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Exploring Social Media Strategies in Response to Match Defeats – A Unique Study on Portuguese Football Clubs

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Master's in Marketing

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To my Grandmother, Maria de Fátima Nunes de Abreu,
who was so excited to see her granddaughter become a master.
I wish you were here; I miss you every day.

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Resumo

Esta dissertação investiga a dinâmica complexa do envolvimento dos adeptos dos clubes de futebol portugueses nas redes sociais após os jogos, enfatizando a relação entre desporto, comunicação online e lealdade dos adeptos. Numa era em que as equipas de futebol utilizam as redes sociais para chegar aos adeptos de formas nunca vistas, o impacto dos resultados dos jogos nas futuras interações online continua a ser um tópico inexplorado, particularmente no futebol português.

Este estudo explora a forma como os clubes utilizam estrategicamente as redes sociais para interagir com os adeptos após os jogos, analisar as emoções atuais e avaliar o seu impacto na lealdade dos adeptos, orientado por questões pertinentes. Para atingir estes objetivos, é utilizada uma combinação de métodos, incluindo uma extensa revisão da literatura existente, a recolha de dados empíricos através de inquéritos e a utilização de técnicas analíticas avançadas para descobrir padrões e tendências na interação com os adeptos.

O estudo está organizado em secções que vão desde a definição do problema até à síntese dos resultados e consequências. As conclusões sugerem que os resultados dos jogos não têm um impacto significativo nas atitudes e na defesa da marca.

Por último, esta investigação fornece perspetivas críticas para a discussão da comunicação desportiva, apresentando táticas de interação bem-sucedidas para as equipas de futebol na era moderna. Destaca a mudança na ligação entre as equipas e os seus adeptos leais, fornecendo informações valiosas para aumentar a fidelidade dos adeptos e cultivar laços emocionais mais fortes no atual clima desportivo.

Palavras-chave: Redes sociais; Defesa da Marca; Atitude da Marca; Futebol
Sistema de Classificação JEL: Marketing (M31); Outros (M39)

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the complex dynamics of Portuguese football clubs' social media fan involvement following games, emphasising the relationship between sports, online communication, and fan loyalties. In an era when football teams use social media to reach out to supporters in previously unheard-of ways, the impact of game outcomes on future online interactions remains an unexplored topic, particularly in Portuguese football. This study explores how clubs strategically use social media to engage with fans after matches, analyse current emotions, and evaluate their impact on fan loyalty, guided by pertinent questions. To meet these goals, a combination of methods is used, including an extensive review of existing literature, gathering empirical data through surveys, and using advanced analytical techniques to uncover patterns and trends in fan interaction.

The study is organised with linked sections that progress from defining the problem to summarising results and consequences. Findings suggest that match results do not significantly impact attitudes and advocacy towards the brand.

Ultimately, this research provides critical perspectives for discussing sports communication by showcasing successful interaction tactics for soccer teams in the modern era. It highlights the changing bond between teams and their loyal fans, providing valuable insights for increasing fan allegiance and cultivating stronger emotional ties in today's sports climate.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In recent years, the interaction landscape between football clubs and their loyal supporters has dramatically shifted, primarily due to the innovative adoption of social media platforms. This research explores this digital transformation and its implications for Portuguese football clubs.

Portuguese football clubs have been at the forefront of this digital shift, proactively embracing platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X (former Twitter) to disseminate information, share updates, and provide exclusive behind-the-scenes content to their extensive and diverse fan base. This forward-thinking strategy has enabled them to build a more robust network among supporters and set a benchmark for other clubs.

This transition offers unprecedented opportunities for enhanced engagement. It poses unique challenges, underscoring the critical need for Portuguese football clubs to have a social media presence and effectively manage their interactions with fans. This need forms the basis of the research problem, highlighting its urgency and importance in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

1.1. Contextualisation and Definition of the Research Problem

Social media is critical in the current landscape of football clubs and fan connections. Portuguese football clubs are adapting to this digital terrain and acknowledging that social media platforms are practical tools for maintaining continuous and dynamic communication with their fan base (Johnston, 2019; Smith & Jones, 2020).

This movement is more than just a change in communication methods; it represents a fundamental transformation in the connection between clubs and supporters. It underscores the need for a more engaged, participative, and community-driven approach, inspiring a new way of thinking and redefining the nature of their relationship.

However, amidst this transformation, a two-fold research problem arises. First, it is necessary to understand how Portuguese football clubs use social media sites, notably Facebook, Instagram, and X, to connect with their fans following match results. Secondly, it is essential to understand how positive and bad encounters affect fan engagement, support, and money. Therefore, the overarching research problem focuses on the effective management of fan participation by Portuguese football clubs on social media in response to match outcomes.

1.2. Clarification of the Pertinence of the Study

This study's significance stems from its potential to provide valuable insights and direction for Portuguese football clubs navigating the complex world of social media involvement. With the growing recognition of social media's transformative impact on the relationship between clubs and their supporters, this study offers a timely exploration of the strategies that can be employed to leverage the opportunities presented and overcome the challenges posed by these dynamic platforms.

When handling fan involvement following a loss, sports organisations must exercise caution. They should acknowledge fan dissatisfaction without taking it personally and ensure they avoid fueling their anger or allowing them to spread negativity on social media platforms. It is essential to focus on constructive feedback that can help improve the team's performance and avoid turning the situation into a public relations nightmare (Brown & White, 2018; Taylor & Johnson, 2019).

When celebrating a victory, sports organisations must demonstrate grace and humility, considering the team's and its opponents' individual and collective efforts. While recognising the support and enthusiasm of fans, it is essential to avoid excessive boasting or arrogance. Instead, it is crucial to emphasise the team's hard work and dedication that led to the win, highlighting the importance of unity and teamwork. Positive engagement with fans through social media shoutouts or community events can foster a sense of camaraderie and gratitude.

Sports organisations can preserve goodwill and momentum for future success by focusing on the positive parts of the victory and showing gratitude to fans. Failure to build an active and influential social media presence may result in missed engagement opportunities and decreased support and revenue. Sports organisations must be aware of fan involvement and ensure their contact with fans is always professional, productive, and polite. By doing so, they may cultivate a devoted fan base that will stick with the club through thick and thin, resulting in improved team performance and long-term success.

By comprehensively understanding fan interaction on social media and addressing it effectively, clubs can foster a more devoted and engaged fan base while optimising revenue streams. Therefore, this research is not only an academic endeavour but also has practical implications for the strategic decision-making processes of Portuguese football clubs (Parganas et al., 2017).

1.3. Research Questions and Objectives

Effective fan engagement is critical for sports organisations, and it is highly influenced by how they interact with their fans after a victory or defeat (Thompson et al., 2018). Social media is vital for fan involvement because it allows fans to express their joy and excitement after a triumph or their disappointment and criticism of their team after a loss.

To address the multifaceted nature of the research problem, the study poses a set of research questions designed to unravel the nuances of Portuguese football clubs' social media engagement following match outcomes:

1. To identify the social media communication strategies used by the leading football clubs in the Portuguese league following a loss.
2. To compare the impact of communication strategies used following losses on brand attitude and advocacy.

These research questions aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of social media engagement by Portuguese football clubs and offer practical insights into effective strategies for managing fan interactions.

1.4. Dissertation Structure

The dissertation has a systematic structure to answer research questions and meet research objectives. The following chapters cover the following subjects:

1. Literature Review: This chapter reviews existing literature on social media, fan engagement, and sports communication to provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the dynamics of Portuguese football clubs (Jones et al., 2021).
2. Methodology: This chapter outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques to provide a systematic approach to gathering insights into the social media practices of Portuguese football clubs.
3. Results and Discussion: This chapter presents empirical findings from analysing social media content and fan surveys to uncover patterns, trends, and critical insights into how football clubs engage with their supporters on digital platforms (Green et al., 2017). The discussion provides a comprehensive overview of the implications, challenges, and opportunities of social media engagement for Portuguese football clubs, linking the research to the broader context of fan relationships in the digital age.
4. Conclusion and Recommendations: The final chapter synthesises the key findings, provides actionable recommendations for Portuguese football clubs to optimise their

social media engagement strategies, and concludes with remarks on the study's significance.

Through this structured approach, the dissertation aims to contribute to the academic discourse surrounding social media and sports and provide practical insights that Portuguese football clubs can apply to improve their fan engagement strategy. As we go deeper into later chapters, a thorough grasp of the complex relationship between Portuguese football clubs and their supporters in social media engagement will unfold.

This thesis will examine Portuguese football clubs' social media engagement strategies after defeats. By analysing the content, tone, and style of social media messages, as well as the challenges and opportunities these clubs face, the study provides valuable insights into the intersection of social media and sports scholarship.

The digital age has transformed the way football clubs interact with their fans. The study highlights the importance of a proactive and strategic approach to social media engagement for Portuguese football clubs. The tone and style of social media messages significantly affect fan sentiment and overall engagement, regardless of whether the club celebrates victories or manages defeats.

The research has illuminated current social media practices and laid the foundation for future research. Its implications for sports organisations extend beyond the field, emphasising the need for a nuanced understanding of fan behaviour in the digital world.

As Portuguese football clubs continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape of social media, this thesis serves as a guide, offering practical insights and recommendations for optimising fan engagement strategies. A positive social media presence is not only a means of disseminating information but also a powerful tool for fostering community, strengthening supporter loyalty, and ultimately contributing to the overall success of football clubs.

In the dynamic intersection of sports and social media, where millions witness victories and defeats in real time, understanding the intricacies of fan interactions becomes a strategic imperative. The journey continues beyond the pages of this thesis as football clubs adapt, innovate, and engage with their supporters in the ever-expanding digital arena.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

According to Beech and Chadwick (2007), sports organisations' performance on the field and with sports customers substantially influences the success of the club's marketing plan, demonstrating that sports are product-led. This literature review investigates existing knowledge about how Portuguese football clubs handle fan interaction on social media platforms.

2.1. Social Media and Sports Fan Engagement

Social media has revolutionised how sports fans interact with their favourite teams and athletes. Previously, fans could only consume sports-related content through traditional media channels such as television, radio, and newspapers. However, social media has given fans direct access to their beloved teams and athletes, enabling them to communicate with supporters worldwide (Burch, 2020).

This direct involvement and access have resulted in a significant increase in fan engagement. Fans are more inclined to follow their favourite teams and athletes on social media platforms and share their views and opinions about games and events (García & Vázquez, 2018). Sports organisations can also use social media to strengthen their relationships with their supporters.

By offering exclusive content, organising contests and giveaways, and regularly communicating with fans, sports organisations can establish a community among their supporters and make them feel more connected to the team (González-Javier & Guzmán, 2021). These feelings may significantly impact fan loyalty. For instance, supporters who feel bad after a loss could be less likely to stick with the team in the future (Pease, 2020).

2.2. E-word of mouth and User-generated content in social media

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful platform for individuals to voice their opinions, share experiences, and create content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). E-word of Mouth (e-WOM) and User-Generated Content (UGC) are influential and pivotal in shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchase decisions across various sectors, including the dynamic world of sports brands (Cheung et al., 2020). This discussion delves into the definitions, drivers, and outcomes of e-WOM and UGC, both in a general sense and within the specific context of sports brands (Smith, 2018). Furthermore, it will explore the implications of social media adoption trends among sports brands (Hutter et al., 2013).

E-word of Mouth (e-WOM) is a term that encompasses various forms of informal communication between consumers about products, services, or brands through online channels (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). It includes social media posts, online reviews, blogs, and forums. On the other hand, User-Generated Content (UGC) is a broad category that consists of any content created by users, not brands or organisations. This can be in text, images, videos, or reviews shared on social media platforms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Several factors drive the creation of e-WOM and UGC. One key driver is the perceived usefulness and relevance of the content. Consumers are more likely to engage in e-WOM and UGC creation when they believe their contributions are valuable to others (Cheung et al., 2009). Emotional engagement is another significant driver. Content that elicits strong positive or negative emotions tends to attract more user engagement and sharing (Berger & Milkman, 2012).

Furthermore, social identity and peer pressure must be considered when motivating individuals to participate in e-WOM and UGC activities. Users often share content that aligns with their self-image or reflects their interests and preferences, enhancing their social identity (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The power of social influence and peer pressure is evident, as it drives individuals to conform to the opinions and behaviours of their social networks, leading to increased e-WOM and UGC generation (Goldsmith et al., 2000).

E-WOM and UGC yield various outcomes for brands, including increased brand awareness, enhanced brand image, and improved customer engagement. Positive e-WOM and UGC can significantly impact brand perception and purchase intentions, leading to higher sales and revenue (Chatterjee et al., 2001). Conversely, negative e-WOM and UGC can damage brand reputation and deter potential customers (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006).

In the context of sports brands, e-WOM and UGC play a vital role in building fan communities, fostering brand loyalty, and driving merchandise sales. Sports fans are highly engaged on social media platforms, where they share their passion, experiences, and opinions about their favourite teams and athletes (Havard et al., 2015). Brands leverage this user-generated content to amplify their reach, strengthen fan relationships, and create immersive brand experiences.

The adoption of social media among sports brands has witnessed exponential growth in recent years. Recognising the immense potential of social platforms to connect with fans and amplify their brand messages, sports organisations have invested heavily in digital marketing strategies (Tench & Gatersleben, 2016). From global giants like Nike and Adidas to local sports

teams, entities across the sports industry are leveraging social media to engage audiences, drive conversations, and monetise fan engagement.

Platforms like Instagram, X, and TikTok have become popular channels for sports brands to share behind-the-scenes content, highlight athlete stories, and interact with fans in real time (Hutchins & Rowe, 2012). Live streaming of matches, interactive polls, and user-generated challenges are some innovative approaches sports brands adopt to enhance fan engagement and foster community participation (Hutchins & Rowe, 2013).

E-word of Mouth (e-WOM) and User-Generated Content (UGC) are integral in shaping consumer perceptions and driving brand engagement in the digital era (Khan et al., 2021). The drivers and outputs of e-WOM and UGC are influenced by perceived usefulness, emotional engagement, social identity, and social influence (Huang et al., 2020). Within the sports industry, social media adoption among brands has led to innovative strategies for fan engagement, community building, and revenue generation (Bennett & Panton, 2021). Continuing research in this area will be essential to understanding evolving consumer behaviours and optimising digital marketing strategies for sports brands (Rohm et al., 2013).

2.3. Reputation Management in Social Media

Maintaining a positive reputation on social media platforms is crucial for brands across various industries, including sports (Bennett & Panton, 2021). Reputation management involves strategies to foster positive electronic Word-of-mouth (e-WOM) engagement and mitigate the impact of negative e-WOM (Lee et al., 2020). This topic explores practical strategies for creating and engaging with positive e-WOM while also addressing techniques for mitigating negative e-WOM, generally and within the context of sports brands (Liu et al., 2018).

It is important to define strategies that create and engage with positive E-WOM. For example, authenticity and transparency: Brands that demonstrate authenticity and transparency in their consumer interactions are likelier to foster positive e-WOM (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Sports brands can build trust and credibility by sharing authentic stories, behind-the-scenes content, and genuine interactions with fans, leading to a positive e-WOM generation. Engagement and Interaction: Engaging with fans and followers on social media platforms is critical to generating positive e-WOM. Responding to comments, acknowledging user-generated content, and initiating conversations demonstrate a commitment to customer satisfaction and community building (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). Sports brands can leverage interactive features such as polls, quizzes, and live Q&A sessions to encourage participation

and foster positive sentiment. Influencer Partnerships: Collaborating with influencers and brand ambassadors can amplify positive e-WOM and reach new audiences (Hajli, 2014). Sports brands often partner with athletes, celebrities, and social media influencers to endorse products, share brand experiences, and engage with fans authentically. Influencer-generated content can significantly impact brand perception and drive positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

It is also important to define strategies to mitigate negative E-WOM, such as proactive monitoring and listening. Sports brands must proactively monitor social media channels to identify and address potential issues before they escalate (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Implementing social listening tools allows brands to track conversations, sentiment trends, and emerging issues in real-time. By promptly responding to negative feedback or criticism, brands can demonstrate accountability and mitigate reputational damage. Transparency in Crisis Management: Openness and honesty are paramount in a crisis or negative publicity. Sports brands should acknowledge the issue, provide relevant information, and communicate a clear plan of action (Coombs, 2007). Transparent communication fosters trust and reassures stakeholders, minimising the impact of negative e-WOM on brand reputation. Engagement and Service Recovery: Turning negative experiences into positive outcomes through effective service recovery can mitigate the effects of negative e-WOM (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002). Sports brands should actively engage with dissatisfied customers, address their concerns empathetically, and offer timely solutions or compensation when appropriate. By demonstrating a commitment to customer satisfaction, brands can convert detractors into loyal advocates.

Effective reputation management in social media involves a combination of strategies for creating and engaging with positive e-WOM while also mitigating the impact of negative e-WOM. Sports brands can enhance their reputation by prioritising authenticity, transparency, and proactive communication with fans.

2.4. Reputation Management in Portugal

Reputation management, a cornerstone of success and longevity, is a formidable task for football clubs in Portugal. Like their counterparts in other nations, Portuguese football clubs navigate the challenge of upholding a positive image and steering public perceptions amidst the unpredictable nature of competitive sports (Guerreiro et al., 2017). These clubs employ various strategies, both on and off the field, to maintain their reputations.

Because of the importance of transparent communication, Portuguese football clubs actively engage with fans, stakeholders, and the media. They leverage social media platforms such as X, Facebook, and Instagram to disseminate information and interact with fans directly (Costa et al., 2016). In the face of controversies, scandals, or adverse publicity, these clubs demonstrate their preparedness with crisis management strategies that swiftly mitigate reputational damage (Dinis & Menezes, 2018). Quick responses, honesty, and accountability underpin their effective crisis communication. Clubs issue official statements, hold press conferences, or utilise social media to address concerns and reassure stakeholders.

Community engagement is a crucial aspect of reputation management for football clubs in Portugal. Clubs actively engage with local communities to enhance their reputation as socially responsible organisations. Clubs strengthen their reputation as community pillars by fostering solid ties with fans and residents. A strong brand identity is paramount for Portuguese football clubs seeking to differentiate themselves in a competitive market. Clubs invest in marketing campaigns, merchandise, and sponsorships to enhance brand visibility and recognition (DaCosta & Soares, 2019).

However, Portuguese football clubs face intense media scrutiny, particularly during times of crisis or controversy (Silva et al., 2021). Negative press coverage can significantly impact a club's reputation and fan perception (Pereira, 2019). Nonetheless, media exposure can be leveraged to convey their messages and shape public opinion effectively. This role of clubs in shaping public opinion can make the audience feel empowered. Fan engagement is another challenge for clubs, as managing online discourse and addressing negative feedback on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook can be complex (Lopes & Almeida, 2022).

Portuguese football clubs must prioritize transparency, crisis preparedness, community engagement, and brand building to maintain a positive public image and foster long-term success (Fernandes et al., 2021). These measures, especially transparency and crisis preparedness, can reassure the audience about the clubs' commitment to maintaining a positive public image. These measures can help clubs strengthen their reputation and enhance their standing in the eyes of fans, stakeholders, and the broader public (Martins & Ferreira, 2020).

2.5. Leveraging Social Media Analytics

Portuguese football clubs can harness the power of social media analytics as a potent tool to evaluate and enhance their fan interaction plans (Pedersen et al., 2023). By leveraging social media analytics, football clubs can gain valuable insights into various metrics. These metrics,

such as the proportion of the club's audience that views its content, the number of individuals who interact with the content, and the sentiment of supporters towards the content, can provide a promising avenue for improving fan engagement strategies (Zhang et al., 2022).

Portuguese football clubs can use this data to identify the content that resonates with their followers and those that do not (Smith & Jones, 2021). They can track their progress over time and identify areas for improvement. By effectively employing social media analytics, football teams in Portugal can optimise their campaigns, monitor fan involvement, and select the social media platforms that are most effective for reaching their target audience, empowering them to take control of their communication strategies (Garcia & Mendes, 2020).

Furthermore, they can identify the optimal times to post content and enhance the quality of their social media marketing by creating more relevant and tailored material (Martins et al., 2021). Using social media analytics, football teams in Portugal can improve fan engagement strategies and foster stronger relationships with their supporters (Fernandes & Lima, 2022).

2.6. Communication Crisis in Social Media

Real-life examples vividly illustrate the vulnerability of football clubs in Portugal to social media communication problems. In recent years, we have witnessed several instances of Portuguese football clubs facing negative publicity or criticism on social media following victories or defeats, underscoring the urgent need for effective crisis management strategies to protect the club's reputation and maintain public trust.

Moussa Marega, a player of FC Porto, went off the field in the 69th minute of their 2-1 win over Vitória de Guimarães on February 16, 2020, after being racially harassed by some home fans. Marega scored the game-winning goal in the 60th minute and celebrated by pointing to his skin, which elicited monkey noises from the audience. His teammates detained Marega as he attempted to leave the field, but he eventually got free and was replaced. Many people were outraged by the episode, with many condemning the racial abuse and supporting Marega for sticking up for himself. Vitória de Guimarães later apologised and stated that the attack would be investigated. The Portuguese Football Federation also condemned the abuse and promised to take measures against the fans who were accountable.

Sporting CP's social media communication dilemma in 2018 is an additional illustration involving a Portuguese football team. Sporting CP was in the running to win the First League (nowadays, Liga Betclic) when on May 15, 2018, two days after Sporting was defeated by Marítimo, leaving Benfica second in the First League and qualification for the Champions

League, slipping away, some Sporting CP supporters attacked the club's practice facility, injuring numerous players and staff members (Antunes, 2018). Football supporters worldwide criticised the club for failing to stop the violence (Baker, 2018).

These two instances highlight Portuguese football clubs' challenges in managing social media communication. These clubs must develop a robust strategy for handling social media communication crises, as social media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception and maintaining the club's reputation (Abeza, O'Reilly, & Reid, 2013).

Portuguese clubs can use several methods to prevent this problem, such as initiative. Holding off on contacting until the situation has become more serious can do more harm (Coombs, 2007). As soon as the team becomes aware of a potential crisis, they should contact their supporters to let them know that they are aware of the issue and are taking action to resolve it (Huang, 2020).

Open-mindedness is essential. Followers must be informed about what occurred and what will be done to prevent this from happening again (Veil, Buehner, & Palenchar, 2011). Punctuality and promptness in responding to followers' inquiries and remarks are also crucial. Make it clear that the team pays attention to their fans' concerns and is devoted to finding solutions (Gonzalez & Jansen, 2020).

It is crucial to empathise with fans' emotions. Recognising their frustration and anger and demonstrating a commitment to resolving the issue can go a long way toward fostering a stronger bond with them (Lee, 2005).

Modesty is also necessary. Taking responsibility for the issue and apologising for errors is essential (Fearn-Banks, 2016). Be mindful of fans' feelings; they may feel delighted and excited after a victory, but they may also feel angry and unhappy after a defeat. Remembering these feelings when producing content and interacting with fans on social media is necessary (Baker & Harris, 2020). Avoid posting anything offensive or deprecatory (Gonzalez & Jansen, 2020). This is crucial following a defeat. Teams need to be careful not to say anything interpreted as excusing the team's performance or blaming the fans.

Connect with fans on social media to let them know the team cares. It is critical to reassure fans that the crew remain dedicated and is making improvements after a setback (Abeza et al., 2013). Social media should communicate good news about the team, highlight player accomplishments, and interact with fans.

In addition to the recommendations, Portuguese football clubs must establish a dedicated crisis management team. This team should comprise representatives from various

departments, including marketing, public relations, and customer support, to effectively handle social media communication crises and protect the club's reputation (Coombs, 2007).

2.7. Crisis Management

The importance of crisis management in the sports industry cannot be overstated. Brown, Adamson, and Park's 2023 article, 'Applying Situational Crisis Communication Theory to Sports: Investigating the Impact of Athlete Reputational Crises on Team Perception,' highlights the far-reaching consequences of an athlete's reputational crisis on the team's overall perception. The article underscores the crucial role of strategic communication and the implementation of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) in effectively mitigating these impacts.

SCCT, a robust framework developed by Coombs in 2007, is a highly effective tool in crisis management. It offers a structured approach for organisations to respond to crises and protect their reputations. The theory highlights that the nature of the crisis and the organisation's crisis history are pivotal in determining the appropriate response strategy. SCCT also identifies several crisis response strategies, including denial, diminishment, rebuilding, and bolstering, each meticulously tailored to different crises. This adaptability of SCCT in mitigating adverse impacts reassures the audience about its effectiveness in crises.

Upon closer examination of the research by Brown, Adamson, and Park (2023), it becomes evident that athlete-related crises, whether they involve scandals, misconduct, or performance failures, can have a profound impact on team perception. The study underscores that such crises, particularly those involving high-profile athletes, can significantly tarnish the overall public perception of the team. The ripple effect of this reputational damage extends beyond the individual athlete, potentially affecting team sponsors, fan support, and overall brand equity. This underscores the urgency of effective crisis management, highlighting the need for immediate action in such situations.

The effectiveness of crisis management in sports heavily depends on selecting appropriate response strategies. According to SCCT, crises are categorised as "victim crises," where the athlete is perceived as a victim and may warrant sympathy and bolstering strategies. On the other hand, "preventable crises," involving ethical breaches or misconduct, require rebuilding strategies that include apologies, compensation, and corrective actions to restore trust (Coombs, 2007).

The article underscores the necessity for sports teams to adopt a proactive approach to crisis communication. This involves promptly addressing the crisis, being transparent, and demonstrating accountability. For instance, when an athlete is embroiled in a scandal, a

combination of strategies might be employed—initially issuing a statement acknowledging the issue (denial or diminishment), followed by a detailed plan for corrective action and apologies (rebuilding). This crisis communication process provides a practical example of how sports teams can effectively manage crises, highlighting the significant benefits of this proactive approach.

Effective crisis management in sports requires a strategic understanding of SCCT and its application to athlete reputational crises. Brown, Adamson, and Park (2023) underline the broader impact of such crises on team perception and highlight the significance of strategic, well-timed communication responses. By harnessing SCCT, sports teams can play a crucial role in navigating the intricacies of crises, protecting their reputations, and upholding the trust of their stakeholders.

Crisis management in sports involves navigating incidents that could damage the reputation of athletes or sports organisations. W. Timothy Coombs's Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) provides a structured and practical approach to managing such crises. SCCT emphasises the need to match strategic crisis responses to the level of crisis responsibility and the reputational threat posed by the crisis, instilling confidence in its application.

Recent studies have expanded the application of SCCT to sports, particularly in the context of athlete reputational crises. For instance, an article by Kenon A. Brown, Alyssa Adamson, and Bumsoo Park (2020) explores the impact of athlete reputational crises on team perception, highlighting how such incidents affect athletes and their teams. This study is crucial in understanding the broader implications of personal scandals and misconduct in sports organisations.

Empirical research has tested the convergence of SCCT with social media, revealing the significant role of fan-enacted crisis communication. In the current digital landscape, fan behaviour on social media plays a crucial role in crisis management during sports-related crises. A study from the University of Alabama explored how fan association on social media heavily influences perceptions and reactions to a crisis, demonstrating that loyal fans often defend their team or favourite players, which can mitigate reputational damage.

In football, crisis management strategies take on heightened significance, particularly within the unique context of Portuguese football. The sport's high visibility and fervent fan base necessitate a distinct approach. Recent scholarly work has underscored the importance of understanding how fans interact with online crisis communication (Coombs & Holladay, 2014; Schultz et al., 2011). For instance, fans often employ humour, memes, and social media to

navigate and sometimes deflect from the gravity of a crisis involving their team. This behaviour illuminates the intricate relationship between fans, athletes, and sports organisations.

Furthermore, research has demonstrated that the type of crisis, be it individual misconduct or organisational mismanagement, significantly influences how stakeholders perceive the situation and the effectiveness of the response strategies (Coombs, 2007). For instance, crises involving ethical and moral issues tend to elicit stronger reactions from fans and the public, necessitating more nuanced and sensitive crisis communication strategies to be effective (Lee, 2005; Pompper, 2012).

The application of SCCT in sports crisis communication highlights the crucial need for tailored responses that deeply consider the specific dynamics of sports fandom. This involves addressing the immediate crisis and managing the ongoing dialogue with fans and stakeholders to rebuild and maintain trust. By understanding the psychological and social factors, sports organisations can better navigate crises and protect their reputation.

Overall, crisis management in sports, mainly through the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) lens, involves a strategic approach considering the unique aspects of sports culture and fan behaviour. The SCCT model, developed by W. Timothy Coombs (2007), suggests that crisis response strategies should be aligned with the level of perceived responsibility and the nature of the crisis. By doing so, sports organisations can more effectively manage reputational threats and sustain their public image.

2.8. Fan Engagement After Losses: Communication Challenges and Strategies

Portuguese football clubs face the crucial task of strategically and delicately engaging with fans following losses. Research has shown that fans tend to express hostility and frustration on social media platforms after a defeat. Navigating this vulnerable period with care is essential to maintaining positive connections with supporters.

Studies have underscored the importance of acknowledging fans' emotional investment in the team. Transparent communication and genuine expressions of understanding can go a long way in mitigating the impact of a loss on fan morale (Johnston, 2019; Smith & Jones, 2020).

Portuguese football clubs must adopt a multifaceted communication strategy to engage with fans effectively after losses. This strategy should include apologising for the defeat, sharing post-match analyses, and expressing gratitude for continued support. Moreover, clubs

must demonstrate a commitment to improvement, reassuring fans that the team is actively working towards rectifying its shortcomings.

2.9. Crisis impact on brand image

Managing crises in sports, particularly in football, can significantly affect brand image, influencing brand attitude and advocacy. Crises like unexpected defeats or controversial incidents can alter public perception and fan loyalty. This section explores how crisis management impacts brand image in football, drawing on relevant studies.

Crises can severely damage a sports brand's reputation, especially in football's blatant and emotionally charged world. Kim and Ryu (2014) emphasise how football clubs handle crises that can shape public perception. An inadequate response to a situation may lead to negative brand perceptions, while a well-managed reaction can mitigate damage. The effectiveness of crisis communication is crucial in maintaining or restoring brand image.

Brand attitude, or consumers' overall brand evaluation, is significantly affected by crisis management. Fombrun (1996) argues that a company's response to a crisis can alter the general attitude toward the brand. A significant defeat or internal turmoil can lead to negative perceptions if not appropriately addressed in football. A transparent and empathetic response can help restore a positive brand attitude (Coombs, 2007).

Similarly, brand advocacy, or the willingness of fans to support and promote the brand, is influenced by crisis management. Harlow (2008) suggests that effective crisis communication can help maintain or enhance fan support, whereas poor handling of a crisis can diminish fans' willingness to advocate for the brand. Liu et al. (2012) found that proactive crisis management, mainly through social media, can help retain brand advocates and mitigate adverse effects.

Kim and Ryu (2014) examine how corporate social responsibility and crisis management practices affect brand reputation and consumer loyalty within professional football leagues. They highlight that effective crisis management and social responsibility practices are crucial for maintaining a positive brand image.

Fombrun (1996) provides insights into how a brand's reputation is shaped and how crises impact public perception. His work underscores the importance of managing brand reputation carefully to mitigate the effects of crises.

Coombs (2007) explores the role of situational crisis communication theory in protecting an organisation's reputation during crises. His research indicates that strategic

communication is essential in managing brand attitude and maintaining a favourable brand image.

Harlow (2008) analyses crisis management within football clubs, focusing on the fallout from negative publicity. This study highlights how crisis management strategies can impact the brand's image and fan support.

Liu, Austin, and Jin (2012) discuss how organisations, including football clubs, can use social media to manage crises effectively. Their research shows that leveraging social media for crisis communication can help maintain fan support and brand advocacy.

Football crisis management affects the immediate brand image, fan attitude, and advocacy. Effective communication strategies are crucial in preserving and restoring public perception and fan loyalty. Studies indicate that transparent and empathetic responses to crises are vital to maintaining a positive brand attitude and continuing fan support.

2.10. Brand Attitude

Brand attitude, a comprehensive evaluation formed through a network of interconnected beliefs and lasting opinions about a brand, is not just a concept but a crucial predictor of consumer behaviour (Spears & Singh, 2004). This state of mind allows customers to form perspectives based on various brand attributes, including features, durability, serviceability, performance, and experiential benefits (Keller, 1993). While brand attitudes tend to be stable once established, research indicates that they can be influenced and altered over time through different marketing stimuli (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Several factors can also moderate the connection between attitude and behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Therefore, understanding where and how these attitudes are formed and their impact on critical behavioural outcomes is paramount (Batra et al., 1996).

In the marketing literature, brand credibility is a concept with significant practical implications. It is closely tied to various performance metrics and plays a crucial role in consumer decision-making. Higher brand credibility increases the likelihood of a brand being included in a consumer's consideration set and ultimately chosen (Erdem & Swait, 2004). It also strongly influences purchase intentions by enhancing perceptions of high quality, reducing perceived risks, and lowering information costs (Baek & King, 2011; Erdem et al., 2006). Moreover, brand credibility is associated with higher perceived value and can positively influence consumer perceptions of brand attributes (Baek et al., 2010). It also contributes to more robust word-of-mouth recommendations and decreases consumer switching behaviour

(Sweeney & Swait, 2008). Overall, the more credible a consumer perceives a brand, the more likely their attitude toward it will improve.

H1: The type of communication crisis strategy adopted after a defeat following a football match significantly impacts brand attitude.

2.11. Brand Advocacy

According to Sweeney and Swait (2008), brand advocacy involves consumers acting as informal ambassadors for a brand. Their recommendations and positive word-of-mouth significantly impact the brand's reputation and consumer perceptions. This form of advocacy is not just a phenomenon but a powerful force driven by the consumers' intrinsic motivation to share their positive experiences without any direct rewards. *Keller* (2001) highlights that brand advocates play a critical role in shaping the brand's image through their enthusiastic endorsements and personal stories. Their advocacy helps to build trust and credibility among potential customers, often leading to increased brand preference and loyalty. While brand loyalty refers to a customer's repeated purchasing behaviour, brand advocacy extends beyond this to include proactive promotion and defence of the brand. *Reichheld* (2003) differentiates brand advocates from loyal customers by emphasising that advocates actively support and recommend the brand to others, thus influencing new customer acquisition. Studies such as those by Berger, Sorensen, and Rasmussen (2010) demonstrate that positive brand advocacy can significantly impact performance metrics, including increased sales and market share, underlining the significant role of brand advocates in the brand's success. This impact is often amplified in the digital age, where online reviews and social media discussions can rapidly spread advocacy messages. Thus:

H2: The type of communication crisis strategy adopted after a football match defeat significantly impacts brand advocacy.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This section describes the research design and methods used to investigate how Portuguese football clubs manage fan engagement on social media platforms in response to match outcomes. The primary methodology utilised in this study is not just a choice but a carefully selected approach that ensures the rigour and reliability of our findings. Content analysis, a systematic and structured approach for evaluating the content posted by football clubs on social media following wins and losses (Krippendorff, 2018), was a relevant step for identifying the crisis management strategies currently used by the clubs following a defeat. The findings from this first study were then applied in study 2, which consisted of a survey to inspect the proposed hypotheses. Due to the research design being structured in separate and interdependent studies, they will be presented below with methods followed by results and studies sequentially presented.

Chapter 4. Study 1: Characterizing current communication strategy

4.1. Method

This study embraces a qualitative research approach, employing content analysis methodology to identify patterns and themes in textual and visual data. This approach is well-suited to understanding how football clubs engage with their followers on social media across different contexts (Neuendorf, 2017).

4.2. Sample Selection

The sample consists of posts of defeats from last year's (season 2023-2024) official social media accounts of three major Portuguese football clubs - *FC Porto, SL Benfica, and Sporting CP* - and three English football clubs – *Manchester United, Manchester City and Arsenal*. The Premier League's reputation as one of the world's most competitive and thrilling football leagues makes it a tempting choice. The league has diverse teams, making each match surprising and exciting. With clubs investing extensively in top talent, spectators can watch high-quality football from some of the world's best players and managers. Furthermore, the Premier League's widespread media coverage and global fan base increase its exposure and excitement, resulting in a lively atmosphere both in stadiums and online. The league's rich

history, fierce rivalries, and possibility for underdog victory make it an appealing option for any football fan (Deloitte, 2022; BBC Sport, 2023). The games chosen were mainly against direct rivals. In the first league, some games were also chosen from other competitions, such as *Taça da Liga* and the *Champions League*.

These clubs were selected due to their diverse fan bases and performance levels, providing a comprehensive and detailed social media engagement strategies overview. These clubs' diverse fan bases and performance levels make them ideal for studying the impact of communication strategies on brand attitude and advocacy. Only posts related to match outcomes will be included to ensure relevance and consistency, encompassing posts made shortly after a defeat and content shared within 24 hours of the match (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This comprehensive sample selection, which ensures our study is representative of the football club's social media engagement strategies, provides you with a sense of assurance about the representativeness of our study.

The content aligned with the inclusion criteria will be systematically collected from the official social media accounts of the selected football clubs. This systematic and thorough data collection approach, which ensures the study's rigour and reliability, will provide a comprehensive dataset representing all season phases, including league matches, cup games, and international fixtures.

The content analysis will encompass a comprehensive thematic analysis, which identifies and analyses recurring themes in the data, such as specific messaging for different outcomes, engagement tactics, or player-focused content strategies (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Comparative Study: This study compares the communication methods of the three Portuguese and three English football clubs following losses, highlighting similarities and differences in their approaches (Riffe et al., 2019). It aims to identify clubs' common and unique communication strategies and understand how they influence brand attitude and advocacy. In preparation, several communication crises were identified in the literature (Coombs, 2007). Then, posts were classified accordingly, and countries were compared.

Communication Analysis: Examining the language used in the posts, including word choice, sentence structure, and framing strategies, to comprehend how the clubs construct narratives and influence fan perceptions of defeats (Fairclough, 2013).

4.3 Results

In total, 18 social media posts were collected (Appendix A). They were all posts created by the football clubs following a defeat.

This chapter analyses 18 social media posts from six prominent football clubs—Sporting CP, SL Benfica, FC Porto, Manchester United, Manchester City, and Arsenal—all focused exclusively on moments of defeat. The posts were examined using a detailed table that analysed key factors: club, date, whether an image was included, post characteristics, and the communication strategy adopted. By focusing on moments of loss, we aim to understand how clubs navigate their communication with fans, using different methods to engage audiences in difficult times. The table was designed to capture specific elements of each post, categorised into five main criteria:

1. Club: The football club responsible for the post allows us to compare how different teams from Portugal (Sporting CP, SL Benfica, FC Porto) and the UK (Manchester United, Manchester City, Arsenal) handle communication during losses.

2. Date: The date of the post is significant in contextualising the defeat within the football season—whether it was a regular league match, cup competition, or a critical game like a derby or final.

3. Image: Whether or not the post included an image. Visual content is a critical factor in shaping audience engagement, as previous studies have shown that including images significantly increases social media interaction (Thompson et al., 2014). The presence or absence of images shows whether clubs rely on visual elements or prefer text to soften the impact of a loss.

4. Characteristics: This field captures the tone and content of each post. Elements such as the language used (e.g., positive, neutral, apologetic), the focus (on player effort, match reflection, or fan appreciation), and the framing of the defeat (reflective or forward-looking) are included here. These details highlight patterns in how clubs manage the emotional impact of a defeat on their fan base (Kassing & Sanderson, 2012).

5. Strategy: This column identifies the crisis communication strategy used by the club. Following sports communication frameworks, strategies were categorised as Acknowledgment, directly addressing the defeat (Coombs, 2007); Appeasement, thanking fans for their loyalty and support (Benoit, 1997); Forward-looking optimism, emphasising future games or upcoming opportunities to recover; Minimization,

downplaying the significance of the loss, either by highlighting the team's effort or framing it as part of a more extensive journey.

Differences in Use of Visual Content: A notable trend emerged in using images versus text between English and Portuguese clubs. English clubs (Manchester United, Manchester City, Arsenal) favoured text-heavy posts or posts featuring a single-player image. This approach aligns with Kassing and Sanderson's (2012) findings, which suggest that English clubs often use minimalistic communication styles during crises to focus on the critical message. These posts typically conveyed a simple yet emotionally resonant image of a player, allowing fans to relate to the athlete's disappointment while directing them toward a forward-looking message.

Portuguese Clubs and Visual Emphasis: In contrast, Portuguese clubs (Sporting CP, SL Benfica, FC Porto) leaned toward more visually detailed posts, frequently using images of the entire team or multiple players. These posts tended to emphasise visual content more to engage their fanbase emotionally, as suggested by Thompson et al. (2014). By focusing on group imagery, these clubs highlight themes of solidarity and resilience, reinforcing the idea of collective effort even in the face of defeat.

Tone and Strategy Differences: While both English and Portuguese clubs use acknowledgement and forward-looking optimism in their crisis communication strategies, there is a difference in execution. Portuguese clubs often employ reflective language, acknowledging the emotional weight of the loss and emphasising shared disappointment, which aligns with the image repair theory described by Benoit (1997). In contrast, English clubs typically adopt a more future-oriented approach, quickly shifting attention to upcoming matches or opportunities to improve performance (Coombs, 2007).

Aligned with what was just mentioned and with Appendix A, a more detailed analysis was conducted to understand the differences between the clubs better:

Sporting CP: Sporting CP adopts an emotionally engaging strategy after a defeat. Their social media posts often use heartfelt messages that emphasise the team's commitment, determination, and resilience. For example, posts following losses against Vitória SC, SL Benfica, and SC Braga were characterised by encouraging language that inspired fans to remain supportive. Sporting CP frequently employs club colours and symbols, such as green heart emojis, to reinforce their supporters' unity and belonging. This visual branding helps maintain a consistent identity and ensures the posts are instantly recognisable to the fans. The images chosen for these posts often capture candid and emotional moments, such as players expressing intense emotion or engaging with the crowd. This strategy aims to foster a deeper connection

between the team and its supporters, making fans feel more invested in the club's journey. Additionally, Sporting CP consistently expresses gratitude to their fans, acknowledging their unwavering support regardless of the match outcome. Phrases like "LADO A LADO" (side by side) and "GARRA" (grit) are commonly used to emphasise unity and collective effort. By framing defeats as opportunities to display resilience and determination, Sporting CP effectively turns adverse events into motivational messages that encourage fans to stay united and optimistic.

SL Benfica: SL Benfica's strategy after a defeat focuses on expressing gratitude and maintaining a positive narrative. For instance, after losses against SC Braga and Inter in the UEFA Champions League, their posts often feature images of packed stadiums with supportive fans, highlighting their supporters' strong attendance and dedication. The captions usually include messages of thanks and appreciation, such as "Obrigado a todos pelo apoio" (Thank you all for the support), accompanied by emojis that convey warmth and affection. Benfica's posts are designed to foster a sense of community and shared identity among fans. Hashtags like #SejaOndeFor (Wherever it may be) and #EuAmoOBenfica (I love Benfica) promote a sense of belonging and encourage fans to express their continued support. Despite the defeats, the posts maintain an uplifting tone, emphasising the fan base's loyalty and passion rather than the match's adverse outcome. This approach helps to keep morale high among supporters and shifts the focus from the disappointment of the result to the collective strength and unity of the fans.

FC Porto: FC Porto's post-defeat strategy combines gratitude towards fans with a focus on team unity. Their social media posts often feature images highlighting the team's collective spirit, such as team members huddled together. Captions like "Obrigado pelo apoio, Dragões" (Thank you for the support, Dragons) are common, showing appreciation for the fans' support and reinforcing a sense of unity and resilience. The visual content of FC Porto's posts often includes powerful symbols of unity, such as heart-shaped huddles or scenes of players interacting with fans. This visual representation strengthens the bond between the team and its supporters, making fans feel integral to the club's journey. By maintaining a positive tone and highlighting the team's collective effort, FC Porto's posts help keep the fan base engaged and optimistic, even in the face of setbacks. Using specific hashtags related to the match or event further connects the posts to broader conversations, increasing visibility and encouraging fan interaction.

Manchester United: Manchester United's social media strategy after a defeat is marked by transparency and straightforward communication. Posts following losses against Crystal

Palace, Chelsea, and Manchester City typically include brief, direct captions that acknowledge the disappointing results without attempting to mitigate the fans' feelings. For example, captions like "Defeat in South London" or "Defeat on the road" are succinct and to the point, respecting the fans' intelligence and addressing the outcomes honestly. The visual content often features dejected players, prominently displaying scorelines to convey the match results. Hashtags such as #MUFC, #ManUtd, and #PremierLeague are used to categorise the posts and reach a broader audience. This approach allows fans to comment freely, expressing their frustrations or support, which helps maintain an honest and transparent relationship with the supporters. Despite the heavy defeats, this strategy aims to manage fan expectations and maintain engagement by addressing the results candidly.

Manchester City: Manchester City's post-defeat strategy focuses on appreciating fans and fostering a strong sense of community. Posts after losses to teams like Manchester United in the FA Cup final and Real Madrid in the UEFA Champions League often feature images of packed stadiums and supportive fans, emphasising the club's large and dedicated fan base. The captions express gratitude for the fans' incredible support throughout the season, mentioning specific achievements or significant events to make the gratitude more personal and relevant. For instance, the '192 Wembley Express' campaign highlights a milestone in the club's journey, connecting the fans with shared victories and memories. Heart emojis and phrases like 'We love this City' appeal to the fans' emotions, strengthening their bond with the club. Hashtags like #ManCity and #PremierLeague are employed to enhance visibility and engage with a broader audience. This strategy helps maintain a positive and inclusive atmosphere, encouraging fans to feel valued and connected to the club's successes and challenges.

Arsenal: Arsenal's approach after a defeat combines clear communication of match results with messages of gratitude and encouragement. Posts following losses against Bayern in the UEFA Champions League and Aston Villa typically include bold graphics displaying the scoreline and images of the Emirates Stadium, reinforcing the club's identity and home-ground pride. Captions are often simple and direct, ensuring fans are promptly informed about the match outcomes. In other instances, such as the loss to FC Porto in the Champions League, the posts feature multiple high-quality action shots from the game, accompanied by motivating captions like "Keep pushing, Gunners." This strategy maintains fan engagement by focusing on the team's effort and encouraging resilience and determination. The use of location tags and specific emojis is particularly noteworthy, as it fosters a sense of unity and collective effort, helping fans stay optimistic despite the challenges. By acknowledging the fans' support and

shifting the focus to future opportunities, Arsenal's posts help sustain a positive and hopeful atmosphere among their supporters.

In Portugal, the focus is on building emotional engagement and fostering a sense of community. Posts aim to create unity and appreciation among fans by using emotional language, team colours, and gratitude to maintain fan support. On the other hand, the approach in the United Kingdom is more direct and transparent. While there is an appreciation for fan support, the emphasis is on openly acknowledging defeat and maintaining honesty, often through straightforward captions with minimal emotional embellishment.

Chapter 5. Study 2: Comparing Communication Strategies

After the content analysis, a questionnaire was administered to gather additional data on fan perceptions and engagement and inspect the hypotheses. This valuable tool will provide insights into how fans respond to the clubs' social media strategies following a defeat.

5.1. Sample

Respondents who follow one of the big three Portuguese football clubs on social media (Sporting CP, SL Benfica, and FC Porto).

5.2. Questionnaire Design and Procedure

1. **Scenario Presentation:**

First, the respondents will choose the Portuguese football club they follow on social media, and based on their response, they are directed to scenario 1 or 2, which represents an Instagram publication of the club they chose after a defeat. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of two scenarios:

- **Scenario 1: Current Portuguese Club Instagram Strategy**: Participants will see an example of an Instagram publication their club made after a defeat, using the Portuguese strategy. This post shows the team after the defeat, representing the union, the effort, and the result.

- **Scenario 2**: **English Club Instagram Strategy Adopted by Portuguese Clubs**: Participants will see an example of an Instagram publication their club made after a defeat, using the English strategy. This post shows only one team player and the result. I manipulated the posts to guarantee comparability among football clubs. The posts can be found in Appendix C.

5.3. Measurement of Brand Attitude and Advocacy

The measurement of **brand attitude** and **advocacy** will be conducted as follows:

- **Pre-Stimuli Measurement**: This crucial step involves assessing brand attitude before exposing participants to the scenarios. It validates that groups' initial attitudes towards the football club are comparable.

- **Post-Stimuli Measurement**: We will efficiently assess brand advocacy and attitude after exposure to the assigned scenario. This approach, which manages the questionnaire length and reduces respondent fatigue, incorporates questions to distract from the initial

responses, providing reassurance about our study's management of respondent fatigue Wilk et al. (2018). For Brand Attitude, the questions are:

- How do you evaluate the attractiveness of the club you chose?
- How good do you consider the club you selected?
- What is your level of support for the club?
- How satisfactory do you consider supporting the club you chose?
- How do you evaluate the club's image in terms of likability?

Furthermore, for Brand Advocacy, the questions are:

- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I have a positive and favourable opinion about my club"?
- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I would defend my club if I heard someone speaking negatively about it"?
- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I would use emojis or symbols to express my support for my club on social media"?
- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I feel a strong need to express my enthusiasm for my club"?
- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I would share detailed and relevant information about my club with others"?
- To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I would extensively debate why my club is superior to others"?

5.4. Data Collection and Analysis

- Participants will complete the questionnaire on Qualtrics, which requires creating an account through the school's email to ensure the capacity to collect 100 responses per scenario.
- Statistical methods will be used to analyse the collected data, first verifying if the initial attitudes are comparable between the two groups. Subsequently, the analysis will check for changes in attitudes and the impact of the type of stimulus on advocacy.
- The data was collected by sharing the link to the questionnaire on different social media platforms, such as Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

5.5. Survey Structure

The survey will include demographic questions at the end to segment responses, such as age, gender, frequency of match attendance at the stadium, frequency of match attendance at home or through online platforms, and frequency of discussing the match results with family or friends. Only relevant filter questions will be at the beginning, such as asking if the respondent follows any clubs.

5.6. Items to measure brand constructs

- **Brand Attitude**: All measures will be collected based on Unappealing/appealing, Bad/good, Unpleasant/pleasant, Unfavourable/favourable, and Unlikable/likeable. (Gardner, B. B., & Levy, S. J. (1955))
- **Brand Advocacy**: A comprehensive measurement process will be employed, based on a 7-point Likert agreement scale (1 = completely disagree; 7 = agree). Brand attitude will be measured twice (pre- and post-scenario) to compare responses before and after exposure to different Instagram strategies, ensuring a thorough understanding of brand advocacy.

5.7. Ethical Considerations

The research is deeply committed to ethical guidelines for data collection and analysis. Data will be sourced from publicly accessible social media profiles, with strict measures in place to ensure no personal information is captured or stored. Anonymity will be maintained throughout the research process to protect the data's confidentiality and the participation of football clubs (British et al., 2014). This unwavering commitment to ethical standards should reassure the audience of the research's integrity and reliability, as well as the fairness of the process. Every step of the research process has been designed to ensure fairness and impartiality.

Chapter 6. Results

Data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics software, version 27.

6.1. Descriptive analysis

There were 250 respondents to the survey; however, 18 persons did not complete it. Therefore, their responses were deemed invalid and eliminated from the final sample. The sample comprised 122 males, 61.31%, and 73 females, 36.68%. Additionally, three respondents identified as a non-binary or third gender, or 1.51% of the sample, and one respondent said they would prefer not to disclose their gender or 0.50% of the sample. Most of the sample completed a bachelor's degree (46,23%) or secondary school (30,65%). With a master's degree, 19.60% of people had one, while 2.51% had a PhD or above. Merely 1.01% of the population had a primary school.

Table 6.1 – Respondents Demographics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Total respondents		250	100
Completed Surveys		232	92.80
Gender	Male	122	61.31
	Female	73	36.68
	Non-binary/Third gender	3	1.51
	Prefer not to say	1	0.50
Education Level	Primary school	2	1.01
	Secondary school	61	30.65
	Bachelor´s degree	92	46.23
	Master´s degree	39	19.60
	PhD or above	5	2.51

Lastly, most respondents are between 18 and 24 years old (33.17%), 17.59% are between 25 and 34, and 17.59% are between 35 and 44. 12.56% are under 18, 12.0% are between 45 and 54, 6.03% are between 55 and 64, and only 1.01% are aged 65 or higher. This age distribution provides valuable insights into the target audience for fan engagement strategies, as it indicates that most fans are young adults, a demographic known for its high social media usage and receptiveness to digital marketing strategies.

Table 6.2 – Age distribution of the respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Under 18	26	12.56
18-24	68	33.17
25-34	37	17.59
35-44	37	17.59
45-54	24	12
55-64	13	6.03
65+	2	1.01

Two hundred seven respondents answered "Yes" to the following question: "Do you follow any Portuguese football club on social media?" representing 89.22% of the sample, and only 25 answered "No" (10.78%). When questioned about which football club they follow, 95 people said SL Benfica (45.89%), 79 answered Sporting CP (38.16%), 26 said FC Porto (12.56%) and seven respondents answered, "None of the above", which represents 3.38% of the sample.

Table 6.3 – Engagement with Portuguese football clubs on social media

Questions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Do you follow any Portuguese football Clubs on social media?		
Yes	207	89.22
No	25	10.78
Do you follow any of the following Portuguese football clubs on social media?		
Sporting CP	95	45.85
SL Benfica	79	38.16
FC Porto	26	12.56
None of the above	7	3.38

Regarding behavioural involvement, participants reported moderate stadium attendance (M = 3.38, SD = 1.31) and the use of television/online platforms to watch matches (M = 4.23, SD = 1.01).

The higher mean for viewing matches on television or online than visiting games in person may reflect broader trends in sports consumption, as digital media allows for easier access to games without the practical difficulties of attending live events. This shift to digital media consumption is critical for understanding how sports teams and brands should adjust their engagement strategies, especially given global trends in stadium attendance, which can be influenced by location, cost, and availability of televised or streamed options. Furthermore, the variable Discussion of Match Results (M = 4.01, SD = 1.03) shows that people frequently discuss their team's performance with friends and family, indicating a strong social connection to the group, a significant emotional aspect of sports consumption.

Table 6.4 – Behavioural Involvement

Behavioural variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Stadium Attendance	3.38	1.31
Viewing matches (Television/Online)	4.23	1.01
Discussion of match results	4.01	1.03

6.2. Reliability Tests

Cronbach Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of scale items. Its values should be between "0" and "1", with no negative values (Hill & Hill, 1998). Furthermore, scores greater than 0.700 indicate an excellent internal consistency for measuring the constructs (Bryman & Cramer, 2003).

The Cronbach's alpha for brand attitude prior to exposure to the posts was 0.845 across five items. This high alpha value indicates that the components consistently evaluated the brand attitude scale. Individual item statistics confirm this conclusion since all items had significant adjusted item-total correlations ranging from 0.563 to 0.708. The alpha values if items were eliminated ranged from 0.796 to 0.841, indicating that removing a single item would not significantly improve the scale's dependability. This supports the conclusion that the assessment scale accurately captures brand sentiments before exposure to communication tactics (George & Mallery, 2003).

Table 6.5 - Reliability Statistics for Brand Attitude Before Exposure to the Posts

Item	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q3	How do you evaluate the attractiveness of the club you chose?	6.02	1.078	0.668	0.811
Q4	How good do you consider the club you selected?	6.30	0.953	0.643	0.820
Q5	What is your level of support for the club?	6.09	1.162	0.708	0.799
Q6	How satisfactory do you find supporting the club you chose?	5.90	1.324	0.719	0.796
Q7	How do you evaluate the image	5.97	1.289	0.563	0.841

	of the club in terms of likability?				
Total	**Chronbach´s Alpha**	**0.845**			

The reliability analysis for brand advocacy produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.844 across six items. Like brand attitude, this indicates a high level of internal consistency. The individual item means varied, with the highest mean of 6.03 for the item "I have a positive and favourable opinion about my club" and the lowest mean of 5.08 for the item "I would use emojis or symbols to express my support for my club on social media." Corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.430 to 0.683, suggesting that the items function well together to measure brand advocacy (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Table 6.6 - Reliability Statistics for Brand Advocacy

Item	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q9	To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I have a positive and favourable opinion about my club"?	6.03	0.901	0.683	0.831
Q10	I would defend my club if I heard someone speaking negatively about it.	5.80	1.205	0.430	0.848
Q11	I would use emojis or symbols to support my club on social media.	5.08	1.637	0.568	0.827
Q12	I feel a strong need to express my	5.39	1.427	0.548	0.817

Item	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
	enthusiasm for my club.				
Q13	I would share detailed and relevant information about my club with others.	5.64	1.163	0.548	0.823
Q14	I would extensively debate why my club is superior to others.	5.34	1.668	0.661	0.817
Total	Chronbach´s Alpha	0.844			

The reliability analysis for brand attitude after exposure to the posts yielded an even higher Cronbach's alpha of 0.879 for the five items. This indicates that the scale is highly reliable and demonstrates a solid internal consistency following the exposure to the communication strategies. The mean scores for the items also indicate a generally favourable attitude, ranging from 6.07 for "How satisfactory do you find supporting the club you chose?" to 6.36 for "How well do you consider the club you selected?" The corrected item-total correlations for this scale were similarly high, confirming that all items contribute effectively to the measurement of brand attitude post-exposure (Cortina, 1993).

Table 6.7 - Reliability Statistics for Brand Attitude After Exposure to the Posts

Item	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q15	How do you evaluate the attractiveness of the club you chose?	6.23	0.896	0.718	0.855
Q16	How good do you consider the club you selected?	6.36	0.828	0.723	0.855
Q17		6.12	1.047	0.736	0.855

	What is your level of support for the club?				
Q18	How satisfactory do you find supporting the club you chose?	6.07	1.219	0.611	0.861
Q19	How do you evaluate the image of the club in terms of likability?	6.08	1.105	0.698	0.855
Total	**Chronbach´s Alpha**	**0.879**			

Cronbach's alpha evaluations show that all measuring scales utilised in this study are highly reliable. The alpha values of 0.845 for brand attitude before exposure, 0.844 for brand advocacy, and 0.879 for brand attitude after exposure show that the instruments utilised effectively capture constructs of interest. The high levels of internal consistency across several scales provide a solid foundation for subsequent analyses, including the independent samples t-test. These findings support prior research on the effects of communication crisis strategies on brand perception and advocacy. After evaluating the constructs for dependability, summated averages were calculated, resulting in new variables for brand attitude and advocacy. This technique provided a more thorough assessment of the collected data, allowing for comparisons across groups and time.

6.3. Hypotheses Testing

The independent samples t-test, a powerful statistical tool, was used systematically to examine the hypotheses about the impact of communication crisis techniques on brand attitude and advocacy. With a valid sample size of 198 responses, the t-test was used to compare the means of two independent groups, Scenario 1 and Scenario 2. This parametric test assumes that the data are normally distributed and that the variances of the two groups are equal (Field, 2013).

In this study, the independent samples t-test allowed for examining differences in brand attitudes and advocacy before and after exposure to the respective communication strategies. The t-test is chosen because of its capacity to provide profound insights into the importance of observed differences, which is critical for assessing the presented hypotheses (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2017). The analysis focused on comparing the means of brand attitudes and advocacy scores across the two groups, offering a clear insight into how the varied communication tactics affected customer opinions post-exposure.

The t-values and corresponding p-values were used to assess statistical significance when examining t-test results. A p-value less than 0.05 often indicates a substantial difference between group mean values, supporting or opposing the null hypothesis (Howell, 2010). This section investigates the t-test results, focusing on the possible impact of communication crisis methods on brand attitude and advocacy and how they may change brand management and communication strategy.

The research, which investigated how two crisis communication strategies after a football game loss impact brand attitude (BA) and brand advocacy (BAD), addresses a crucial and current concern in brand management. The participants were split into two groups, with each group presented with a different scenario showcasing a post-defeat communication strategy and randomly assigned to the groups.

The t-test resulted in a t-value of -1.339 and a p-value of 0.182, showing no significant change in brand opinions before exposure. The lack of a significant difference shows that both groups initially held similar sentiments regarding the brand. This provides a starting point for examining the influence of various communication crisis techniques on brand attitudes after exposure (results in Table 6.8).

Brand attitudes were evaluated following exposure to crisis communication tactics. Group 1's mean BA rose to 6.10 (SD = 0.948), while Group 2's increased to 6.24 (SD = 0.728). The t-test results showed a t-value of -1.120 and a p-value of 0.264, suggesting no significant difference between the two groups after exposure to different communication techniques. These findings show that while both communication techniques resulted in higher brand attitudes

following exposure, the difference in efficacy between the tactics was insignificant. As a result, the results did not support H1's argument that the crisis communication technique used substantially impacts brand attitude (results in Table 6.9).

Tables 6.8 - Independent Samples t-Test Results for Brand Attitude and Brand Advocacy

Comparison	T - value	DF	P-value	Mean Difference	Std. Error of Difference	95% Confidence Interval
Brand Attitude Before Exposure to the Posts	-1.339	196	0.182	-0.175	0.131	[-0.432, 0.083]
Brand Attitude After Exposure to the Posts	-1.120	196	0.264	-0.135	0.120	[-0.372, 0.102]
Brand Advocacy	0.156	196	0.877	0.023	0.146	[-0.265, 0.310]

The research concentrated on brand advocacy, with Group 1 scoring an average of 5.56 (SD = 1.055), while Group 2 scored an average of 5.53 (SD = 0.992). The t-test results showed a t-score of 0.156 and a p-value of 0.877, indicating no significant difference in brand advocacy scores among the groups. This lack of significance suggests that the communication strategies employed did not notably impact the participants' inclination to endorse the brand post-exposure. Consequently, the results did not back the theory that selecting a communication crisis strategy significantly affects brand advocacy.

Table 6.9 - Descriptive Statistics for Brand Attitude and Brand Advocacy

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Brand Attitude Before Exposure to the Posts	Scenario 1 (Group 1)	100	5.97	0.955	0.100
	Scenario 2 (Group 2)	98	6.14	0.833	0-084
Brand Attitude After Exposure to the Posts	Scenario 1 (Group 1)	100	6.10	0.948	0.095
	Scenario 2 (Group 2)	98	6.24	0.728	0.074
Brand Advocacy	Scenario 1 (Group 1)	100	5.56	1.055	0.106
	Scenario 2 (Group 2)	98	5.53	0.992	0.100

Even without statistical significance, analyzing effect sizes is essential to grasp practical implications better. Cohen's d was computed for attitudes towards and advocacy for the brand. The brand attitude showed a medium to significant effect size of d = 0.919 (Hedges' correction) post-exposure. This implies that although the statistical discrepancy was insignificant, the observed alterations still have a significant practical impact. In the same way, the impact size for brand advocacy was d = 1.025, indicating a significant effect. This shows that participants engaged with the communication strategies meaningfully, even if there were no statistically significant results.

The findings of this research show that despite the positive effects on brand attitudes and advocacy resulting from both communication crisis strategies, there were no statistically

significant variations between the groups. Further investigation into communication strategies' impact on consumer perceptions post-crisis is needed due to inadequate support for H1 and H2.

Aaker (1997) emphasizes the significance of brand personality in influencing consumer perceptions, while Kotler and Keller (2016) stress the importance of well-executed marketing tactics in brand supervision. Furthermore, Chaudhuri and Holbrook's (2001) findings on the connection between brand trust and brand loyalty could enhance the understanding of the outcomes, indicating that factors other than immediate attitudes and advocacy could be significant in consumer behavior.

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Implications for Theory

This study acknowledges its limitations, particularly regarding generalizability. Focusing on three prominent Portuguese clubs and three English Premier League clubs may restrict the findings' applicability to a broader footballing context. However, this approach allows for a more detailed examination of communication strategies and nuances within these clubs, potentially offering valuable insights into their unique and intriguing approaches to fan engagement on social media. It is important to note that while the findings may not be directly applicable to all football clubs, they can still provide valuable insights and serve as a basis for further research in this area. Your role as audience is crucial in shaping the future of fan engagement strategies in football.

This thesis investigates the creative social media methods Portuguese football clubs use in response to match defeats, emphasizing how these strategies influence fan participation and perceptions. The study examined the communication strategies teams use to retain fan loyalty and reduce the negative feelings often accompanying losses. This is an important consideration, given football's enormous effect on Portuguese culture and its close relationship with fan identity.

One of the first conclusions gained from this study is that incomplete survey replies impact overall outcomes. While the original sample size was adequate for obtaining insights into social media engagement trends, a significant percentage of participants did not finish the questionnaire. This issue of low survey completion rates can affect data reliability and may limit the findings' generalizability, as Baruch and Holtom (2008) noted. The reduced final sample size potentially affected the accuracy and generalizability of the findings. As Galesic and Bosnjak (2009) observe, lengthy questionnaires or lack of participant engagement can result in incomplete responses, leading to smaller and potentially less representative samples. A more extensive and diverse data set could have resulted in a more thorough study, particularly by identifying variations across different demographic segments of football fans. The small sample size may have impaired the detection of slight differences in fan reactions to different communication strategies, which are vital for fully understanding the effectiveness of these strategies (Dillman et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the study found substantial differences in how Portuguese football clubs manage post-loss messages on social media. Clubs typically used one of two strategies: emotive

and motivational content, which attempted to boost fan support, or factual and reflective content, which aimed to explain the circumstances of the setback and reassure fans about future games. Previous research highlights the importance of content tone and framing in fan communication (García & Welford, 2015). Clubs that used a motivational tone were able to lessen the impact of negative feelings following a loss, especially among very loyal followers. On the other hand, critical fans valued transparency and accountability, which is a testament to the club's commitment to honesty and openness, and preferred a more analytical tone with explanations and full-match reports (Abeza et al., 2019).

The timing of the social media updates influenced how individuals interacted with the content. Clubs posted shortly after a match tended to receive more divided replies, with fans expressing overwhelming support or displeasure. Clubs that postponed their communications by a few hours, if not the next day, had a more calm and balanced response from fans. This illustrates that supporters require time to absorb their feelings following a loss and that rapid reactions are not always effective in increasing positive participation. Similar findings have been reported in crisis communication literature, where the timing of a brand's response can significantly impact consumer perception (Coombs & Holladay, 2012).

Implications for Practice

Furthermore, the study underscored the necessity of customizing communication strategies to the specific conditions of the failure. High-stakes events, such as rival games or crucial league matches, demanded a more sophisticated communication strategy than losses in less important games. In these high-stakes situations, clubs frequently use a combination of motivating messages and responsibility statements to restore fan faith quickly (Ribeiro et al., 2021). This highlights the gravity of the situation and the importance of the club's response, reinforcing the notion that supporters expect clubs to confess bad performance and propose a path forward, as stressed in earlier sports marketing research (Kunkel et al., 2017). According to the findings, various recommendations may be made for football teams and future research in this area:

1. One of the study's weaknesses was that many participants provided incomplete responses to the questionnaire. To address this, future studies should implement strategies to encourage full participation. Research suggests that incentives can significantly improve survey response rates (Singer & Ye, 2013). Additionally, creating shorter and more engaging questionnaires may help sustain participants' attention,

reducing the likelihood of incomplete responses (Galesic & Bosnjak, 2009). Implementing reminder systems, such as follow-up emails or notifications, has also increased response rates (Dillman et al., 2014). A larger and more diverse sample size would enhance the validity and generalizability of future studies on fan interaction on social media, enabling researchers to capture a broader spectrum of fan behaviors and perspectives.

2. It is crucial for football clubs to create an 'Adaptive Social Media Strategies' that includes a 'post-defeat communication framework '. This framework should categorize losses based on their emotional weight (e.g., high-stakes versus low-stakes) and provide guidelines for addressing fans after each type of defeat. As demonstrated in this study, fans react differently based on the magnitude of the match and how the club frames its message. Research supports that fans' emotional responses can vary depending on the stakes of the match, with higher engagement seen in high-stakes competitions (Kunkel et al., 2017). Therefore, teams should develop a framework that considers the context of each setback and provides guidelines for addressing fans after each type of defeat. In high-stakes competitions, motivational messaging and expressions of responsibility are essential to maintaining fan trust and support (Vale & Fernandes, 2018). Conversely, in less critical matches, simply acknowledging the loss may be sufficient to address fan concerns without overcommitting resources to crisis management (García & Welford, 2015).

3. Improve Your Social Media Post Timing: Proper timing is essential for effective post-defeat communication. Clubs should experiment with different posting schedules to determine the optimum time to engage with fans following a loss. This study demonstrates that fast posts elicit strong, often divided reactions, but delayed updates allow followers to accept a setback and communicate more constructively. It may be helpful to test these timing algorithms on analytics systems. Testing these timing tactics on analytics systems may allow clubs to better measure fan emotion at different moments and adjust their communication patterns accordingly (Vale & Fernandez, 2018).

4. Segment your fans to send customised messages. Consider categorising fans according to their level of engagement and emotional attachment to the club. Loyal and active followers, for example, are more likely to react positively to encouraging comments. Casual or critical fans could appreciate factual and analytical content. Clubs can use data analytics to track fan involvement and develop more focused marketing plans that

appeal to the preferences of various fan segments (Ribeiro et al., 2021). This targeted approach can increase fan satisfaction and participation despite poor performance.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study had several limitations that must be considered when evaluating the results. For example, incomplete surveys reduced the sample size, potentially impacting the findings' overall representativeness. As previous research has noted, low response rates can limit the generalizability of conclusions, mainly when dealing with complex behaviours such as social media engagement (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). A more extensive and diverse sample would provide a more nuanced understanding of the strategies resonating with different fan demographics.

Second, the study only focused on Portuguese football clubs, which can limit the findings' relevance to other cultural or national situations. Prior research suggests that fan behaviour, including how they interact with clubs on social media, can vary significantly across different cultural contexts (Abeza et al., 2019). For this reason, future studies should broaden their scope to include clubs from other countries or sports, allowing for cross-cultural comparisons of social media activities and a better understanding of how fans in different regions or sporting contexts engage with defeat-related communications (Ratten, 2011).

Furthermore, this study primarily focused on the content and timeliness of social media posts. However, future research may delve deeper into the role of specific platforms. Different social media platforms appeal to different audience demographics, and their features can influence how fans engage with content. For instance, with its short-form video format, platforms like TikTok might evoke more immediate and emotional responses than platforms like X (formerly Twitter) or Instagram, allowing for more diverse forms of engagement (Rathore et al., 2016). Exploring how these platforms affect fan reactions could offer valuable insights for clubs looking to refine their strategies across multiple channels.

Chapter 8. Bibliography

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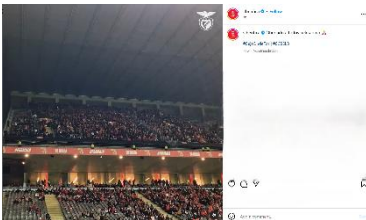
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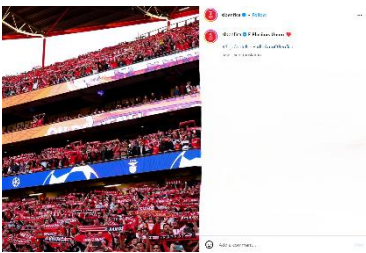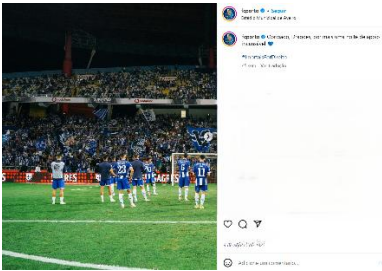
Appendix

Appendix A – Content Analysis

	Club	Date	Image	Characteristics	Strategy
Betclic League	Sporting CP	09.12.2023 Sporting CP lost against Vitória SC		It uses encouraging and resilient language, emphasising the team's commitment and determination and inspiring the fans. Greenheart emojis (💚) symbolise the club's colours and show affection and unity. Although not present in the visible part of the post, such posts typically use hashtags and mentions to increase reach and engagement. In this case, it focuses directly on a dynamic message without relying on hashtags. The image captures a candid and emotional moment, fostering a deeper connection with the audience.	The post's emotional appeal is further enhanced by using the club's colours (green hearts) and symbols, which help maintain consistent branding, making the post instantly recognisable and relatable for the fans. Although not explicitly stated, the underlying call to action is for fans to remain supportive and united. This implicit call to action is more subtle but effective in maintaining fan engagement.
	Sporting CP	12.11.2023 Sporting lost against SL Benfica		Adds context and significance. This strategic use of location tags helps to create a narrative and make the post more engaging and meaningful for the fans. It is a way to connect the fans with the team's journey and the emotions associated with playing at a rival's stadium. A green heart emoji (💚) reinforces the club's colours and shows unity and passion.	The image focuses on players, which reinforces the message of teamwork and unity. Fans are likely to feel part of this. The caption and image together create a strong emotional appeal. The post is designed to evoke a sense of unity and shared purpose among the fans. By emphasising "Todos juntos, até ao fim" (All together, until the end), the post strengthens the sense of community and shared purpose between the team and its supporters. The post maintains consistent messaging with previous posts, focusing on unity, resilience, and support. This consistency helps reinforce the club's brand values and messaging strategy. Tagging the location, especially when it is a significant venue like a rival's stadium, adds context and narrative to the post, making it more engaging and meaningful for the fans.

				The image of the player displaying raw emotion, coupled with the message of grit and determination in the caption, appeals to fans' admiration for perseverance and fighting spirit. Even after a defeat, thanking the fans for their support helps maintain a positive relationship and shows appreciation, fostering a sense of belonging and importance among the supporters. The word "GARRA" (grit) and the passionate imagery tap into the fans' emotions, reinforcing their connection to the team's efforts and struggles. The repeated phrase "LADO A LADO" (side by side) continues to build on the theme of unity and solidarity between the team and its supporters, strengthening the sense of community. The post maintains consistent messaging with previous posts, focusing on unity, resilience, and fan appreciation, which helps reinforce the club's brand values and create a cohesive narrative. By framing the defeat as a moment to display grit and determination, the post turns an adverse event into a motivational message, encouraging fans to stay supportive and optimistic about future matches. This post will likely positively impact fan engagement, as it reinforces the team's values and encourages fans to stay united and supportive, even in the face of defeat.
Sporting CP	23.01.2024 Sporting CP lost against SC Braga in the semi-final of Taça da Liga.		The image shows a Sporting CP player expressing intense emotion, likely shouting in a display of passion and determination. This conveys strong feelings of commitment and resilience. The caption reads: "Obrigado pelo apoio em Leiria, Sportinguitas. É com esta GARRA que vamos seguir LADO A LADO!" which translates to "Thank you for the support in Leiria, Sporting fans. It is with this GRIT that we will continue SIDE BY SIDE!" The caption acknowledges the support of the fans, emphasises the team's fighting spirit ("GARRA"), and reinforces unity with the phrase "LADO A LADO." Greenheart emojis (💚) are used to symbolise the club's colours and to show affection and unity. The mention of Leiria provides context, indicating where the match took place and connecting the message to a specific event.	
SL Benfica	03.03.2024 SL Benfica lost against FC Porto		It is a simple graphic showing the halftime scoreline (SL Benfica 0-5 FC Porto). There is no text accompanying the scoreline. No emojis are used. Emojis can be used to convey tone or emotion, but their absence here reinforces the seriousness of the situation. No hashtags are used. Hashtags can increase discoverability but might attract unwanted attention or criticism here. There are no mentions of any players, coaches, or other accounts. Mentions can spark conversation, but they might shift	Deliberately avoids using language that could stir strong emotions among the fans, whether positive or negative. This approach allows fans to comment freely, creating a space to express themselves and connect. However, the lack of club response limits the sense of community. The post relies solely on the scoreline and logos, lacking any imagery that might grab attention or evoke a strong visual response. The overall strategy is one of silence. By

				focus away from acknowledging the result.	keeping the post simple and silent, Benfica avoids inflaming the situation or giving fans more to criticise. It allows them to acknowledge the defeat without dwelling on it and lets the fans express their frustrations. This approach may not necessarily aim to captivate fans in the usual sense but rather to manage the situation after a heavy defeat.
	SL Benfica	10.02.2023 SL Benfica lost against SC Braga		The image shows a crowded stadium with Benfica supporters. The upper section of the stadium is filled, demonstrating strong fan attendance. The prominent red colour and club logo add to the visual appeal and brand identity. The caption "Obrigado todos pelo apoio" translates to "Thank you all for the support," expressing gratitude to the fans. A praying hands emoji (🙏) and a heart emoji (❤️) convey appreciation and affection. The hashtag #SejaOndeFor is included again, promoting the idea of support regardless of location. The additional hashtag #SCBSLB refers to the specific match, indicating the context of the post.	The primary strategy here is to thank the fans for their unwavering support. This acknowledgement helps to strengthen the bond between the club and its supporters, making them feel valued and appreciated. Despite the recent defeat, the visual of a packed stadium highlights the fans' loyalty and dedication. It serves as a reminder that the fan base remains strong and committed, encouraging continued support. Using emojis in the caption helps create a warm and heartfelt message. This approach fosters an emotional connection, making fans feel part of a larger, caring community. By focusing on the positive aspect of fan support, the post helps to maintain high morale among the supporters. It shifts the narrative from the outcome of the match to the collective strength and unity of the fan base. The overall strategy of this post is to cultivate a sense of gratitude and appreciation towards the fans, reinforcing their importance to the club. The club fosters a positive and united atmosphere, even in adversity, by highlighting the strong turnout and unwavering support. This approach helps maintain fan engagement and loyalty, ensuring the supporters feel valued and motivated to continue their support.

SL Benfica	12.04.2023 SL Benfica lost against Inter in the first leg of the UEFA Champions League quarter-final.		The image features a packed stadium with fans holding up scarves, creating a vibrant and unified visual. Red dominates the picture, reinforcing the club's primary colour and symbolising passion and energy. The caption "E Pluribus Unum" (Latin for "Out of many, one") emphasises unity and solidarity among fans and the team. Heart emojis are used to convey love and support. #SejaOndeFor and #EuAmoOBenfica (translates to "Wherever it may be" and "I love Benfica") are used to promote a sense of belonging and love for the club. Despite the recent defeat, the post maintains a positive and uplifting tone. It highlights the fans' unwavering support and the communal spirit.	By using the phrase "E Pluribus Unum," the post underscores the collective strength and unity of the Benfica community. The hashtags encourage fans to express their continued support and love for the club, fostering a sense of community. The image of fans together, holding scarves high, serves as a visual representation of solidarity and support. It reminds fans that their support is crucial and appreciated, even after a loss. Heart emojis and uplifting phrases aim to connect emotionally with the fans. It shifts focus from the defeat to the positive aspects of fan loyalty and unity. The post encourages positivity and resilience by focusing on the fans and their unwavering support. It subtly suggests that the defeat is a momentary setback, and the collective spirit of the fans and team will prevail. Overall, the strategy adopted in this post is to maintain a positive and united front, celebrating the fans' loyalty and creating an emotional connection that transcends the recent defeat. This approach helps sustain fan morale and reinforces their support for the team.
FC Porto	18.12.2023 FC Porto lost against Sporting CP		The image shows FC Porto players and staff in a huddle, suggesting unity and teamwork. The background features the stadium and fans, creating atmosphere and support. The caption reads "Obrigado pelo apoio, Dragões", which translates to "Thank you for the support, Dragons." It includes the hashtag #SCPFCP, referring to the specific match and indicating the context of the post.	Like SL Benfica's approach, FC Porto is expressing gratitude to their fans for their support. This helps to strengthen the bond between the club and its supporters, making them feel appreciated and involved. The team's image in a huddle reinforces the message of unity and collective effort. This visual representation can boost morale among fans, showing that the team is together and committed. The post maintains a positive tone by focusing on the fans' support and the team's unity. This helps to keep the fan base engaged and optimistic, regardless of the match outcome. The hashtag #SCPFCP connects

					the post to the broader conversation around the match, increasing visibility. This invites fans to interact with the post, share their experiences, and feel part of the community. The overall strategy of this post is to foster a sense of gratitude and unity. By thanking the fans and highlighting the team's collective spirit, FC Porto emphasises the importance of their supporters and maintains a positive narrative. This approach helps to keep the fan base engaged and supportive, ensuring that the club's social media presence remains solid and encouraging, even after challenging matches.
	FC Porto	04.10.2023 FC Porto lost against FC Barcelona in the UEFA Champions League group stage.		The image shows an overhead view of FC Porto players and staff in a huddle forming a heart shape, symbolising unity and love. The setting on the grass pitch enhances the connection to the sport and the team's environment. The caption states "Domingo estamos de volta" (Sunday we are back) and "Obrigado, Dragões, pelo incrível apoio" (Thank you, Dragons, for the incredible support). It includes the hashtag #FCPFCB, linking it to the referenced match or event. The inclusion of applause emojis (🙌) further conveys gratitude and appreciation.	The post thanks the fans for their incredible support, which helps to strengthen the bond between the club and its supporters. This approach ensures that the fans feel valued and recognised for their continuous support. The heart-shaped huddle is a powerful visual symbol of unity, love, and collective effort. This reinforces a sense of community and togetherness within the team and with the fans. The message "Sunday we are back" indicates resilience and readiness to move forward, maintaining a positive and forward-looking tone. This helps to keep the fan base engaged and hopeful, even after setbacks. The hashtag #FCPFCB connects the post to a broader conversation, increasing its visibility. This invites fans to interact with the post, share their thoughts, and feel part of the community. The overall strategy of this post is to foster a sense of gratitude, unity, and positivity. By thanking the fans and highlighting the team's collective spirit and love, FC Porto emphasises the importance of their supporters and maintains a positive narrative. This approach helps to keep the fan base engaged and supportive, ensuring that the club's social media presence remains solid and

				encouraging, even in challenging times. The visual impact of the heart-shaped huddle particularly underscores the emotional connection between the team and its fans.
FC Porto	09.08.2023 FC Porto lost against SL Benfica in the final of the Supertaça.		The image features FC Porto players on the field facing a large crowd of sad supporters in the stadium. The fans are visibly engaged, with flags and banners, creating a vibrant and energetic atmosphere. The caption reads "Obrigado, Dragões, por mais uma noite de apoio incansável" (Thank you, Dragons, for another night of tireless support). It includes the hashtag #ImortaisPorDireito (Immortals by Right), emphasising the enduring legacy and loyalty of the supporters. The blue heart emoji (💙) signifies love and unity with the club's colours.	The post strengthens the emotional connection between the club and its supporters by thanking them for their relentless support. This gratitude ensures that the fans feel acknowledged and appreciated for their loyalty. The visual of fans actively supporting the team in the stadium showcases the passion and dedication of the supporters. This encourages a sense of pride and belonging among the fan base. The hashtag #ImortaisPorDireito implies a shared legacy and pride, reinforcing the club and its supporters. This sense of unity is crucial in maintaining a robust and connected community. The optimistic tone of the post encourages fans to interact with it, sharing their experiences and sentiments. This interaction further strengthens the bond between the club and its supporters. The overall strategy of this post is to foster a sense of unity, gratitude, and pride among the supporters of FC Porto. By acknowledging the fans' tireless support and highlighting their passionate engagement, the club emphasises the importance of their fan base. The visual and caption create a narrative of enduring loyalty and shared identity, encouraging positive interaction and reinforcing the emotional connection between the team and its supporters. This approach helps to maintain a solid and engaged community, even during challenging times.

Premier League	Manchester United	, not Crystal Palace, as previously mentioned.		The image features a Manchester United player looking dejected, with the scoreline "4-0" prominently displayed. The scoreline indicates a heavy defeat for Manchester United against Crystal Palace. The background shows the Crystal Palace logo, signifying the opponent. The caption reads, "Defeat in south London." The post includes the hashtags #MUFC, #ManUtd, and #PremierLeague to categorise it and reach a broader audience.	However, amidst the disappointment, there is a sense of resilience and hope for the future. Fans express anxiety about upcoming games, reflecting a lack of confidence after a heavy defeat. This indicates that the loss has impacted the fans' expectations and outlook for the team's future performances. This post's overall strategy is to acknowledge a disappointing result straightforwardly without trying to mitigate the fans' feelings. The club shows transparency and acceptance by keeping the caption brief and to the point. Using hashtags helps engage with a broader audience and connect with ongoing conversations in the football community. The fan reactions reveal a mix of disappointment, humour, and concern, reflecting the emotional impact of the defeat. This approach helps to maintain an honest and transparent relationship with the supporters, even during challenging times.
	Manchester United	04.04.2024 Manchester United lost against Chelsea.		The image features a Manchester United player in action, with the scoreline "4-3" prominently displayed. The scoreline indicates a close defeat for Manchester United against Chelsea. The background shows the Chelsea logo, signifying the opponent. The caption reads, "A late defeat in west London." The post includes the hashtags #MUFC, #ManUtd, and #PremierLeague to categorise it and reach a broader audience.	The club's transparent and accepting stance, evident in the brief and direct caption, reassures the fans and instils confidence in the club's transparency. Using hashtags helps engage with a broader audience and connect with ongoing conversations in the football community. The fan reactions reveal a mix of disappointment, humour, and concern, reflecting the emotional impact of the defeat. This approach helps to maintain an honest and transparent relationship with the supporters, even during challenging times.
	Manchester United	03.03.2024 Manchester United lost against Manchester City.		The image features a dejected Manchester United player, Bruno Fernandes, walking with his head down. The "3-1" scoreline is prominently displayed, indicating Manchester United's loss to Manchester City. The background includes the Manchester City logo, marking the opponent. The caption reads, "Defeat on the road." The	The post straightforwardly acknowledges the defeat without sugarcoating. This transparency respects the fans' intelligence and addresses the result directly. The brief caption "Defeat on the road." succinctly communicates the outcome. This minimalistic approach reflects the sombre mood and aligns with the fans'

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				post uses hashtags #MUFC, #ManUtd, and #PremierLeague to categorise it and reach a broader audience.	likely sentiments. The hashtags help categorise the post and make it discoverable for fans following the club and the league. They also connect the post to broader football conversations. Numerous comments from rival fans, notably Manchester City supporters, emphasise "Manchester is blue," celebrating their victory. This shows the competitive nature of football rivalries and how opposing fans use social media to gloat. Manchester United fans express their disappointment and frustration with the team's performance. Comments reflect a mix of disappointment and a call for improvement. Despite the loss, some fans show their support, emphasising that they stand by the team in both wins and losses. This loyalty is common among passionate sports fans. The strategy of this post is to acknowledge a disappointing result without attempting to mitigate the fans' feelings. The club shows transparency and acceptance by keeping the caption brief and direct. Using hashtags helps engage with a broader audience and connect with ongoing conversations in the football community. The fan reactions reveal a mix of rivalry, taunts, disappointment, and support, reflecting the emotional impact of the defeat. This approach helps maintain an honest relationship with the supporters, even during challenging times and shows that the club is in touch with the fans' feelings.

				The image of a packed stadium visually reinforces the team's large and dedicated fan base, encouraging fans to feel part of a more significant community. Thanking fans for their support fosters a sense of gratitude and community, making supporters feel valued and acknowledged. Mentioning the season's global journey engages international fans, making them feel included and part of the club's journey. Using phrases like "We love this City" and heart emojis appeals to the fans' emotions, strengthening their bond with the club. Using hashtags like #ManCity and #PremierLeague ensures the post reaches a broad audience, including potential new fans and existing supporters who follow these popular tags. The high number of likes and comments shows active fan engagement. The club's engagement strategy likely includes monitoring and responding to comments to keep the conversation going and maintain a solid online presence. Allowing space for fans to engage in friendly banter and discussions (e.g., "Manchester is red" comments) can increase interaction and keep the fan community lively and engaged. The engagement strategy centres around appreciating fans, fostering a solid emotional connection, and ensuring inclusivity by acknowledging local and international supporters. The visual content and caption create a sense of unity and pride among the fans, encouraging active participation and interaction.
Manchester City	, despite a hard-fought battle, fell short against Manchester United in the final of the Emirates FA Cup. Our team's resilience and determination in the face of this defeat is a testament to their spirit and should make us all proud.		The image shows a packed stadium with fans and a scoreboard displaying "Final 2024" for the Emirates FA Cup between Manchester City and Manchester United. The focus is on the unity and presence of fans in the stadium, emphasising a strong sense of community and support. The caption thanks the fans for their support throughout the season. It mentions the global journey of the season and wishes fans safe travels home. It concludes with a heartfelt expression of love for our city, using a heart emoji to symbolise our deep affection. This is our city, and we are proud to represent it. The hashtags used are #ManCity and #PremierLeague, which are broad and widely recognised, enhancing visibility.	
Manchester City	17.04.2024 Manchester City lost against Real Madrid in the UEFA Champions League quarter-final.		'192 Wembley Express'. This banner, a symbol of our shared journey and victories, is a testament to the fans' unwavering support. Caption: 'Thank you for the incredible support throughout our @championsleague campaign. Travelling far and wide to be right behind the lads 💙'	The '192 Wembley Express' campaign, a significant milestone in our journey, was [insert significance here]. This post targets this specific achievement, making the gratitude more personal and relevant. Highlighting the fans' effort to travel 'far and wide ' emphasises their commitment, making them

	Club	Date	Image	Description	Analysis
					feel appreciated and valued. The vibrant and packed stadium visual and a creative and eye-catching banner add aesthetic value and showcase the strong fan presence and support. By showcasing a banner that likely has personal significance, it connects with the fans deeper, fostering a sense of community and shared identity. The tone is highly appreciative and motivational, celebrating the collective effort and dedication of the fans.
	Manchester City	08.10.2023 Manchester City lost against Arsenal.		The image captures a huddle of players on the field, highlighting a moment of team unity and solidarity. **Caption**: "Together as one! 💙 "	The caption, "Together as one! 💙," is short but powerful, emphasising the importance of unity and teamwork. This message resonates with both players and fans, reinforcing a collective identity. The imagery of players huddled together symbolises strength, unity, and teamwork, which are vital values that fans and players can rally behind. The concise caption ensures the message is easily understood and memorable, making it more likely to be shared and appreciated. The image is central to the post, allowing the powerful visual of team unity to speak for itself. This draws the viewer's attention and evokes an emotional response. By focusing on the concept of "together," the post includes fans as part of the team's journey, making them feel integral to the team's success and spirit. Inspirational and unifying, the tone fosters a strong sense of solidarity and collective effort.
	Arsenal	17.04.2024 Arsenal lost against Bayern in the UEFA Champions League quarter-final.		The post features a clear, high-quality image of Martin Ødegaard applauding. The player's expression and gesture convey gratitude and respect towards the fans. The caption addresses the fans directly, acknowledging their support and disappointment in the match result. It also includes an encouraging note for the next game.	The post visually communicates appreciation and respect by showing the player applauding. The caption reinforces this by directly thanking the fans and recognising their support despite the loss. The post openly acknowledges the defeat, which adds a layer of authenticity and transparency, showing that the club is in tune with the fans' feelings. Ending the caption with a positive note about the

					upcoming game helps to shift focus from defeat to future opportunities, fostering a sense of hope and continuity. Using "Gooners" and a heart emoji creates a sense of community and belonging, strengthening the bond between the club and its supporters.
	Arsenal	14.04.2024 Arsenal lost against Aston Villa.		The post includes a bold graphic stating "FULL TIME" with the scoreline prominently displayed. The image of the Emirates Stadium reinforces the club's identity. The caption is simple: "Full time at Emirates Stadium."	The post clearly and directly provides essential information about the match outcome, ensuring fans are promptly informed. The bold and eye-catching graphic captures attention quickly, making it easy for fans to see the result at a glance. Including an image of the Emirates Stadium helps reinforce the club's identity and home-ground pride. The brief caption complements the visual content without overwhelming the audience, ensuring the message is clear and compelling.
	Arsenal	21.02.2024 Arsenal lost against FC Porto for the first leg of the round of the UEFA Champions League Round of 16		The post features multiple high-quality action shots from the game, showing players in dynamic, intense moments. The caption reads, "Keep pushing, Gunners 👊 " with a location tag indicating Estádio Do Dragão.	The use of action shots captures the excitement and intensity of the match, appealing to fans' passion for the game. The caption "Keep pushing" motivates players and fans to remain determined and optimistic despite the challenges. The first emoji (👊) symbolises strength and solidarity, fostering a sense of unity and collective effort. Posting during the game or shortly after maintains high relevance and immediacy, keeping fans engaged with ongoing events and discussions.

Appendix B – Online Questionnaire

Default Question Block

Olá! O meu nome é Laura Monteiro e sou aluna do segundo ano do Mestrado em Marketing da ISCTE Business School. No âmbito da minha tese "Social Media Strategies to Deal with Defeats Following a Match – The Case of Portuguese Football Clubs", estou a explorar a forma como os clubes de futebol portugueses utilizam as redes sociais para se relacionarem com os seus adeptos, particularmente no que diz respeito aos resultados dos jogos. As suas respostas ajudar-me-ão a compreender o impacto dos resultados dos jogos no envolvimento dos adeptos e nas estratégias globais das redes sociais destes clubes.

O inquérito deve demorar aproximadamente [tempo estimado] 5 minutos a ser concluído. As suas respostas são totalmente confidenciais e serão utilizadas exclusivamente para fins académicos. Não há respostas certas ou erradas :)

Se tiver alguma dúvida ou precisar de mais informações, contacte-me: laura_martins_monteiro@iscte-iul.pt

Segue algum clube de futebol português nas redes sociais?

○ Sim
○ Não

Segue algum dos seguintes clubes de futebol portugueses nas redes sociais?

○ Sporting CP
○ SL Benfica
○ FC Porto
○ Nenhum dos anteriores

Como avalia a atratividade do clube que escolheu?

○ Nada atrativo
○ Pouco atrativo
○ Levemente atrativo
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente atrativo
○ Atrativo
○ Muito atrativo

Quão bom considera o clube que selecionou?

○ Nada bom

○ Pouco bom

○ Levemente bom

○ Neutro

○ Moderadamente bom

○ Bom

○ Muito bom

Qual é o seu grau de apoio ao clube?

○ Nada favorável

○ Pouco favorável

○ Levemente favorável

○ Neutro

○ Moderadamente favorável

○ Favorável

○ Muito favorável

Quão satisfatório considera apoiar o clube que escolheu?

○ Nada satisfatório

○ Pouco satisfatório

○ Levemente satisfatório

○ Neutro

○ Moderadamente satisfatório

○ Satisfatório

○ Muito satisfatório

Como avalia a imagem do clube em termos de simpatia?

○ Nada simpático

○ Pouco simpático

○ Levemente simpático

○ Neutro

○ Moderadamente simpático

○ Simpático

○ Muito simpático

Block 1

Agora irá ver uma publicação no Instagram do seu clube após uma derrota

De que cor é a camisola do jogador que aparece no post?

○ Azul
○ Verde
○ Branco
○ Vermelho

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Tenho uma opinião positiva e favorável sobre o meu clube"

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente

○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Defenderia o meu clube se ouvisse alguém a falar negativamente sobre ele."

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Usaria emojis ou símbolos para expressar o meu apoio ao meu clube nas redes sociais."

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente

○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Sinto uma forte necessidade de expressar o meu entusiasmo pelo meu clube."

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Partilharia informações detalhadas e relevantes sobre o meu clube com outras pessoas."

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Debateria extensivamente por que razão o meu clube é superior a outros."

○ Discordo Totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Como avalia a atratividade do clube que escolheu?

○ Nada atrativo
○ Pouco atrativo
○ Levemente atrativo
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente atrativo
○ Atrativo
○ Muito atrativo

Quão bom considera o clube que selecionou?

○ Nada bom
○ Pouco bom
○ Levemente bom
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente bom
○ Bom
○ Muito bom

Qual é o seu grau de apoio ao clube?

○ Nada favorável
○ Pouco favorável
○ Levemente favorável
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente favorável
○ Favorável
○ Muito favorável

Quão satisfatório considera apoiar o clube que escolheu?

○ Nada satisfatório
○ Pouco satisfatório
○ Levemente satisfatório
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente satisfatório
○ Satisfatório

○ Muito satisfatório

Como avalia a imagem do clube em termos de simpatia?

○ Nada simpático
○ Pouco simpático
○ Levemente simpático
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente simpático
○ Simpático
○ Muito simpático

Com que frequência assiste aos jogos da sua equipa no estádio?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (1-2 jogos por época)
○ Ocasionalmente (3-5 jogos por época)
○ Frequentemente (6-10 jogos por época)
○ Sempre (+10 jogos por época)

Com que frequência vê os jogos da sua equipa na televisão ou online (por exemplo: plataformas de

stream)?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (1-2 jogos por época)
○ Ocasionalmente (3-5 jogos por época)
○ Frequentemente (6-10 jogos por época)
○ Sempre (+10 jogos por época)

Com que frequência discute os resultados da sua equipa com amigos ou familiares?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (só depois de jogos importantes)
○ Ocasionalmente (após alguns jogos)
○ Frequentemente (após a maioria dos jogos)
○ Sempre (após todos os jogos)

Qual a sua idade?

○ Menos de 18
○ 18-24
○ 25-34
○ 35-44
○ 45-54
○ 55-64
○ 65+

Qual o seu género?

○ Masculino
○ Feminino
○ Não binário / terceiro género
○ Prefiro não responder

Qual o seu nível de habilitações literárias?

○ Escola primária
○ Ensino secundário
○ Licenciatura
○ Mestrado
○ Doutoramento ou superior

Se quiser, faça comentários adicionais :)

[   ]

Block 2

Agora irá ver uma publicação do seu clube após uma derrota

De que cor é a camisola dos jogadores que aparecem no post?

○ Verde
○ Amarelo
○ Vermelho
○ Azul

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Tenho uma opinião positiva e favorável sobre o meu clube"

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente

○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Defenderia o meu clube se ouvisse alguém a falar negativamente sobre ele."

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Usaria emojis ou símbolos para expressar o meu apoio ao meu clube nas redes sociais."

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente

○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Sinto uma forte necessidade de expressar o meu entusiasmo pelo meu clube."

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Partilharia informações detalhadas e relevantes sobre o meu clube com outras pessoas."

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Até que ponto concorda com a afirmação: "Debateria extensivamente por que razão o meu clube é superior a outros."

○ Discordo totalmente
○ Discordo parcialmente
○ Discordo
○ Neutro
○ Concordo parcialmente
○ Concordo
○ Concordo totalmente

Como avalia a atratividade do clube que escolheu?

○ Nada atrativo
○ Pouco atrativo
○ Levemente atrativo
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente atrativo
○ Atrativo
○ Muito atrativo

Quão bom considera o clube que selecionou?

○ Nada bom
○ Pouco bom
○ Levemente bom
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente bom
○ Bom
○ Muito bom

Qual é o seu grau de apoio ao clube?

○ Nada favorável
○ Pouco favorável
○ Levemente favorável
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente favorável
○ Favorável
○ Muito favorável

Quão satisfatório considera apoiar o clube que escolheu?

○ Nada satisfatório
○ Pouco satisfatório
○ Levemente satisfatório
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente satisfatório
○ Satisfatório

○ Muito satisfatório

Como avalia a imagem do clube em termos de simpatia?

○ Nada simpático
○ Pouco simpático
○ Pouco simpático
○ Neutro
○ Moderadamente simpático
○ Simpático
○ Muito simpático

Com que frequência assiste aos jogos da sua equipa no estádio?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (1-2 jogos por época)
○ Ocasionalmente (3-5 jogos por época)
○ Frequentemente (6-10 jogos por época)
○ Sempre (+10 jogos por época)

Com que frequência vê os jogos da sua equipa na televisão ou online (por exemplo: plataformas de

stream)?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (1-2 jogos por época)
○ Ocasionalmente (3-5 jogos por época)
○ Frequentemente (6-10 jogos por época)
○ Sempre (+10 jogos por época)

Com que frequência discute os resultados da sua equipa com amigos ou familiares?

○ Nunca
○ Raramente (só depois de jogos importantes)
○ Ocasionalmente (após alguns jogos)
○ Frequentemente (após a maioria dos jogos)
○ Sempre (depois de todos os jogos)

Qual a sua idade?

○ Menos de 18
○ 18-24
○ 25-34
○ 35-44
○ 45-54
○ 55-64
○ 65+

Qual o seu género?

○ Masculino
○ Feminino
○ Não binário / terceiro género
○ Prefiro não responder

Qual o seu nível de habilitações literárias?

○ Escola primária
○ Ensino secundário
○ Licenciatura
○ Mestrado
○ Doutoramento ou superior

Se quiser, faça comentários adicionais :)

[   ]

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Appendix C – Instagram Posts using the English Strategy (Block 1)

Appendix D – Instagram Posts using the English Strategy (Block 2)