalls	135	5,2333	1,87362	,16126
Top-of-Mind	94	5,8777	1,66992	,17224
Total	385	5,1961	1,83956	,09375

Source: Developed by the author

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP ON BRAND EQUITY

An ANOVA test was performed for the Brand Personality variable, and a descriptive analysis was added as a supplementary. In the descriptive tables below, the conclusions are very similar to the other two brand association variables. The higher level of sponsor awareness, the higher the mean value of Brand Personality, which means that sports sponsorship plays a big part in defining the supporter association with the sponsor Brand Personality.

All the sub-hypotheses of Brand Associations proved that sports sponsorship statistically impacts the supporters' perception of the brand with significance.

H5(a to d): Supporter brand love is acting as a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and the brand equity assets

For the fifth hypothesis, a multiple linear regression will be used to assess the possibility supporter's brand love is acting as a mediator between the dependent variable consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) assets (X) and the independent variable sports sponsorship (Y) through the mediator variable has on the relationship Supporter's brand love for their team (M). The goal of the multiple linear regression is to assess if the relationship between the dependent (brand equity asset) and the independent variable (sponsorship awareness) is statistically significant by adding the mediator variable to the model (brand love scale), see figure 5.1 below.

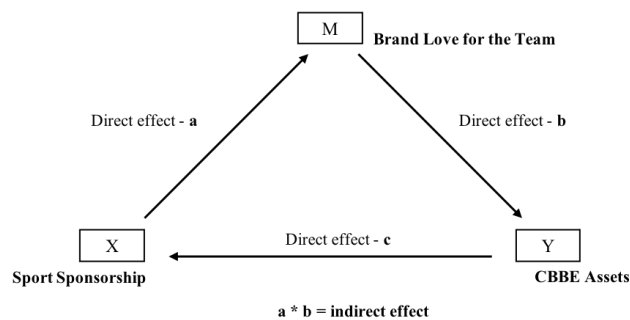


Figure 5.1. Illustration of the Mediation Effect in the study

Source: Developed by the author

This figure illustrates how a Mediation effect works. There are four steps to assess it (Baron & Kenny, 2020):

- 1) The direct effect between the dependent variable was studied to confirm if it is statistically significant. If not, the analysis should be abandoned.
- 2) Determine the value of **a**: the direct effect of sports sponsorship on the mediator variable.
- 3) A Multiple Line Regression was conducted where the independent variable and mediator were added as independent predictors of the brand equity assets. Then, the **b** values were determined by retrieving the values of the β test value on the direct effect on each brand equity asset by the mediator, and the value **c** was the value of the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent one.

- 4) The **a** value was multiplied by the **b** value to calculate the indirect effect. Finally, a Sobel Test was performed through an online platform to assess the statistical significance of the indirect effect of X on Y when the mediator was added to the model.

For the first step, six simple linear regressions were conducted. For all the brand equity assets, it was proved that sports sponsorship had a positive direct effect that was statistically significant. Therefore, the study could advance to step 2), chapter 9—appendix H.

In step 2, all the different values of **a** were determined through the β (estimated regression coefficients) of the direct effect sports sponsorship has on supporters’ brand love. All the direct effects were proved with statistical significance. For step 3, a Multiple linear Regression was led to determine the direct effects and the value of **b**, which is β , the effect value between the mediator variable and the dependent one. Below can be seen the table with all the **a** and **b** values, the std. Deviations and the significant importance of maintaining each independent variable in the models.

Table 9.21, chapter 9—appendix H. shows the values of **a**, **b** and **c** for each brand equity asset. For all cases, the regressed value of X on Y was either non-significant or smaller than the direct effect before adding M. Thus, by adding M, the direct effect of X on Y is weaker or non-existing.

Consequently, for step four, the significance of the indirect effect should be studied to assess the significance of the multiple linear regression results. Therefore, a Sobel test should be conducted for all the variables to confirm the **c** values statistical evidence.

Table 5.8. Sobel Test to assess the Indirect Effect Statistical Significance

<i>Sobel Test</i>	C - Value	Test Statistic	Std. Error	P- Value
Brand Awareness	0,348147	4,681	0,074	0,000
Brand Loyalty	0,921498	2,680	0,229	0,007
Perceived Quality	0,658377	3,038	0,156	0,002
Perceived Value	0,458451	5,098	0,082	0,000
Brand Personality	0,883581	6,284	0,141	0,000
Organisational Associations	0,883581	6,679	0,099	0,000

Source: Kristopher J. Preacher (2022) - quantpsy.org/sobel/sobel.htm - *p.* value <0,05

The Sobel test was performed through an online platform Quantpsy, developed by Quantitative university methods PhD professor Kristopher J. Preacher. The Sobel test proved their significance for all the **c** values in the study since the *p.* value is smaller than 0,05 (Preacher & Leonardelli, 2010; Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021). Therefore, all the hypotheses were accepted, table 5.8. Supporter brand love is a mediator variable of the effect between sports sponsorship and brand equity assets. By adding supporter brand love data to the model, sports sponsorship effect on all the different brand equity assets is weaker or non-existing. For Brand Awareness and Brand Personality, there is an effect of full mediation, but for the four others, it is partial mediation.

Now that all the results have been presented, it is necessary to discuss them and compare them to the conclusions retrieved from the literature review and find the academic and managerial implications, limitations, and future research.

6 DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the previous results of the data analysis. All the proposed hypotheses were accepted, confirming that sports sponsorship impacts consumer-based brand equity. However, through the Mediation analysis, supporters' love for their team was proved to play a key role in sponsorship impact on brand equity assets.

As learned in the literature review, congruence is essential for football supporters to be impacted by sponsorship. In this study, congruence level was assessed, confirming that beer is perceived as a part of football supporters' rituals. Portuguese supporters identified common ground between beer and football, and participants affirmed that the act of drinking beer and watching football are related. Also, football and beer are associated with social behaviour intrinsically connected to Portuguese football, as Duarte and Brinca (2018) mentioned.

Chebli and Gharbi (2014) confirmed that sponsorship success depends on congruence between the sponsor and sponsee. It is followed by sharing a common audience, having a level of proximity and understandable reasoning behind the partnership (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014). The online interview participants confirmed that the level of congruence is perceptible, agreeing that there is recognised reasoning for the partnership. Moreover, the survey confirmed football supporters' drinking frequency; 207 out of 387 participants agreed to drink beer Often, Very Often or Frequently.

Furthermore, sponsorship efficiency depends on the supporter's close relationship with the sports entity. Consequently, it is important to assess their image perception and relationship with their team. The stronger the connection, the more open supporters will be to the sponsorship. A supporter that spends more time in contact with the team has more chances of being exposed to the sponsorship. Therefore, the supporters that buy more official shirts of their teams, watch more games, or have higher social media interactions are impacted by the sponsor brand to a higher degree. (Biscaia et al., 2014)

The brand love scale assessed the supporter's love for their team while investigating their club-related behaviour. Of the 387 supporters that answered the survey, 258 had a high brand love for their team. Also, most supporters are in contact with their football team daily. Either by talking about it, watching their games (live or broadcast) or buying their merchandise.

Literature review evidenced that supporters' positive perception is crucial for sports organisations, as their business depends significantly on supporters' overall approval of the team and their assets. Moreover, football teams keep assessing their supporters' opinions, focusing on strategies beyond sports to impact them positively. (Biscaia et al., 2013; P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Melovic et al., 2019). In

the last decades, this has been evident through the team's social media interactions with the fans, a strategy that goes beyond the football performance of the team to impact their fans.

Consequently, like football teams, sponsorship depends on supporters' perceptions to impact them effectively. Furthermore, an efficient sponsorship strategy depends on the relationship between the sponsee and the sponsor /supporter (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014) and Brand Awareness (Henseler et al., 2007). Therefore, sponsorship is evaluated by its impact on supporters' awareness levels.

Sponsorship awareness is not achieved if the sponsor brand is not recognised or if the supporter does not recall the brand or does not have an image associated with it. (Biscaia et al., 2014) The data analysis proved that supporters had a great overall level of sponsor Brand Awareness. Therefore, the beer brand partnership with the "big three" Portuguese football teams shows excellent exposure and impact on their target audience.

The study's objective was to verify if sports sponsorship is impacting the brand equity assets, being the goal to differentiate scores of supporters who are unaware of the sponsor brand from those who are aware. As mentioned in the previous chapter, there is a significant difference between supporters' sponsor awareness levels. Therefore, those not aware of the sponsorship have lower brand equity scores. Suggesting supporters who are not impacted by the sponsorship have lower levels of brand equity, which will impact their Purchase Intentions, follows the conclusions of other authors (Andres & Prantl, 2012; Biscaia et al., 2013; Chieng & Lee, 2011; Magalhães Oliveira, 2019; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020).

Brand Awareness was focused on assessing the supporter's familiarity with the brand. In parallelism with Keller's (2001) CBBE Pyramid, the construct assesses which brand the consumer recalled when thinking about a specific product class or need. Also, supporters' familiarity with the brand proves that the identification level is achieved. On Keller's pyramid, the basis is brand salience, which symbolizes customer awareness (Keller, 2001).

Through the results, it is possible to understand on average, respondents who are aware of the sponsorship agree to be familiar with the brand. Therefore, the supporters impacted by the sponsorship have a higher probability of identifying it when considering the product category. Therefore, it was proved that the sponsors' brands, Sagres and Super Bock, are achieving their brand salience goal among supporters of the football teams.

The second brand equity asset being studied was Brand Loyalty, which was also proved to have a significant difference between aware and unaware supporters. The supporters with a higher level of sponsor awareness have higher Brand Loyalty scores, which meets the conclusions of other authors that Brand Loyalty is positively influenced by sports sponsorship (Aissa & Matar, 2016; Biscaia et al., 2014; Burton & Chadwick, 2019).

Brand Loyalty was proposed to the participants to evaluate their favouritism for the sponsor brand over substitutes or competitors. For Keller (2001), Brand Loyalty incorporates the brand's goal at the top of the CBBE pyramid. By achieving behaviour loyalty, meaning knowing a consumer will opt for a certain brand over others, the brand creates an authentic, intense and active bond. The study results

suggested that supporters who recall the sponsor as top-of-mind have a greater attachment to it. Therefore, when facing a particular product category, there is a higher chance that the sponsor brand would be their first and only choice.

Silva and Veríssimo (2019) have similar conclusions about Brand Awareness (in their study is called brand identification) and Brand Loyalty in the Portuguese sports sponsorship market. They proved there is a relationship between team identification, team loyalty and Purchase Intentions, which indicates that by identifying the brand and having higher levels of Brand Loyalty, the supporters are more likely to have higher Purchase Intentions than those whom the sponsor does not impact

The third brand equity asset studied was Perceived Quality, assessing the supporter's approval of the product features. The data analysis shows that supporters with higher awareness levels have higher average quality perception scores. Thus, sponsorship awareness impacts the participants' quality opinion, which follows the literature review findings that sports sponsorship impacts consumer perception of quality. (Aissa & Matar, 2016; Biscaia et al., 2013; Buil et al., 2008; P. M. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Donlan, 2014)

Perceived Quality is one of the assets Keller focuses on in the second block of his CBBE pyramid, divided into brand judgments and feelings. Quality is part of the brand judgement part. (Keller, 2001). Keller states that the primary goal of any brand should be to have positive responses, regardless of the reasoning behind it. It can be more judgemental or sentimental. What matters is that the consumer likes the brand attributes. A positive perception, opinion and evaluation from consumers will positively affect consumer behaviour towards the brand, leading to a positive brand response.

Therefore, the supporters who identified the sponsor brand are more likely to have positive responses like loyalty, preference or Purchase Intentions. This conclusion meets Chien and Cornwell's (2005) and Aissa and Matar's (2016). Therefore, the sponsored entity positively influences consumer judgements and feelings, impacting the consumer's Purchase Intentions.

Finally, the last asset of brand equity, brand associations, was assessed, split into three: Perceived Value, Brand Personality and Organisational Associations. Perceived Value focused on evaluating the brand's worth from the participants' point of view. Brand Personality assesses the human characteristics of the supporter associated with the brand. At the same time, Organisational Associations were focused on the associations generated by the organisation's supporters that produced the sponsor brand.

For all these sub-assets, the hypotheses were confirmed, proving the results of different studies about brand associations, brand imagery and consumer perceptions of the brand. For example, a supporter that is highly exposed to the sponsor brand has higher brand associations than those who do not even recognise the sponsor brand. (Biscaia et al., 2013; P. M. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Pappu et al., 2005; Donlan, 2014)

Those associations can be functional and abstract, the first related to the brand performance and the second to the brand imagery. The brand performance associations will ultimately influence the brand's position in the market. (Keller, 2003). While brand imagery is related to the consumer's psychological

or social needs, generating the personification of the brand in the consumer's mind, adding human value and emotions. Therefore, it impacts the way consumer relates to the brand.

So, it is suggested that by having higher scores of brand associations, the supporters who identified the sponsor brand have higher knowledge about the brand attributes and a better brand image. Therefore, positioning it higher than a competitor. (Ovidiu, 2005)

All the hypotheses assessing sports sponsorship's positive influence on brand equity assets were confirmed. However, it was left to study what played a decisive role in that relationship. Several studies mention the importance of supporters' relationship with their team importance. No sponsorship will be efficient if it focuses on impacting a target that does not have a connection with the sponsored entity.

Supporters who love their team have higher chances of perceiving it as part of themselves. Often, supporters who reach a high level of commitment to their team tend to follow it more, having higher chances of being impacted by any communication that involves the team. So, for them, sponsorship is valued since they will have more chances of being in contact with it, being more likely to form better perceptions about the brand. (Herrmann et al., 2016)

The study assessed the supporter's love for the team as a mediator of the relationship between sports sponsorship and brand equity assets. The relationship between the sponsor brand and each one of the assets was proved to be significant, meaning sponsorship has a direct effect on the supporter value perception of the team. Therefore, it meets the previous conclusions. However, the goal was to study if, by adding the supporter's love for their team, the sponsorship was still significantly justifying the brand equity assets results.

Different conclusions were retrieved. The supporters' love for their team acts as a full mediator for Brand Awareness and Brand Personality, but for the other four assets, it acts as a partial mediator. While sports sponsorship's indirect influence on Brand Awareness or Brand Personality is only significant through supporters' love for the team, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality, Perceived Value and Organisational Associations, it is only helping to justify the effect relationship.

Thus, the supporters' love for their team plays a decisive role in the sponsorship relationship with the brand equity assets. It is an external factor regarding sponsorship strategy since the sponsor does not have the power to control this aspect, but it helps explain how the sponsorship impacts the supporters. If the supporters have higher love for their team, they will most likely have better value perceptions about the sponsor. (Biscaia et al., 2013; Henseler et al., 2007).

Furthermore, a study indicates that the supporter's level of identification helps explain how the sponsorship is observed and how it will affect the audience to become a sponsor consumer. Therefore, the more they identify with the team, the higher the exposure and awareness, which will later positively impact the purchase decisions (Biscaia et al., 2014).

The next chapter will analyse the study's contributions, applications and limitations.

7 CONCLUSIONS

In the following chapter, the study's conclusion will be presented by keeping in mind the theoretical contributions, the managerial implication, and the study's limitations. Also, future research will address this by guiding investigators through the gaps in the field and the conclusion this study did not reach.

7.1 Theoretical contributions

The study's main objective was to investigate the importance of sponsorship for sports while identifying the repercussions it has on the consumer perception of a brand. Practically, what was assessed was the possibility that sports sponsorship was impacting consumer-based brand equity.

Through the study, it was possible to identify how other authors define an efficient sports sponsorship strategy. Through state-of-the-art, several variables were described by authors as crucial for a sponsorship strategy to be efficient. First, sponsorship will be impactful when there is a common audience for both and a detectable level of congruence between the sponsor and sponsee. Moreover, the sponsorship's reasoning must be understandable to the consumers, which implies the consumer has to approve it. Therefore, the first conclusion retrieved was that sponsorship depends on congruence level, common audience, perceptible reasoning and audience approval of the sponsorship (Brochado et al., 2018; P. Chien & Cornwell, 2005; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020).

Additionally, the second assumption retrieved from the literature review was that sponsorship would never impact the desirable target if they have no level of connection with the sports entity (Velicia Martín et al., 2020). Thus, there must be a visible connection between the sponsee and the target consumer.

Furthermore, sports sponsorship depends on exposure and recognition (Biscaia et al., 2014). That is, for a sponsor brand to impact its audience, it will need to be recognised or recalled by the supporter of the sports entity being sponsored. Therefore, the first question to assess sports sponsorship is, “are you aware of the X sponsor of the sports entity you follow?”. If the supporters are not aware of the sponsor brand in question means they were not impacted by it (Biscaia et al., 2013; Branscombe & Wann, 1993; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020; Velicia Martín et al., 2020)

Only by respecting these assumptions can the sponsorship be effective, thus having more chances of impacting Purchase Intentions. Therefore, the consumer-based brand equity assets need to be influenced to impact Purchase Intentions, acting as the connection point between sponsorship and brand equity. (Magalhães Oliveira, 2019; Silva & Veríssimo, 2020) Many studies focused on assessing brand image, Brand Loyalty, Brand Awareness, purchase intention or quantitative KPIs. Nevertheless, few focused on analysing the brand equity assets defined by Aaker (1991).

The second part of the literature review focused on defining Consumer-Based Brand Equity and identifying the best metrics when evaluating brand equity. Consumer-based brand equity studies focus on understanding the added advantages and disadvantages of a product or service by a particular brand

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from the consumer's perspective (Keller, 2001). Each brand has its value, either an asset or a liability, depending on how the consumer senses it. Brand equity assets or liabilities directly affect the buyer's purchase behaviour, willingness to pay extra for a particular brand, a choice between a preferred brand and others, or the buyer recommending the brand to their peers (Keller, 1993).

Aaker (1991, 1996) focused on five main variables to assess if the consumer considered them an asset or liability for the brand. The five metrics are Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality, brand association and other companies' assets. On the other hand, Keller (2001; 2003) focused on assessing how to build a strong brand that impacts the goal of consumer resonance. In other words, Aaker created a way of assessing the brand perception by the consumer, while Keller focused on guiding brands to achieve success.

Most authors pick Aaker's model (1991) as the basis to assess the consumers about the brand when doing quantitative research. Many scales focus on developing the best metrics to assess the different assets. For example, the scale was applied to 387 football supporters of the three biggest teams in Portugal to measure their perception of the different brand equity assets.

Important conclusions were retrieved for the research field. First, sponsorship was assessed through brand recall and recognition, meaning the sponsorship was considered impactful when the supporters were aware of it. Sponsorship recall and recognition helped measure average Portuguese awareness of the sponsorship of their favourite football teams. Also, it is a practical way of understanding the different levels of sponsorship awareness. Through these, it was proven that Portuguese football supporters are aware of the sponsorship at high levels.

Furthermore, another important conclusion for the field was retrieved through quantitative research. Sports sponsorship positively impacts brand equity assets, which proves what other authors suggested. This conclusion will be constructive for researchers that want to assess how the sponsorship will lead to purchase intention. (Aissa & Matar, 2016; Andres & Prantl, 2012; B. T. Cornwell et al., 2001; Wang, 2017)

Additionally, by putting together the conclusions of the quantitative research and literature review, it could be possible to define a three-step sponsorship strategy. The first step would be to identify a sports entity with a common audience with the brand and verify the congruence level within the audience by assessing their overall approval of the partnership. The second step is ensuring that the supporter has a real relationship with the sports entity, thus having a higher chance of being impacted by the sponsorship content. Finally, the last step would be to confirm that the four brand equity assets are being positively influenced by sports sponsorship. If these three steps are confirmed, the researcher there can study the possibility that sponsorship is impacting the Purchase Intentions of the supporter of the sponsored brand.

In the quantitative research, there was another conclusion, supporters' love for their team was proved to have a Mediation effect on the relationship between sponsorship and brand equity assets.

Therefore, the supporter's involvement with their favourite football team should be considered when investigating if sponsorship impacts brand equity assets or purchase intention.

All these conclusions can assist other researchers on how to assess sponsorship effectiveness. Sponsorship has more suitable scales to evaluate how the sponsorship impacts the consumers. Now that the theoretical contributions have been assessed, it is crucial to retrieve conclusions that could be important for companies or organisations to implement.

7.2 Managerial implications

The organizations' primary objective is to make a Brand with a significant heritage for the consumer, which makes them identify a series of benefits on their mind when thinking about it. The ultimate goal is to be the brand they think about when facing a need (Keller, 1993, 2001). Many studies give information on how to assess any marketing tool focusing on quantitative results—being undeniable that marketing depends on numbers for managers and companies to make equitable strategic decisions. (Jensen & Cobbs, 2014; Melovic et al., 2019; Netemeyer et al., 2004)

However, marketing still depends on consumers to have sales. Even though they represent numbers for companies, they are also an effective way of assessing how the company is positioned in the market. This study focused on consumer perception of the brand, giving concrete results on consumer-based brand equity, which can be transformed into learnings on what is done and what can be improved. The goal of the study was to evaluate sponsorship from the consumer perspective. (Aaker, 1991; Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012)

Sponsorship is still one of the most effective marketing strategies to impact consumer minds. Sponsorship in sports, in particular, is a ubiquitous marketing tool whose main objective is to use the exposure of the sports entity and impact the target audience effectively and positively. In some cases, the synergy between the two entities goes beyond investment and exposure, highlighting both commonalities as instinctive associations. As a result, consumers automatically associate with another entity when they think about one sponsor/ sponsee (Biscaia et al., 2013, 2014).

Additionally, football generates strong feelings among fans, connecting to the supporter's emotional side (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020). Sports are intangible, uncertain, temporary, practical and subjective, making it impossible to predict the result/ performance (Tsiotsou, 2016). Moreover, sports entities' success is based on unpredictable variables, like winning games. Most times, consumer motivation is harder to impact since they depend on the performance of the athletes. Additionally, success also depends on the unpredictable performance of the rivalry. (Schlossberg, 1992).

Considering how important it was to assess sponsorship's impact on the consumer's mind, it is important to assess how it impacts the brand equity assets and the consumer's different opinions about the sponsor.

The study proved that Brand Awareness is impacted by sports sponsorship. When a consumer identifies the sponsor of their team, they will be more likely to be familiar with it, meaning that by being

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impacted by the sponsorship, there is a higher chance that the supporter will know the sponsor brand and therefore have a clear identification of its name, symbol and values. (Keller, 2001)

In the current high-competitive market environment, it is harder to retain consumers' honest attention, being unrealistic for brands to restrain their communication efforts to a particular communication tool (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012; Cornwell & Kwon, 2020). By knowing a company is successfully impacting Brand Awareness, the first objective is achieved, brand salience (Keller, 2001).

The study proved that Brand Awareness is impacted by sponsorship, which will impact brand performance. To achieve brand awareness, the beer brands had to be recognised and recall. The company had to communicate their brand attributes and generate positive associations between its name and attributes. Therefore, it is achieved supporter's familiarity. It is proven that consumers prefer a brand they are more familiar with over its competitors. Also, by noticing a brand, a consumer will automatically form an opinion or review about it, bringing a more substantial value to the brand (Aaker, 1991, 1996; Donlan, 2014)

In sum, Brand Awareness is the brand name's presence in the consumer's mind. Therefore, the supporter aware of the sponsored entity will be more likely to be a buyer than those unaware.

Furthermore, a brand's ultimate goal is to be the consumer's first choice. There will be many options for the consumer to choose from within a specific product category. It is important to know that the strategies chosen by the company are positively impacting the consumer's choice over a competitor. The study proves sponsorship impacts supporters' Brand Loyalty, Meaning the supporter will most likely choose the brand as their first option within a particular product category. (Keller, 2001)

Many authors defend the many benefits of Brand Loyalty, focusing on assessing how loyal consumers will be a certainty for the brand. Also, keeping a customer is more profitable than looking for new leads. Devoted consumer is a reliable source of income because they make regular and recurring purchases. Additionally, it symbolizes profit for distributors like supermarkets too. Therefore they are more inclined to give space to that brand over competitors. (Aaker, 1991)

Additionally, committed consumers spread the word about the brand, bringing in new customers. Therefore it will give the business some leeway if changes need to be made to the brand to acquire a competitive edge because most customers take time to switch to a rival. (Aaker, 1991)

The research study's third conclusion was that sponsorship significantly impacted Perceived Quality. Supporters who are aware of their team's sponsor have a better opinion about its product features than those not aware that the brand is a sponsor of their team.

The strategic importance of Perceived Quality for businesses is related to how crucial it is for customers to positively perceive a brand's product performance. Because consumers frequently lack brand knowledge, a company's reputation for quality is a sufficient justification for a customer's purchase. High-Perceived Quality supports elevating the brand's market positioning. The perception of the brand as premium or low-cost affects purchasing decisions. Additionally, distribution channels are

impacted by it, not just the consumers. The stakeholders may be interested in giving an excellent brand more attention, making it more affordable, or even increasing traffic. (Aaker, 1996; Donlan, 2014)

The brand will benefit from consumers' Perceived Quality as an integrated approach, among other brand attributes. A powerful Brand Awareness approach will be useless if the brand is not noticed as high quality. (Aaker, 1996)

Finally, brand associations were assessed based on Perceived Value, Brand Personality and Organisational Associations. All those assets were proved to be positively impacted by the sponsorship. Brand associations are the different qualities consumers consider when thinking about the brand. Since associations are how consumers remember brands, they can affect their decisions. Also, to be distinguished in the market, a single association can be crucial. While it can be challenging to tell substitute brands apart from one another, an association might help the consumers make judgments on them. (Aaker, 1991, 1996)

Additionally, a positive association can motivate purchase because it prompts consumers to consider why they should choose that brand by influencing their feelings or attitudes. For example, some brands can cause consumers to think of pleasant memories, which causes them to associate thoughts or attitudes with the brand. As a result, associations give other brand extensions meaning. (Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004)

Overall, the study focused on evidence from Portugal, and Portuguese supporters are active and passionate. Over the years, Portuguese football fans have established themselves as an essential part of their team. The popularity of football in Portugal excites followers because it appeals to their sentimental side and fosters strong bonds with their favourite teams. Many writers emphasize the unique characteristics of football supporters, comparing fan identification with addiction or devotion. Portuguese supporters are hardly an exception; their fervent support for their club is evident and influences how customers behave. Even the level of relationship between clubs and fans is regarded as expanding, leading to higher levels of dedication, loyalty, and trust. (Biscaia et al., 2014; Brochado et al., 2018; Sá & Sá, 2008)

Several authors who have studied the topic further developed a scale to evaluate the degree of fan love. For example, higher love for the team is influenced by team success, so the more successful the team is, the greater the expectation placed on the team. Additionally, the more invested a fan is in the sport, the more time or money they are willing to devote to it. (Silva & Veríssimo, 2020; Velicia Martín et al., 2020)

According to studies (Velicia Martn et al., 2020), these brand love traits favour consumer loyalty, willingness to invest, and word-of-mouth advertising. Therefore, it is critical for businesses operating in the sports market to understand Brand Love among fans. In addition, because fans are more likely to spend money on goods, services, or affiliations associated with their preferred sports, team, or athlete, they identify more closely with the team.

The team's fan base's affiliation is a critical factor in the sponsorship strategy. Although it might be considered an external issue in terms of sponsorship strategy, since the brand has no control over this element, it is a crucial factor affecting brand equity assets. If the team's fans are devoted, they are more likely to be inclined to invest in and be devoted to the team's sponsor, which will affect sponsor purchasing intentions.

It has been demonstrated in the research that fans' love for their team has a meditative influence on their relationship with sponsorship and brand equity assets. Therefore, the fan's involvement with their preferred football club should be considered when determining whether sponsorship impacts brand equity assets or purchase intention.

Moreover, the study conclusions impact how sponsor organizations should prioritize their financial gain and effective asset management. The relationship between fans and the club/team should be a focus. By considering the fans' perception of the team, the company can define strategies that target that passion and become more profitable. An example is understanding the value the supporters cherish on their teams in mirroring them. The values can be regionality, sociality, colours, moment, and behaviour between others. The sponsor must show the supporters they know what it is to be part of that relationship. (Biscaia et al., 2014; Lin & Bruning, 2020)

The study conclusions were proved for the universe in the study, Portuguese football supporters of the "big three" football clubs, FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP. First, however, it is vital to identify the limitation of the study and suggest a path to enrich the sports marketing research field for future researchers.

Concludingly, for the supporters with higher brand love for their team, Sagres's and Super Bock's sponsorship of FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP is impacting supporters' Brand Awareness (familiarity) which creates robust, favourable and unique Brand Associations, leading to positive brand image, including quality perceptions. Consequently, it also creates a valid, intense and active bond between the customer and the brand, which can be interpreted as brand loyalty. Thus, sports sponsorship intensively impacts the consumer-based brand equity of supporters who love their team.

7.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Despite efforts to avoid bias, every study has limitations and includes only pertinent data. The limitations of this study will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter; nevertheless, these constraints may also suggest new directions for future study.

The first limitation is the sports marketing field itself. Many external factors influence sports marketing. So, the success of sports entities depends on unpredictable and uncontrollable results, like winning games. Therefore, a conclusion may not fit all the teams in the universe when analysing a specific sample, like a team. A team with a higher success rate in the current paradigm might have supporters who are more willing to invest in it than teams in a worse situation. Thus, possible future research would assess how the team moment influences the supporter's love for the team, which impacts

how the sponsor is perceived. That way, conclusions can be taken by comparing teams which are in a healthier momentum with teams that are far from successful.

Another limitation concerns the time the data was retrieved, matching the above limitation. The data was retrieved after one of the clubs in the study became a national football champion. Therefore, their supporters might be more motivated than the others, making them more predisposed to support the team and its stakeholders, like the sponsor brands. Thus, suggesting that the state in which the team finds itself may interfere with the respondents' answers. Therefore, each group of supporters should answer the questionnaire in moments of similar sporting success for their team.

The construct of the questionnaire had limitations involving the software chosen. Google Forms software is free. Therefore, it does not incorporate essential features for this research. A critical limitation was respecting the two first questions, brand recall and brand recognition. Brand Recall was assessed by asking respondents to identify three different sponsors of their team by memory, while brand recognition, the second question, offered a list of companies for the respondent to identify the sponsor brand. Even though the questions were separated on different pages, limiting the possibility of the respondent looking at both simultaneously, the respondents were not restricted from returning to previous answers. Therefore, there might be a biased answer to the first question since respondents could check the list of the second question and come back to edit their answers. For subsequent studies, it is advised to use a more advanced data retrieval software that can restrict respondents from coming back to previous questions.

The methodology had some limitations due to a lack of resources, and the choice of online surveys led to self-selection bias. This phenomenon is related to online communities and their behaviour. Many internet users do not take the time to answer online inquiries. These people belong to a specific profile that will be poorly represented in the sample, even though they might belong to the study population (Bethlehem, 2010).

In addition, the sociodemographic indicate a lack of heterogeneity among two variables, area of residency and age. Lisboa e Vale do Tejo was the area of residence for most participants, not portraying the reality of Portugal. Also, most participants were under 36 years old, which is not representative of the Portuguese population. Most people answered the questionnaire through close contact with the student or a close social media sharing cycle, making it impossible to reach people from all sociodemographic realities. For future studies, it is suggested that the data collection method should be more comprehensive.

Additionally, the elements picked to act as the independent variable are from the same industry, beer. The possibility of assessing brand equity performance for sponsors from different industries should be considered for broader conclusions. Furthermore, the brands are highly known for the universe in the study. The two-beer brand in the study is the classical brand for Portugal beer consumers, being the first choice of most of the population. They have a high level of salience in the product category and generate value for the consumers. For future research, less familiar brands might be picked to confirm the results.

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Also, the study focused on retrieving evidence from Portugal. Given this, future research should focus on broader generalizability and consider various businesses and product categories. The creation of a universal brand equity scale will be aided by cross-continental research. An additional investigation should compare the brand equity of competing goods and services in various global contexts. Therefore, helping to retrieve relevant conclusions for a broader and more complex universe will help managers better understand the repercussion of sponsorship for any reality.

The scale chosen to assess supporter love for their team had to be adapted and reduced to ensure the participants were not abandoning the study. However, this can affect the relevance of the construct, making it a less reliable scale. Future research should assess the possibility of using the full scale and confirm that the conclusion of this study is not affected when adding more items to it.

The brand equity score results might show fragility since the scale was designed to inquire about a standardised sample, which means the sample is representative but belongs to one universe. In this study, the sample had three different groups with significantly different behaviours, showing that the universe in the study could be separated into three. FC Porto, SL Benfica and Sporting CP have different brand equity average scores. However, the study summed them all together. For future research, it is suggested to assess the three different groups alone by separating the three-team supporters into three different samples for the conclusions to be more reliable for each universe.

Supporters' brand love was used to test a Mediation relationship to assess the possibility that sports sponsorship is not influencing brand equity assets alone. It was confirmed through an online platform. However, many authors agree that the best method to test Mediation is through bootstrap on SPSS or another computer statistical software. For future research, this should be considered.

Also, there is a possibility that there are more mediators of the sponsorship relationship with the brand equity assets. For example, congruence level, familiarity with the sponsor brand, relationship with the product category or even brand image could be assessed as an intermediary of the sponsorship impact on brand equity assets. These variables can be added to future research.

Finally, it is suggested that positive brand equity scores influence consumer decisions by knowing that consumers are more likely to have superior purchase intention levels. However, this study did not confirm it. Also, there is a lack of validated scales in the field that study Purchase Intentions through positive brand equity perceptions. Thus, the possible future research designs a scale to assess it.

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9 APPENDIX

A. QUESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE ONLINE INTERVIEWS

Table 9.1 - Questions and conclusions of the online Interviews

Original Questions:	Decision:	Reason:
Age	Keep	
Area of Living	Keep	
Scholar level	Not relevant	It was not playing a decisive role in respondent's answers
Household annual salary	Not relevant	It was not playing a decisive role in respondent's answers
1. Football Team Supported	Keep	
2. Can you identify official sponsors for your club?	Divide into two: Recall (can you name 3 sponsors of your team); Recognition (Between a list of sponsors, can you identify your team's sponsors?)	
3. Do you think the relationship between beer brands and the football team makes sense? If yes, which ones?	Not relevant	It is a qualitative answer, not proper for an online survey
4. Can you understand why SAGRES and SUPER BOCK are sponsoring the Big 3? justify	Not relevant	It is a qualitative answer, not proper for an online survey
On a scale from 1 to 7, say if you agree with the following questions (1 - I totally disagree and 7 - I totally agree).		
1. Emotional connection	Keep	
2. Quality	Not relevant	Many similar responses across all groups. Feeling that everyone thinks their club has quality.
3. Brand Connection	Keep	
4. Intrinsic Rewards	Keep	
5. Thought	Keep	
6. Passion	Keep	
7. Loyalty	Not relevant	There is not much difference between the answers. Most football fans are loyal to their team.
8. MOM	Not relevant	There is not much difference between the answers. Fans of the team, even if not so interested, talk positively about the team they support to others.
9. Investment	Not relevant	There is not much difference between the answers. It does not differentiate the supporters. Similar to the "Thought" question.
On a scale from 1 to 7, say if you agree with the following questions (1 - I totally disagree and 7 - I totally agree).		
1. Brand Awareness	Keep. Although some respondents found the questions repetitive.	Repetitive group of questions. Many respondents answer the same for all sub-questions.
2. Perceived Quality	Keep	One question does not fit the product
3. Brand Loyalty	Keep	

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4. Perceived Value	Keep. Two questions are perceived as the same.	The answer among almost all respondents was similar for the second and fourth sub-questions
5. Brand Personality	Keep	
6. Organizational associations	Keep	

Source: Developed by the author

B. QUESTIONER

Table 9.2 - Questionnaire construct

Construct:	Dimension/ Components	Source/ Adapted
Team Identification/ Sponsor Recall & Recognition/ Awareness	TI_1: Is the Football Team supported? <i>Sponsor Brand Recall</i>	Biscaia, R.; Correia, A.; Ross, S.; Rosado, A. (2014)
	BR_1 Name an official sponsor	
	BR_2 Name an official sponsor	
	BR_3 Name an official sponsor <i>Sponsor Brand Recognition</i>	
	SRG_1 Identify among the following list the official sponsor/sponsors	
Brand Love scale applied to football teams	<i>Emotional attachment:</i>	
	Att_1 I Feel committed to my team	Adapted from: Palos-Sanchez, P. & Toledo, L. (2020)
	Att_2 I feel an emotional connection with my team	
	Att_3 I feel united with my team	
	<i>Passion:</i>	
	Pa_1 I feel a desire to watch the matches of my favourite team	
	Pa_2 I feel like using the merchandise of my team	
	Pa_3 I feel happy to see the football matches of my team	
	Pa_4 I feel enthusiastic about seeing the next match of my team	
	<i>Brand connection:</i>	
	BC_1 This team represents who I am BC_2 My personal identity coincides with the identity of my team BC_3. For me, it is important to be a supporter of this team	
	BC_4 Using the products of my team contributes to a good image in society	
	BC_5 To be a supporter of this team has a positive impact with respect to what others think of me	
	<i>Intrinsic rewards:</i>	
	IR_1 My team makes me happy	
	IR_2 My team entertains me	
	IR_3 I am satisfied with my team as an institution	
IR_4 I enjoy the football matches I see with my team		
IR_5 I enjoy going to the stadium to see my team		
IR_6 I enjoy it when I read news about my team		
IR_7 I feel happy when I use the branded merchandise of my team		
IR_8 My team gives sense to my life		
<i>Thought:</i>		
Th_1 I frequently think a lot about my favourite team		
Th_2 When I do not go to the stadium, I watch the football matches of my team on TV		
Th_3 I usually read news about my team in newspapers or magazines		
Th_4 I frequently follow the news of my team through the communications media		

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	Th_5 I often comment or discuss my team with other people	
	Th_6 I often comment on or read news about my team on the social networks or the internet	
Brand Equity Scale (for both brands)	<i>Brand Awareness</i>	Yoo & Donthu (2000)
	AW1 I am aware of brand X	Netemeyer, R.; Pullig, R.; Krishnan, B. & Wang, G. (2004)
	AW2 When I think of PC, brand X is one of the brands that comes to mind	
	AW3 X is a brand of PC I am very familiar with	
	AW4 I know what brand X looks like	
	AW5 I can recognise brand X amongst other competing brands of PC	
	<i>Perceived Quality</i>	Pappu, R.; Cooksey, R. & Quester, P. (2005);
	PQ1 Brand X offers very good quality products	Pappu, R.; Cooksey, R. & Quester, P. (2006).
	PQ2 Brand X offers products of consistent quality	
	PQ3 Brand X offers very reliable products	
	PQ4 Brand X offers products with excellent features (<i>not fit</i>)	
	<i>Brand Loyalty</i>	Yoo & Donthu (2000).
	LO1 I consider myself to be loyal to brand X	
	LO2 Brand X would be my first choice when considering a PC	
	LO3 I will not buy other brands of PC if brand X is available at the store	
	<i>Brand associations:</i>	
	<i>Perceived Value:</i>	Lassar et al., 1995;
	AS1 Brand X is good value for the money	Aaker (1996);
	AS2 Within PC, I consider brand X a good buy	Netemeyer, R.; Pullig, R.; Krishnan, B. & Wang, G. (2004).
	AS3 Considering what I would pay for brand X, I would get much more than my money's worth	
	<i>Brand Personality:</i>	Aaker (1996).
	AS4 Brand X has a personality	
	AS5 Brand X is interesting	
	AS6 I have a clear image of the type of person who would use brand X	
	<i>Organisational Associations:</i>	Aaker (1996);
	AS7 I trust the company which makes brand X	Pappu, R.; Cooksey, R. & Quester, P. (2005);
	AS8 I like the company which makes brand X	Pappu, R.; Cooksey, R. & Quester, P. (2006).
	AS9 The company which makes brand X has credibility	
		(<i>adapted from: Buil, Chernatony and Martínez (2008) and Schivinski, B & Dabrowski, D (2014) scales</i>)
Preference Questions	<i>Preference questions (based on brand association and Brand Loyalty):</i>	Aaker. (1996);
	PQ_1 Which brand do you identify the most?	Schivinski, B & Dabrowski, D. (2014);
	PQ_2 Which brand would you recommend to others?	Brochado, A.,
	PQ_3 Which brand do you trust the most?	Dionísio, P. & Leal, M. C. (2018)
	PQ_4 Which brand bring the best memories?	
	PQ_5 Which brand do you consume more frequently?	

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PQ_6 Which brand would you choose if both were available?

Sociodemographic Geographic area (Portugal's regions according to NUTS II*)
Age Group
Gender
Beer drinking Frequency

*NUTS II: basic regions for the application of regional policies

Source: Developed by the author

C. SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Table 9.3 - Sample Description: Demographics and Supporter Description

Variables	Categories	Count	%
<i>Demographics</i>			
Gender	Female	182	47,00
	Male	205	53,00
Age Groups	18 - 35 years old	205	53,00
	36 - 55 years old	140	36,20
	56 years old or older	42	10,90
Geographic Area according to NUTS II	Região do Norte	52	13,40
	Região do Centro	30	7,80
	Lisboa e Vale do Tejo	282	72,90
	Alentejo	10	2,60
	Algarve	8	2,10
	Região autónoma dos Açores	0	0,00
	Região autónoma da Madeira	1	0,30
	Outside of Portugal	4	1,00
	<i>Supporter Description</i>		
Football Club Supported	FC Porto	96	24,80
	SL Benfica	177	45,70
	Sporting CP	114	29,50
Frequency of beer consumption	Never	58	15,00
	Almost Never	42	10,90
	Rarely	34	8,80
	Sometimes	46	11,90
	Often	63	16,30
	Very Often	67	17,30
	Frequently	77	19,90
FC Porto Supporter's Average Brand Love	Low	19	4,90
	Neutral	7	1,80
	High	70	18,10
SL Benfica Supporter's Average Brand Love	Low	40	10,30
	Neutral	27	7,00
	High	110	28,40
Sporting CP Supporter's Average Brand Love	Low	22	5,70
	Neutral	14	3,60

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High	78	20,20
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Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.4 - Which brand is preferred by the respondents?

		Count	%
7.1. Which brand do you identify the most?	Super Bock	245	63,3%
	Sagres	142	36,7%
7.2. Which brand would you recommend to a friend?	Super Bock	249	64,3%
	Sagres	138	35,7%
7.3. Which brand gives you the most confidence?	Super Bock	247	63,8%
	Sagres	140	36,2%
7.4. Which brand gives you the best memories?	Super Bock	231	59,7%
	Sagres	156	40,3%
7.5. Which brand do you most often consume?	Super Bock	233	60,2%
	Sagres	154	39,8%
7.6. Which brand would you choose for consumption if both were available?	Super Bock	248	64,1%
	Sagres	139	35,9%

Average preference: Super Bock (62,6%); Sagres (37,4%)

Source: Developed by the author

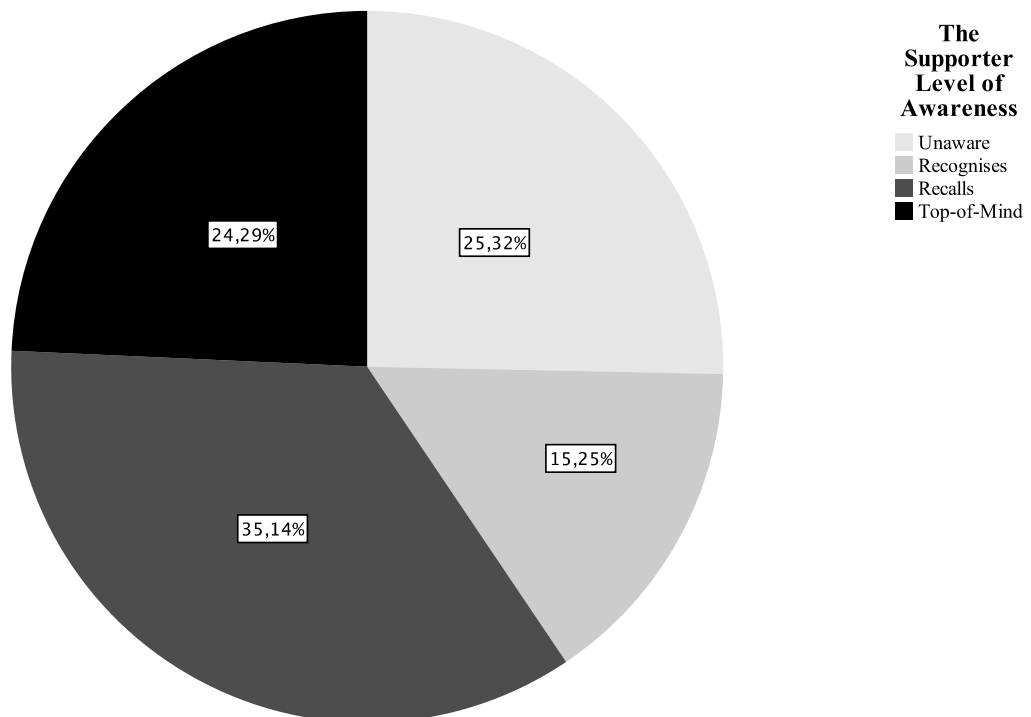


Figure 9.1-Pie Chart: The supporter level of Awareness based on Aaker's Awareness Pyramid

Source: Developed by the author

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D. RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT

Table 9.5. Brand Equity Scale Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Awareness	,959
Brand Awareness [I am familiar with the x Brand]	
Brand Awareness [I know how x brand looks like]	
Brand Awareness [I can recognise x amongst other competing beer brands]	
Brand Loyalty	,940
5.4. Brand Loyalty [I consider being loyal to the X brand]	
5.4. Brand Loyalty [Considering beer brands, X would be my first choice]	
Perceived Quality	,947
5.3. Perceived Quality [X products are of good quality]	
5.3. Perceived Quality [X offers reliable products]	
Perceived Value	,953
Perceived Value [x has good value for money]	
Perceived Value [Within beer brands, I consider x to be a good buy]	
Brand Personality	,959
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand has personality]	
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand Is Interesting]	
Organisational Associations	,925
5.6. Associations to the organization [I trust the company that manufactures X]	
5.6. Associations to the organization [The company that manufactures X is Reliable]	

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.6. Brand Awareness Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
	0,904	
Brand Awareness [I am aware of the x brand]		,924
5.1. Brand Awareness [When I think of Beer, x is one of the brands that come to mind]		,922
5.1. Brand Awareness [I am familiar with the x Brand]		,866

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5.1. Brand Awareness [I know how x brand looks like]	,872
5.1. Brand Awareness [I can recognise x amongst other competing beer brands]	,866

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.7. Brand Loyalty Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Brand Loyalty	,914	
5.4. Brand Loyalty [I consider being loyal to the X brand]		,850
5.4. Brand Loyalty [Considering beer brands, X would be my first choice]		,842
5.4. Brand Loyalty [Would not buy other brands of Beer if X were available]		,940

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.8. Perceived Quality Reliability evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Perceived Quality	,936	
5.3. Perceived Quality [X products are of good quality]		,875
5.3. Perceived Quality [X products have consistent quality]		,947
5.3. Perceived Quality [X offers reliable products]		,901

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.9. Table 9.6. Brand Loyalty Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Perceived Value	,856	
5.2. Perceived Value [x has good value for money]		,717
5.2. Perceived Value [Within beer brands, I consider x to be a good buy]		,732
5.2. Perceived Value [Considering the price of X, I feel I get more than I pay]		,953

Source: Developed by the author

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Table 9.10. Brand Personality Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Brand Personality	,836	
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand has personality]		,608
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand Is Interesting]		,647
5.5. Brand Personality [I have a clear picture of the type of person who drinks X]		,959

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.11. Organisational Associations Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Organisational Associations	,914	
Associations to the organization [I trust the company that manufactures X (Super Bock Group)]		,843
Association to the organization [I like the company that makes X]		,925
Associations to the organization [The company that manufactures X is Reliable]		,864

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.12. Brand Love Scale Reliability Evaluation

	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional Connection	,939
Feeling	,958
Brand Connection (Brand is the team)	,953
Intrinsic Reward	,959
Though	,952

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.13. Feeling Reliability Evaluation

Feeling Cronbach's Alpha: 0,946	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
4.2.a Feeling [I want to see matches of the club I support]	,915

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4.2.b Feeling [I want to use products from the club I support]	,958
4.2.c Feeling [I feel happy when I am watching matches from the club I support]	,924
4.2.d Feeling [I feel excited to know that I am going to see games for the club I support]	,919

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.14. Intrinsic Reward Reliability Evaluation

Intrinsic Reward Cronbach's Alpha: 0,946	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
4.4.a Intrinsic reward [My club makes me happy]	,946
4.4.b Intrinsic reward [My club amuses/entertains me]	,948
4.4.c Intrinsic Reward [I am satisfied with the club I support as an institution]	,952
4.4.d Intrinsic reward [I like the football games I see from the club I support]	,948
4.4.e Intrinsic reward [I like going to the stadium to see the club I support playing]	,950
4.4.f Intrinsic Reward [I like to see news related to the club I support]	,948
4.4.g Intrinsic Reward [I feel happy when I use club products I support]	,951
4.4.h Intrinsic Reward [The club I support gives my life meaning]	,959

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.15. Thought Reliability Evaluation

Thought Cronbach's Alpha: 0,948	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
4.5.a Thought [I often think about the club I support]	,938
4.5.b Thought [When I do not go to the stadium, I watch the matches of the club I support on TV (or computer, cell phone, etc.)]	,943
4.5.c Thought [I often read club-related news that I support in newspapers or magazines]	,930
4.5.d Thought [I often follow news from the club that I support in the media]	,930
4.5.e Thought [I often comment or discuss the club I support with others]	,936
4.5.f Thought [I often comment, read or share news about the club I support on social media or the internet]	,952

Source: Developed by the author

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E. VALIDITY TEST

Table 9.16. Brand Equity Scale - KMO & Barlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test

<hr/>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,880
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6120,373
	df	78
	Sig.	,000
<hr/>		

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.17. Factor Loadings Brand Equity Scale

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Factor Loadings					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.1. Brand Awareness [I am familiar with the x Brand]	,909	,050	,177	,145	,172	,093
5.1. Brand Awareness [I can recognise x amongst other competing beer brands]	,893	,176	,119	,163	,259	,097
5.1. Brand Awareness [I know how x brand looks like]	,883	,246	,133	,121	,204	,103
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand Is Interesting]	,170	,918	,162	,208	,074	,126
5.5. Brand Personality [The X Brand has personality]	,171	,888	,217	,247	,097	,160
5.4. Brand Loyalty [Considering beer brands, X would be my first choice]	,196	,208	,861	,264	,216	,117
5.4. Brand Loyalty [I consider being loyal to the X brand]	,184	,218	,820	,280	,221	,232
5.6. Associations to the organization [The company that manufactures X is Reliable]	,221	,271	,309	,822	,196	,099
5.6. Associations to the organization [I trust the company that manufactures X (Super Bock Group)]	,192	,317	,290	,792	,168	,231
5.2. Perceived Value [x has good value for money]	,455	,094	,283	,217	,774	,132

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5.2. Perceived Value [Within beer brands, I consider x to be a good buy]	,502	,149	,293	,217	,728	,126
5.3. Perceived Quality [X products are of good quality]	,254	,421	,454	,294	,198	,616
5.3. Perceived Quality [X offers reliable products]	,230	,408	,439	,369	,201	,598

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

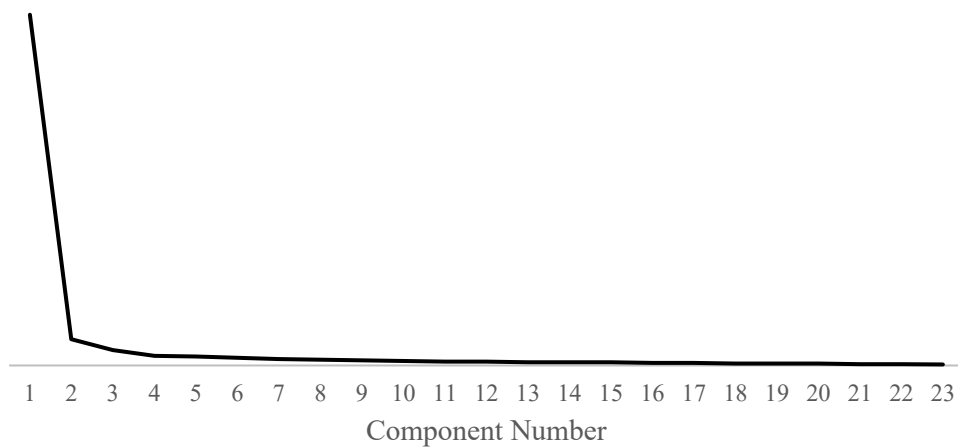
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Source: Developed by the author

F. PCA FOR BRAND LOVE SCALE

Scree Plot



Graph 9.1. Scree Plot - PCA Brand Love Scale

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.18. PCA Factor Loadings

Component Matrix ^a	Component
	1
4.4.a Intrinsic reward [My club makes me happy]	,916
4.4.b Intrinsic reward [My club amuses/entertains me]	,893
4.3.c Brand connection [It is important for me to be a fan of my club]	,890
4.1.c Emotional connection [I feel united with the club I support]	,890
4.2.d Feeling [I feel excited to know that I'm going to see games for the club I support]	,889

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4.2.a Feeling [I want to see matches of the club I support]	,885
4.4.f Intrinsic Reward [I like to see news related to the club I support]	,884
4.4.d Intrinsic reward [I like the football games I see from the club I support]	,883
4.5.a Thought [I often think about the club I support]	,880
4.2.c Feeling [I feel happy when I'm watching matches from the club I support]	,871
4.1.a Emotional connection [I feel committed to the club I support]	,867
4.5.c Thought [I often read club-related news that I support in newspapers or magazines]	,866
4.1.b Emotional connection [I feel an emotional connection to the club I support]	,865
4.5.d Thought [I often follow news from the club that I support in the media]	,865
4.5.b Thought [When I don't go to the stadium, I watch the matches of the club I support on TV (or computer, cell phone, etc.)]	,863
4.3.a Brand connection [I feel the club I support represents who I am]	,863
4.4.g Intrinsic Reward [I feel happy when I use club products I support]	,856
4.3.b Brand connection [My personal identity matches the identity of the club I support]	,851
4.4.e Intrinsic reward [I like going to the stadium to see the club I support playing]	,850
4.4.c Intrinsic Reward [I am satisfied with the club I support as an institution]	,807
4.5.e Thought [I often comment or discuss about the club I support with others]	,806
4.3.d Brand connection [Using the club's products that I support contribute to a good image in society]	,798
4.3.e Brand connection [Being a club fan has a positive impact on what others think of me]	,750

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Source: Developed by the author

Table 9.19. PCA total variance explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	17,057	74,163	74,163
2	1,277	5,551	79,714
3	,757	3,293	83,007
4	,475	2,065	85,073

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5	,450	1,956	87,029
6	,369	1,604	88,633
7	,304	1,322	89,955
8	,289	1,256	91,211
9	,255	1,110	92,320
10	,227	,989	93,309
11	,197	,856	94,165
12	,174	,754	94,920
13	,169	,735	95,654
14	,159	,693	96,347
15	,142	,617	96,964
16	,130	,566	97,529
17	,112	,486	98,015
18	,098	,427	98,442
19	,093	,403	98,845
20	,089	,389	99,233
21	,071	,308	99,541
22	,056	,246	99,787
23	,049	,213	100,000

Source: Developed by the author

G. LEVINE’S TEST - HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCE

Table 9.20 - Levine's test of Homogeneity of variances

		Levene Statistic	Sig.
Avg Brand Awareness	Based on Mean	9,596	<,001
Avg Brand Loyalty	Based on Mean	2,611	,050
Avg Perceived Quality	Based on Mean	4,619	,003
Avg Perceived Value	Based on Mean	8,416	<,001
Avg Brand Personality	Based on Mean	1,806	,146
Avg Organisational Associations	Based on Mean	4,010	,008

(To reject the null hypothesis – Equality of variances is assumed –Sig. < 0,05)

Source: Developed by the author

In this case, the null hypothesis is rejected for all cases (Sig. < 0,05), apart from Average Brand Personality, meaning the four sub-groups samples (Unaware, Recognise the sponsor, Recall the Sponsor, Sponsor as Top-of-Mind) come from populations with the different variance of the Brand

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Equity Assets. Therefore, the ANOVA should be abandoned for the variables where the assumption is not fulfilled, and a non-parametric test should be performed: Kruskal Wallis.

H. MEDIATOR ANALYSIS

Table 9.21 - Mediator analysis

		R square	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.
H5a) Brand Awareness	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,143	0,866	0,108	0,378	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	0,101	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,115	0,223	0,136	0,091	0,102
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,115	0,303	0,059	0,284	<0,001
H5b) Brand Loyalty	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,137	1,457	0,187	0,37	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	0,101	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,301	0,535	0,194	0,136	0,006
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,301	0,802	0,085	0,468	<0,001
H5c) Perceived Quality	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,115	1,071	0,151	0,34	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	0,101	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,246	0,413	0,161	0,131	0,011
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,246	0,573	0,07	0,417	<0,001
H5d) Perceived Value	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,091	0,823	0,133	0,309	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	0,101	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,175	0,365	0,146	0,135	0,013
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,175	0,399	0,064	0,355	<0,001
H5d) Brand Personality	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,039	0,838	0,838	0,199	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	1,149	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,164	-0,061	-0,061	-0,014	0,791
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,164	0,769	0,769	0,413	<0,001
H5d) Organisational Associations	SLR: Direct Effect X On Y	0,039	0,838	0,211	0,199	<0,001
	SLR: Direct Effect X On M	0,25	1,149	0,101	0,5	<0,001
	MLR: Indirect Effect X On Y	0,164	-0,061	0,23	-0,014	0,791
	MLR: Indirect Effect M On Y	0,164	0,769	0,102	0,413	<0,001

SLR: simple linear regression

MLR: Multiple linear regression

Direct effect X on Y, B value **a**.

Indirect effect M on Y, B value **b**.

Source: Developed by the author

I. QUESTIONNAIRE

(Questionnaire shared in Portuguese to fit the sample)

Patrocínios no Futebol e o Valor de Marca

Este questionário está integrado no âmbito de uma investigação académica, será apresentada sob forma de dissertação para conclusão do Mestrado em Marketing do ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa.

O Objetivo do estudo é analisar o impacto no Valor da Marca quando a mesma patrocina uma entidade desportiva, em concreto uma equipa de futebol.

Irão ser analisados e comparados dois patrocínios diferentes a três clubes que partilham uma rivalidade histórica.

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Este estudo é destinado a adeptos do FC Porto, SL Benfica e Sporting CP que sejam maiores de idade.

Caso alguma destas premissas não seja verificada agradece-se desde já a disponibilidade, mas não será contabilizadas a sua participação no presente questionário.

Duração: 5-10 minutos.

Muito Obrigada.

*Obrigatório

Tomei conhecimento do âmbito, objetivo e das condições do estudo e estou apto a responder a este questionário. (Sou adepto(a) do FC Porto, SL Benfica e Sporting CP e Maior de idade).*

Sim
 Não

1. Clube de Futebol que apoia:*

FC Porto
 SL Benfica
 Sporting CP

(Obs. Se responder FC PORTO, questionário segue para secção II Se responder SL Benfica, questionário avança para secção III; se responder Sporting CP avança para Secção IV)

Secção II

2.a Patrocínio Identifique três patrocinadores oficiais do FC Porto. Um por cada caixa de texto. No caso de não saber identificar, escreva "não sei".

2.1.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.2.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.3.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

Secção III

2.a Patrocínio: Identifique dos seguintes os patrocinadores oficiais do FC Porto. Se não souber, deixe em branco.

Patrocinador oficial:

NOS
 ALTICE (MEO)
 BETANO
 EMIRATES
 SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK
 ADIDAS

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NEW BALANCE
 NIKE
 REVIGRES

Secção III

2.a Patrocínio Identifique três patrocinadores oficiais do SL Benfica. Um por cada caixa de texto. No caso de não saber identificar, escreva "não sei".

2.1.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.2.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.3.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

3.a Patrocínio: Identifique dos seguintes os patrocinadores oficiais do SL Benfica. Se não souber, deixe em branco.

Patrocinador oficial:

NOS
 ALTICE (MEO)
 BETANO
 EMIRATES
 SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK
 ADIDAS
 NEW BALANCE
 NIKE
 REVIGRES

Secção IV

2.a Patrocínio Identifique três patrocinadores oficiais do Sporting CP.. Um por cada caixa de texto. No caso de não saber identificar, escreva "não sei".

2.1.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.2.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

2.3.a Indique um patrocinador oficial do clube de futebol que apoia*

A sua resposta

3.a Patrocínio: Identifique dos seguintes os patrocinadores oficiais do Sporting CP. Se não souber, deixe em branco.

Patrocinador oficial:

NOS
 ALTICE (MEO)
 BETANO
 EMIRATES
 SAGRES

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SUPER BOCK
 ADIDAS
 NEW BALANCE
 NIKE
 REVIGRES

Secção IV - Brand Love Scale

Escala: 1- Discordo totalmente

2- Discordo

3- Tendo a não concordar

4 - Não concordo nem discordo

5- Tendo a concordar

6- Concordo

7- Concordo totalmente

4.1. Ligação emocional*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sinto-me comprometido ao clube que apoio							
Sinto uma conexão emocional ao clube que apoio							
Sinto-me unido ao clube que apoio							

4.2. Sentimento*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tenho vontade de ver jogos do clube que apoio							
Tenho vontade de usar produtos do clube que apoio							
Sinto felicidade quando estou a ver jogos do clube que apoio							
Sinto entusiasmo ao saber que vou ver jogos do clube que apoio							
Tenho vontade de ver jogos do clube que apoio							
Tenho vontade de usar produtos do clube que apoio							
Sinto felicidade quando estou a ver jogos do clube que apoio							

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Sinto entusiasmo ao saber que vou ver jogos do clube que apoio							
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4.3. Ligação à marca*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sinto que o clube que apoio representa quem eu sou							
A minha identidade pessoal coincide com a identidade do clube que apoio							
Para mim é importante ser adepto do meu clube							
Usar os produtos do clube que apoio contribuem para uma boa imagem na sociedade							
Ser adepto do clube tem um impacto positivo no que os outros pensam de mim							

4.4. Recompensa intrínseca*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O meu clube deixa-me feliz							
O meu clube diverte-me/ entretém-me							
Estou satisfeito com o clube que apoio como instituição							
Gosto dos jogos de futebol que vejo do clube que apoio							
Gosto de ir ao estádio ver o clube que apoio jogar							
Gosto de ver notícias ligadas ao clube que apoio							
Sinto-me feliz quando uso produtos do clube que apoio							
O clube que apoio dá sentido à minha vida							

4.5. Pensamento*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Penso com frequência no clube que apoio							

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Quando não vou ao estádio vejo os jogos do clube que apoio na TV (ou computador, telemóvel, etc.)							
Leio com frequência notícias ligadas ao clube que apoio em jornais ou revistas							
Sigo com frequência notícias do clube que apoio nos media							
Com alguma frequência comento ou discuto sobre o clube que apoio com outras pessoas							
Com alguma frequência comento, leio ou partilho notícias sobre o clube que apoio nas redes sociais ou internet							

Seccão VI - Brand Equity Scale: SUPER BOCK

- Escala:** 1- Discordo totalmente
 2- Discordo
 3- Tendo a não concordar
 4 - Não concordo nem discordo
 5- Tendo a concordar
 6- Concordo
 7- Concordo totalmente

5.1 Brand Awareness*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conheço a marca Super Bock							
Quando penso em Cerveja, a Super Bock é uma das marcas que me vêm à cabeça							
Estou familiarizado com a Marca Super Bock							
Eu sei como a Marca Super Bock se parece							
Eu consigo reconhecer a marca Super Bock entre marcas concorrentes da mesma categoria							

5.2 Lealdade à marca

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
considero ser leal à marca Super Bock							
Considerando marcas de cerveja, a Super Bock seria a minha primeira opção							
Não compraria outras marcas de Cerveja, se a Super Bock estivesse disponível							

5.3 Percepção de Qualidade

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Os produtos da Super Bock têm boa qualidade							
A Super Bock tem produtos com qualidade consistente							
A Super Bock oferece produtos de confiança							
A marca Super Bock oferece produtos com excelentes características							

5.4 Percepção de Valor

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Super Bock tem boa qualidade-preço							
Dentro das marcas de cerveja considero que a Super Bock é uma boa compra							
Considerando o preço da Super Bock, sinto que recebo mais do que pago							

5.5 Personificação da Marca

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A Marca Super Bock tem personalidade							
A Marca Super Bock é interessante							
Tenho uma imagem clara do tipo de pessoa que bebe Super Bock							

5.5 Personificação da Marca

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A Marca Super Bock tem personalidade							
A Marca Super Bock é interessante							
Tenho uma imagem clara do tipo de pessoa que bebe Super Bock							

5.6 Associações com a organização

-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Confio na empresa que fabrica Super Bock (Grupo Super Bock)							
Gosto da empresa que fabrica Super Bock							
A empresa que fabrica a Super Bock é de Confiança							

Secção VII - Brand Equity Scale: SAGRES

Escala: 1- Discordo totalmente

2- Discordo

3- Tendo a não concordar

4 - Não concordo nem discordo

5- Tendo a concordar

6- Concordo

7- Concordo totalmente

6.1 Brand Awareness*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conheço a marca Sagres							
Quando penso em Cerveja, a Sagres é uma das marcas que me vêm à cabeça							
Estou familiarizado com a Marca Sagres							
Eu sei como a Marca Sagres se parece							
Eu consigo Reconhecer a marca Sagres entre marcas concorrentes da mesma categoria							

6.2 Lealdade à marca

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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considero ser leal à marca Sagres							
Considerando marcas de cerveja, a Sagres seria a minha primeira opção							
Não compraria outras marcas de Cerveja, se a Sagres estivesse disponível							

6.3 Perceção de Qualidade

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Os produtos da Sagres têm boa qualidade							
A Sagres tem produtos com qualidade consistente							
A Sagres oferece produtos de confiança							
A marca Sagres oferece produtos com excelentes características							

6.4 Perceção de Valor

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sagres tem boa qualidade-preço							
Dentro das marcas de cerveja considero que a Sagres é uma boa compra							
Considerando o preço da Sagres, sinto que recebo mais do que pago							

6.5 Personificação da Marca

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A Marca Sagres tem personalidade							
A Marca Sagres é interessante							
Tenho uma imagem clara do tipo de pessoa que bebe Sagres							

6.5 Personificação da Marca

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A Marca Sagres tem personalidade							
A Marca Sagres é interessante							

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Tenho uma imagem clara do tipo de pessoa que bebe Sagres							
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6.6 Associações com a organização

-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Confio na empresa que fabrica Sagres (Grupo HEINEKEN)							
Gosto da empresa que fabrica Sagres							
A empresa que fabrica a Sagres é de Confiança							

Secção VIII – Preferências

7.1. Qual a marca com que mais se identifica?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

7.2. Qual a marca que recomendaria a um amigo?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

7.3. Qual a marca que lhe transmite mais confiança?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

7.4. Qual a marca que lhe transmite melhores memórias?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

7.5. Qual a marca que consome com mais frequência?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

7.6. Qual a marca que escolheria para consumo no caso de ambas estarem disponíveis?*

SAGRES
 SUPER BOCK

Secção IX

8. Análise Sociodemográfica

8.1. Localidade:*

Selecionar (Lista com Distritos Portugueses)

8.2. Idade:*

A sua resposta

8.3. Género:*

Feminino
 Masculino
 Prefiro não dizer

8.4. Frequência de consumo de cerveja:*

Raramente

1

2

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP ON BRAND EQUITY

3
4
5
6
7

Consumo Recorrente (Pelo menos 2 vezes por semana)