Dipartimento di Impresa e Management

Cattedra di Research Methodology for Marketing

THE ROLE OF SPONSOR-EVENT FIT IN SPORT EVENT SPONSORSHIP

A STUDY ON THE DETERMINANTS OF FIT AND THE CONSEQUENCES

RELATRICE

Prof.ssa Feray Adiguzel

CANDIDATA

Elisa Santimone

Matricola n° 680101

CORRELATORE

Prof. Michele Costabile

ANNO ACCADEMICO 2017/2018

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

This summary has been provided to allow readers to have a rapid appreciation of the content of this thesis. To have a more comprehensive description of the research undertaken and its results, those interested may need to read the thesis in toto.

Sponsorship definition and sport event context

Sponsorship has been defined as "*provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives*".

It is essentially support, either financially or through products and services, that an individual or a company provide to others. Sponsorship, furthermore, has become a commonplace. It is sufficient to mention that sponsors now regularly employ outside agencies to assist them in areas such as proposal management, measurement, and hospitality. Sponsorship exists in two forms: *philanthropic* or *commercial:* philanthropic sponsorship consists in the support of social causes, while commercial sponsorship establish an association between the firm and a public event in order to enable the firm to gain direct commercial benefits such as increasing consumer awareness, improving in image, sales, and more. In the thesis, the focus is on commercial sponsorship and the public event is an international sport league event: the EuroLeague. The EuroLeague is the European professional basketball club competition that is organized by EuroLeague Basketball, since 2000, for eligible European basketball clubs. The EuroLeague is held throughout the entire year and it uses a European basketball league system, 16 teams take part in this event: each team plays each other twice, once at home and once away, totaling 30 games. Also, the focus is on three specific sponsors: EX Armani Exchange, Efes Pilsener, and Turkish Airlines.

Purpose of the study

In absence of scholars' studies on sponsor-event Fit for multiple sponsors in a sport event situation, a proper and dedicated study was needed. Due to the strong bond between the audience and the team, sport events sponsorship is affected by the successes or the failures of a team which leads to changes of fans' behavior towards the sponsors. When the team and, consequently, the sponsor generates a positive influence on consumers' behavior this leads to a strong support for the sponsoring brand. Though, all of this is possible when the sponsoring brand and the sporting event are congruent with each other. The lack of fit between the event and the sponsor results in rather damaging consequences for the brand as it leads to a decrease in sales and, therefore, in consumers'

purchase intentions, it also involves a lower brand recall and minor brand image. Shortly, a potential absence of fit in an international sport event with multiple sponsor makes this topic interesting and suitable for the purposes of this study. Additionally, this approach wishes to enrich existing studies improving scholars' knowledge about sponsor-event Fit, and also it aims to provide a valid support to managers eager to enter the sponsorship field clarifying how to protect their brand from failures. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore what are the factors that influence sponsor-event Fit when in a multiple sponsors context.

Factors affecting sponsor-event Fit

After running a multiple linear regression analysis, the research shows that the sponsorship is an effective tool as long as the Fit between the sponsor and the event is respected. Fit is positively influenced by different entities, namely Attitude toward the Sponsorship, Country-of-Origin, Functional based Similarity, and Brand Familiarity. Although previous studies show a positive impact on Fit of Team Identification and Event Involvement, this study's result show a negative influence of the aforementioned construct.

As outcome of the sponsorship, Purchase Intentions feels the positive effect of Fit: according to this thesis' result, the marketers would benefit in sponsoring sport events such as the EuroLeague because a higher Fit between the sponsor and the event leads to higher Purchase Intentions for the sponsoring brand. Moreover, Purchase Intentions is positively affected by other entities, this means that it can also be increased when consumers perceive the sponsor brand familiar, the event's image consistent with the sponsor image, Country of Origin also plays a positive and influencing role on the DV probably thanks to the sponsoring brand's European origins and its reliable and of quality products. Nonetheless, when the IV are mediate with the presence of Fit, Country of Origin is the only variable that keeps its positive influence on Purchase Intentions.

Strategies for Sponsors

Managers should be encouraged to continue in linking their image to major sports event since it appears that the when the event's image is consistent with the firm's brand positioning goals, sponsor may increase their visibility; also, the familiarity with the sponsoring brand gives makes respondents more predisposed to consider as a sponsor brands of which they have at least a basic knowledge; as a matter of fact, the more familiar a sponsor is, the more likely it is to influence other

entities (i.e. Fit). Consumers who have a very strong attachment to the sport event and the sponsor, frame a positive picture of the sponsoring brand in their mind. Finally, the origin of the sponsor plays an important and unexpected positive role.

Brands should still rely on event sponsorships.

They increase credibility which is not just about building a direct relationship with the target and gaining trust. Linking a brand name to that of a business and lucrative subjects (like the EuroLeague) that enjoys recognition and prestige will improve the perception of the brand itself. Also, brand awareness will be increased thanks to the countless times, during a basketball match, the spectator sees the sponsors on the team shirt of the heart. Sponsorship Helps to grow sponsors reach thanks to a powerful mix of communication channels and, along with this, the it generate leads: it is easier for a sponsor to emerge among the numerous items and, perhaps, find new opportunities for their business at every stage of the event. Finally, it increases engagement with the audience: in some cases brands do it physically, letting themselves be found and favoring the face-to-face meeting with their target audience present at the event. In other cases, sponsorships are able to involve customers and stakeholders in a more ideal dimension, linked as anticipated to a better perception of the brand.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Orientation

International sport events, such as World Cup 2018, are some of the most awaited sport events by sport fans and serve a great sponsorship opportunity for companies, but not only for those selling products but also for others such as beverage brands, airline companies, banks, and more.

Suppose that among all the sponsors, a renowned US fast-food brand, German sportswear, a Chinese airline company or an Italian luxury brand sponsor the World Cup. Could it be considered congruent with an event like the World Cup, or with a random sport event? Which one of these sponsors could get highest fit perception and therefore perhaps the highest sponsorship effectiveness? Why?

Now assume the event is meant to support a social cause such as raising money to help a Foundation who is intended to prevent deforestation. Would a brand of cigarettes, or paper brands, be appropriate to sponsor the event?

Sponsor-event fit, or congruity, is defined as "*the extent to which a consumer perceives that an event and its sponsoring brand have a similar image, value, and a logical connection*" (Simmons and Olsen, 2006), basically consumers expect brands to have some kind of relationship with the event in order to be considered as sponsors.

Previous studies have covered several dimensions in the sponsorship field, namely sponsorship recall (Wakefield, Olsen, Cornwell, 2007; Lardinoit, Derbaix, 2001), sponsor affect and purchase intentions (Gwinner and Swanson, 2003; Meenaghan, 2001; Smith, Graetz, Westerbeek, 2008), antecedents of sponsorship effectiveness (Tsiotsou and Alexandris, 2009; Lee, Mazodier, 2015), ambush marketing (Pitt, Parent, Berthon, Steyn, 2010; Weeks, O'Connor, Martin, 2017). Among many studies about antecedents of sponsorship effectiveness, sponsor-event fit has been widely accepted as a most important factor.

However, to the best of my knowledge, none of these studies investigated factors that influence sponsor-event fit when there are multiple sponsors of an international sport event. I will consider two types of factors which might influence fit perceptions differently: 1) Factors related to sport fans and 2) Factors related to a sponsor brand. What sport fan characteristics and brand-related

factors do influence fit perceptions? The sponsor brand could be national or foreign brand i.e. with different country-of-origin. How does country-of-origin effect will influence fit perceptions? What type of congruence -functional versus symbolic- will play highest role for fit?
Hence, this study aims to measure the effect of items like Functional based Similarity, Brand Familiarity, Team Identification, Event Involvement, and Country-of-Origin effect on the aforementioned fit. Also, the final output of the model proposed in this study will be the effect sponsor-event fit has on consumers' purchase intentions toward the sponsoring brands.

This thesis will focus on a random sport event in which there are three sponsors: EX Armani Exchange, Efes Pilsener and Turkish Airlines.

1.2 Background

This section will address the background of this research and will give a clearer understanding of the sponsorship concept and field.

1.2.1 Sponsorship definition and market

Sponsorship has been defined as "*provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives*" (Speed and Thompson, 2000).

It is essentially support, either financially or through products and services, that an individual or a company provide to others. Although it is not a modern phenomenon (in 590 BC the Greek state sponsored athletes in the Olympic games), sponsorship has grown and turned into a huge and profitable industry (Smith, 2004): as a matter of fact, in 2018 sponsorship has achieved a market value of $65.8 billion. Sponsorship, furthermore, has become a commonplace. It is sufficient to mention that sponsors now regularly employ outside agencies to assist them in areas such as proposal management, measurement, and hospitality. A recent study of Fortune 500 companies websites found one-third of these firms have made their sponsorship policy available on the Internet (Deits, Evans, Hansen, 2012).

The majority of the global sponsorship spending came from North America, totaling 22.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2016, followed by Europe with 16 billion U.S. dollars and the Asia Pacific

with 14.8 billion U.S. dollars. North America has had the highest growth of global sponsorship spending since 2010, increasing by 4.2 billion U.S. dollars over the course of five years, while Central/South America only had a growth of 0.7 billion U.S. dollars from 2010 to 2015. Out of the 3 major regions, North America, Europe and the Asia Pacific, Europe had the lowest growth, increasing by only 2.4 billion U.S. dollars over five years (Statista, 2018).

Sponsorship exists in two forms: *philanthropic* or *commercial.* Philanthropic sponsorship consists in the support of social causes which has emerged as an important promotional tool: consumers will view a firm more favorably if it supports social causes because of the general positive feeling created; this will increase their purchase intentions toward that firm/brand which is acting as a sponsor.
Commercial sponsorship establish an association between the firm and a public event in order to enable the firm to gain direct commercial benefits such as increasing consumer awareness, improving in image, sales, and more (D'Astous and Bitz, 1995).

In this thesis, I will focus on commercial sponsorship and the public event is an international sport league event. The EuroLeague is the European professional basketball club competition that is organized by EuroLeague Basketball, since 2000, for eligible European basketball clubs. EuroLeague is one of the most popular professional indoor sports leagues in the world, with an average attendance of 8,472, for league matches in the 2016–17 season. That was the fifth-highest of any professional indoor sports league in the world (the highest outside the United States), and the second-highest of any professional basketball league in the world, only behind the NBA.

The EuroLeague is a sporting event held throughout the entire year. It uses a European basketball league system. Featuring 16 teams, which each play each other twice, once at home and once away, totaling 30 games. The top 8 placed teams at the end of the regular season advance to the playoffs, which are held as four individual 5 game playoff series. The higher placed team in the regular season standings of each playoff matchup has home-court advantage in each playoff series, playing 3 out of the 5 games at home. The winners of each of the four playoff series advance to the Final Four, which is held at a predetermined site. The Final Four features two semifinals games, a third place game, and the championship game. Each team plays a maximum 37 games per season. The EuroLeague season is broadcast on television, and can be seen in up to 201 countries and territories; also it has its own internet pay TV service, called "EuroLeague TV".

1.3 Research Problem and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to explore what are the factors that influence sponsor-event fit when in a multiple sponsors context. Thereby the research question of the study is:

"Which factors do influence sponsor-event fit when there is an international sport event with multiple sponsors?"

The research question covers a wide area of the topic, accordingly sub-questions will be provided to narrow the area of interest:

- *What is the role of brand-related factors, namely functional based similarity, familiarity, and involvement on sponsor-event fit?*
- *What is the role of sport fan characteristics, namely team identification on sponsor-event fit?*
- *How does country-of-origin of sponsor brand influence sponsor-event fit?*
- *What is the role of sponsor event fit on consumers' purchase intentions toward the sponsors?*

1.4 Justification for the Research

In absence of scholars' studies on sponsor-event fit for multiple sponsors in a sport event situation, a proper and dedicated study was needed (see Table 1).

Sponsorship (but most of all the one relating to sport events) is one of the workhorses for companies. It involves more and more brands within its world lately, it is an important tool that generates in the sports' audience images, feelings, emotions, which in turn promote company's recognition for those choosing to sponsor a team or an athlete.

Due to the strong bond between the audience and the team, sport events sponsorship is affected by the successes or the failures of a team which leads to changes of fans' behavior towards the sponsors. When the team and, consequently, the sponsor generates a positive influence on consumers' behavior this leads to an increase of sales, brand recall, brand image; in short this leads to a strong support for the sponsoring brand. Though, all of this is possible when the sponsoring brand and the sporting event are congruent with each other.

The lack of fit between the event and the sponsor results in rather damaging consequences for the brand as it leads to a decrease in sales and, therefore, in consumers' purchase intentions, it

also involves a lower brand recall and minor brand image. Shortly, a potential absence of fit in an international sport event with multiple sponsor makes this topic interesting and suitable for the purposes of this study.

Additionally, this approach wishes to enrich existing studies improving scholars' knowledge about sponsor-event fit, and also it aims to provide a valid support to managers eager to enter the sponsorship field clarifying how to protect their brand from failures. The findings of this thesis will help event managers, event organizers and companies who plan to invest in sponsorship for obtaining fruitful sponsorship outcomes. Additionally, companies can get information on how they should select a sport event to sponsor and whether or not they should communicate differently their sponsorship deal to sport fans.

1.5 Scientific relevance

To elucidate all the progresses made about this topic, a table that summarizes the most relevant studies about sponsor-event fit will be provided to highlight previous contribution. At the very end of the table it will be also stated the contribution brought by this study which aims to understand the role and influence brand cohesiveness, brand familiarity, team identification, and sport identification play on sport-event fit when it comes to multiple sponsors. Differing from previous research, we added country-of-origin as a new variable which might influence fit perceptions. In addition this study's model will also provide a focus on sport-event fit's impact on consumers' purchase intentions toward the sponsors.

Table 1. Contribution and literature review studies about Fit in sponsorship context

STUDY	CONTEXT	METHOD	DV & IV	CONTRIBUTION
Fleck and Quester (2007) The Red Bull Final Five (international)	Sport Event Sponsorship	Interview; Factor analysis	Congruence (DV); Expectancy (IV); Relevancy (IV)	Hypothesized a bidimensional structure of congruence, scale development and validation process, reliable and cross-culturally robust scale to measure congruence.
Gwinner and Bennett (2008) Dew Action Sports Tour (American extreme sport circuit)	Sport Event Sponsorship	Survey; Factor analysis	Event-sponsor fit (DV/IV); Attitude toward sponsor (DV/IV); Purchase intentions (IV) Brand cohesiveness (IV); Sport identification (IV);	Brand cohesiveness and sport identification lead to increased fit. Fit influences attitude toward the sponsor which in turn has a positive impact on purchase intentions.
Lee and Cho (2009) Figure Skating, U.S. Open Tennis, X Games 12, Auto Racing, Tour de France and Soccer, British Open Golf, Kentucky Derby, NCAA Football Championship, NBA Playoff (all international sport events)	Sport Event Sponsorship	Survey; One-way ANOVA	Prior attitude toward the brand (DV); Personality congruence between the sponsoring brand and the sporting event (DV); Prior attitude toward the sport event (DV); Purchase intentions' of sponsoring brand (DV); Attitude toward the sponsoring brand (IV)	Attitude toward the sponsoring brand positively influences prior attitude toward the brand, personality congruence between the sponsoring brand and the sporting event, prior attitude toward the sport event, and purchase intentions' of sponsoring brand.
Zdravkovic, Magnusson, and Stanley (2010) Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation (American Foundation)	Social Cause Event Sponsorship	Survey, Factor analysis,	Fit (DV) Attitude toward the sponsorship (IV); Attitude toward the brand (IV);	Fit has a positive relationship and influence on both attitudes toward the brand and the sponsorship.

Olson and Thjomoe (2011) Norwegian National Championship (Norwegian ski race) Formula 1 (international car racing)	Sport event Sponsorship	Experiment, Qualitative cognitive mapping, Linear regression, Conjoint analysis	Overall fit between a sponsor and an object (DV); Fit-related explanation (IV); Articulation (IV)	7 dimensions of fit explanation emerged, about this 4 are significant predictor of overall fit (use by participants, audience similarity, geographic similarity, attitude similarity). Articulation can change overall fit both positively and negatively.
Close and Lacey (2013) Tour de Georgia (American annual professional cycling race)	Service Brands in Sport events Sponsorship	Survey; SEM procedure	Purchase intentions (DV); Perceived fit (DV/IV); Commitment to the service brand sponsor (DV/IV); Attendees' activeness in sport event domain (IV); Attendees' affect toward the event (IV); Attendees' knowledge about the service brand sponsor (IV)	Activeness, affect toward the event, and knowledge about the service brand sponsor have a positive influence on sport-event perceived fit. Perceived fit has a positive impact on commitment to the service brand sponsor which, in turn, has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions.
Papadimitriou, Kaplanidou, Papacharalampous, (2016) Athens Marathon (international race)	Sport Event Sponsorship	Survey; Simultaneous Equations Model approach using SPSS Amos 18	Sponsor brand purchase intentions (DV); Brand attitude (DV/IV) Perceived quality (DV/IV); Fit (IV)	Fit drives attitude formation which, in turn, influences perceived brand quality and subsequently purchase intentions. Brand attitude did not predict intentions to purchase while there is a positive relationship of sponsor-perceived brand quality and intentions to purchase the sponsor brand products.

This Thesis (2018)	Sport Event Sponsorship	Survey, Multiple linear regression	Sponsor-event fit (DV); Consumers' purchase intentions (DV); Functional based Similarity (IV); Brand familiarity (IV); Team Identification (IV); Sport Identification (IV); Country-of-Origin of sponsor brand (IV)	Fit as DV is positively influenced by Attitude toward the Sponsorship, Brand Similarity, Brand Familiarity, and Country of Origin. As an IV Fit does influence Purchase Intentions positively and has a partial mediating effect on the other IVs.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Hardy, Mullin and Sutton (2007) define sport sponsorship as the "*acquisition of rights to affiliate or directly associate with a product or event for the purpose of deriving benefits related to that affiliation or association. The sponsor then uses this relationship to achieve its promotional objectives or to facilitate and support its broader marketing objectives*".

Sports is a natural area for sponsorship, as a matter of fact it has been the dominant sponsorship context during modern times because it involves sponsoring several components: sport associations, teams, athletes, facilities, events, leagues, and competitions (Tsiotsou and Alexandris, 2009). To prove sponsorship greatness and importance it is safe to report that out of North America's total sponsorships in 2016, 15.7 billion U.S. dollars were spent for sports; this is partly due to the increase in the salaries of many athletes and their demand for higher earnings, particularly through sponsorships.

Sport event sponsorship disruptive feature is the *engagement* that is the ability to fully capture the audience setting up an emotional bonding through its values and athletes achievements; after all, sports is based on shared values, competition, and emotions of people. Prominent is its emotional feature able to sway people encouraging complicity and a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, nowadays sport events sponsorship is one of the most remarkable forms of marketing promotion: an international and transversal target and a broad media dimension make sports marketing a marketing strategy adopted by brands all around the world. To advertise a sponsor's product whilst the audience emotional tension is strong, positively effects the product itself and improves its notoriety and recall (RTR Sports Marketing, 2016); moreover, the sponsorship of a sport event drives excitement around the brand, its product, and services increasing their sales and expanding the brand to new markets and geographies. Those are just some of the several and essential reasons why brands and companies enter into sponsorship, but on the whole two of the most common and important properties worthy to mention are the increasing of brand awareness and the establishing, strengthening or changing of brand image (Gwinner and Eaton, 1999).

The purpose of this section is to provide a literature review for the key components of the study. More specifically this chapter will review the literature pertinent to sponsor-event fit, brand cohesiveness, brand familiarity, sport identification, team identification, country of origin, and purchase intentions as a means to support the hypothesis.

2.2 Fit

According to the vocabulary fit can be defined as "*the particular way in which things match*" or *"being suitable or appropriate for"*; statistically it represents the "*correspondence between observed data and the values expected by theory*". In this specific marketing research, fit is described as "*relevance, complementarity, or compatibility*" (Rifon et al., 2004) by referring to the congruence between a sponsor and a sport event. Fit between a firm and a sponsored cause is high when the two are perceived as congruent, whether that congruity is derived from mission, products, markets, technologies, attributes, brand concepts, or any other association (Bridges, Keller, and Sood 2000).

Since transfer effects from the event are not guaranteed or produced because the event can be linked with several companies, congruence (or fit) effect between the sponsor and the event has been drawing more and more attentions.

The construct of fit embodies the idea of transferability of expertise or synergies in activities, such as when there is similarity in products, technologies, or markets (Rumelt 1974) or complementarity of skills and activities (Porter 1987).
From a consumer-based point of view, fit has two main dimensions (Fleck and Quester, 2007; Simmons and Becker-Olsen, 2006):

- *Relevance*: the extent to which the sponsor–event partnership is seen as making sense or has meaning;
- *Congruence*: the extent to which the relationship is a good match at the eyes of the event participants and consumers.

Gwinner and Bennett (2008) findings show that brand cohesiveness helps to build brand knowledge which, in turn, can increase fit. Thus, companies consistent with their promotional and

communication tool toward the consumers can increase sponsor-event fit; brand cohesiveness, will also led to greater chances of brand recognition. These scholars postulated that "*high perceptions of brand cohesiveness result in higher perceptions of event-sponsor fit*" and the data supports that a more elaborate knowledge structure among event attendees leads to stronger brand cohesiveness. Thus, firms that are consistent with their promotional and other communication strategies toward consumers could increase the perceived fit between the event and sponsoring firm.

Zdravkovic, Magnusson, and Stanley (2010) identified ten sub-dimensions of fit (visibility of relationship, relationship explicitness, slogan, mission¸ visuals, target market, promotional activities, geographic compatibility¸ local attributes, active involvement, attitude to the sponsorship, attitude to the brand, overall fit) in a social cause event that individually significantly influence sponsorship and brand attitudes, and most importantly they identified two more variables which are considered latent: *marketing strategy fit* and *prominence fit*. Prominence fit relates to the manner in which the cause relationship is presented and explained to potential customers, while the marketing strategy fit dimension deals with the partners' similarity in segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Both macro-dimensions of fit have positive and significant effect on sponsorship and brand attitude: prominence fit can lead to improved sponsorship and brand attitudes, while attitude generated by marketing strategy fit not only depends on the congruence between the cause and the brand but also on the interaction between fit and familiarity with the cause. A greater familiarity with the social cause increases the effect of fit on attitude toward brand. Such results support the expectations that consumers have a high evaluation of brands when those brands are involved in partnerships that make sense.

Although fit has been shown to be an important predictor of sponsorship effects, little research has examined how people exposed to sponsorships form their judgments of overall fit: to fix this carelessness, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) qualitatively researched dimensions used to form the perception of fit and whether these dimensions are able to predict overall fit through sponsor and objects. The outcomes revealed six important dimensions (use by the participants, audience similarity, geographic similarity, attitude similarity, size similarity, and image similarity) forming overall fit of which four has been further analyzed: these four (use by the participants, audience similarity, geographic similarity, attitude similarity) are the dimensions that significantly predict overall fit. Overall fit is a major tool in predicting sponsorship effectiveness, and the four dimensions analyzed are a major tool in predicting a meaningful amounts of attitude toward the

sponsorship and sponsor constructs. This indicates that perceptions of overall fit between sponsor and object, or in this case sports, are based on some logical thoughts related to the degree that the sponsor's products are used by participants of the sponsored event, the match between the sponsor's target market and object's audience, and attitude similarities.

Lacey and Close (2013) pursued a study to explore how events and sponsorship enhance consumers' relationship by connecting them with service brands; more specifically, it has been studied how attendees knowledge, activity, perception of fit, and commitment impact on event-sponsor fit itself, commitment to the service brand, and purchase intentions. The positive relations and influences concerning the above mentioned construct expected by the scholars have been supported by the study.

Sponsorships with high fit with an event can improve brand attitudes and can increase the probability of purchase intentions toward the sponsor brand through the influence of other constructs, such as cognitive and affective responses and sponsor receptiveness and integrity. On the other hand, low-fit sponsorships encourages negative associations and feelings leading to negative image transfer for the sponsors. However, some results question the linear effect from event to sponsor by demonstrating that also low-fit sponsors can receive positive sponsorship outcomes (Papadimitriou, Kaplanidou, Papacharalampous, 2016). It might be expected that positive activities, such as social sponsorships, are less likely to suffer from low fit than are commercial activities, such as brand extensions or alliances. In contrast, Simmons and Olsen (2006) show that the benefits of favorable actions can be mitigated and even reversed by low fit. Fit matters because high-fit sponsorships are consistent with what would be expected from the firm, whereas low-fit sponsorships are not. As a matter of fact they found that consumers tend to expect a sponsor and an event to be congruent to each other; therefore, an unexpected low-congruity leads to an increased elaboration of the sponsorship. Such elaboration is negatively biased, and it comes with less favorable attitudes toward the sponsorship. Meanwhile, sponsorships with a greater perceived fit with the event provide cognitive consistency (Lacey and Close, 2013).

Fit can also be divided depending on its origin. It can be whether *natural* or *created* (Simmons and Olsen, 2006) where natural is the extent to which the sponsored cause is perceived as being congruent with the image of the sponsor.
Created fit, on the other hand, has two ways to be created:

- with product-related donations that evoke a shared association;
- with messages that explain how the firm fits with the cause. As is the case with high natural fit, created fit increases the favorability of responses relative to low-fit sponsorships and to no sponsorship, at least for familiar firms.

2.3 Antecedents of Sponsor brand- Event Fit

2.3.1 Functional based Similarity

"*Functional based similarity refers to the potential congruence between events and the brands/companies that act as sponsors*" (Gwinner, 1997). Gwinner has also suggested that functional based similarity can occur when the sponsored brand "*is actually used by the participants during the event*" or when "*the image of the event is related to the image of the brand*".

While fit is a measure that typically informs sponsorship decision-making, similarity is not. Although similarity and fit are lexically and conceptually distinct (Park et al. 1991), the boundary between them is blurred, with the two terms being used interchangeably (Aaker and Keller 1990). As a matter of fact, similarity between objects of comparison drift from commonality, which includes shared features or characteristics as well as aligned differences; on the other hand, fit refers to the degree to which the sponsor's brand specific associations are applicable or beneficial to the sponsee's product category (Spiggle et al. 2012). Furthermore, fit measures have been used to measure similarity (Taylor and Bearden 2002) and similarity measures have been used to measure fit (Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006).

Nonetheless similarity can be considered as one of the drivers of brand fit. According to Van der Lans, Van den Bergh, and Dieleman (2014) the notion of fit, as discussed in the brand extension literature, needs to be distinguished from brand fit in a brand alliance context. When a brand alliance is presented, two families of brand associations are triggered. Brand fit issues are unlikely to arise in the brand extension literature, as brand extensions involve only a single brand. Although alliances between brands with images that fit are generally recommended, previous research has not clearly elucidated the drivers of brand fit. On one hand, one might expect that a brand alliance between two brands with very similar brand images would elicit favorable responses from consumers. Indeed, the more shared associations there are between brands, the greater the perception of fit. For instance, overall similarity between brand and category personality is an

important driver of brand extension success (Batra et al., 2010); nonetheless several scholars argue that moderate dissimilarity fosters favorable evaluations (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989).

Van der Lans, Van den Bergh, and Dieleman (2014) argue that "*successful alliances require the pursuit of partners with similar characteristics on certain dimensions ("birds of a feather flock together"), but dissimilar characteristics on other dimensions ("opposites attract*")". They also propose that the intrinsic versus extrinsic nature of brand personality determines whether similarity or dissimilarity increases brand fit.

Previous findings suggest that members of brand alliances do not need to be similar in sincerity, they do have to be competent, exciting, sophisticated and share some kind of ruggedness; this scholars' contribute makes a huge step into alliances research. Also and most importantly, similarity lies on prior theories such as Kepler's *structure mapping theory* which is the process of coming to a judgment of similarity and which states that similarity is like analogy; in that, both involve an alignment of relational structure (Gentner & Markman, 1995) and the difference between them is that in analogy, only relational predicates are shared, whereas in literal similarity, both relational predicates and object attributes are shared; hence similarity is a process of structural alignment and mapping over articulated representations.

Thus, the hypothesis is built as follows:

H1: *Functional based similarity positively influences sponsor-event fit*

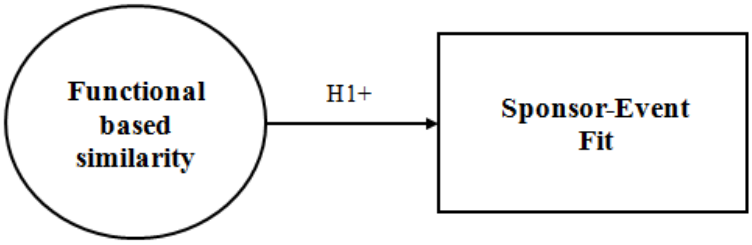


Figure 1 Functional based similarity on Sponsor-Event Fit

2.4 Brand Familiarity

"Brand familiarity is a unidimensional construct that is directly related to the amount of time that has been spent processing information about the brand, regardless of the type or content of the processing that was involved" (Baker, Hutchinson, Moore, Nedungadi, 1986).

Familiarity is also broadly defined as "*the associations of a product, brand, or cause that has been gathered by a consumer through direct or indirect experience*"; it represents the associations that exist in the memory of the consumer. When a brand is more familiar, the consumer has more and stronger associations toward the brand compared to a less familiar brand because the associations have already been gathered and evaluated through the direct and indirect experience (Huijbregts, 2010).

Following on from what has been stated by Huijbregts, Alba and Hutchinson (1987) found that customers would remember brand and product information when they are familiar with the brand. Due to this, consumers can be separated into *novices* and *experts* based upon their degree of product knowledge with such familiarity influencing information processing and brand evaluations. Brand familiarity usually comes from past experience and brand exposure (Pope and Voges, 2000). When people use or are exposed to a brand, they create some perceptions with the brand and store it in mind. These past experiences with the brand, whether good or bad, will enhance brand familiarity (Chao, 2001). Hence, familiarity impacts brand recall and recognition, it also plays a major part in attitude formation. Research has shown that attitudes toward less familiar brands are weaker when it comes to strength and accessibility, they are less likely to be established and can be considered more susceptible to change, than attitudes toward more familiar brand (Pentecost, Doyle, Funk, 2013).

Previous findings suggest that familiarity has generally a positive impact on brand-event fit (Singh and Singh, 2017). This holds that consumers who have a very strong attachment to the sport event and the sponsor, frame a positive picture of the sponsoring brand in their mind that can influence their attitude toward the brand and also their purchase intentions. This assertion relies on previous studies provided by Close and colleagues. As a matter of fact, in 2006 Close et al. found that attendees' knowledge about the sponsor's product and their enthusiasm toward the sport itself have a positive impact on their perception of the sponsor's community involvement in the event.

Moreover, if attendees consider the sponsor's involvement like positive this can lead to favorable perceptions toward the brand and its product which, in turn, leads to higher purchase intentions.
In 2015, Close and Lacey found support to their assumption in which they suggested that those attendees aware of the sponsoring brand shared favorable thoughts about the brand which can help to increase attendee's patronage towards the sponsor's product. The present study seeks to use brand familiarity as a variable influencing sponsor-event fit as well as previous scholars. Thus, the hypothesis is built as follows:
H2: *Brand familiarity positively influences sponsor-event fit*

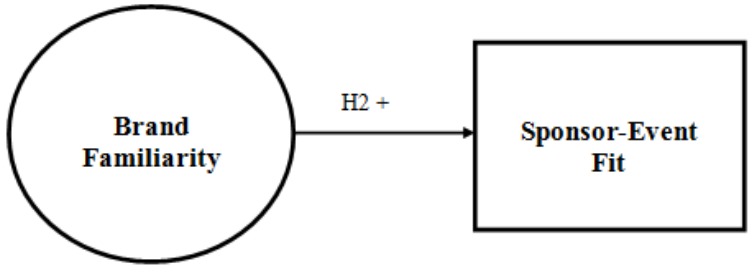


Figure 2 Brand Familiarity on Sponsor-Event Fit

2.5 Event Involvement and Team Identification

Team identification is defined as *"the spectators perceived connectedness to a team and the experience of the team's failings and achievements as one's own"*. Identification has been largely studied in Social Identity Theory which proposes that "*individuals classify themselves in various categories in order to facilitate self-definition within their own social environment"* (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

Event involvement is often considered as "*motivation, ability, and opportunity consumers have to process an event*" (McInnis and Jaworski, 1989). Event involvement is a construct that does not differ much from sport identification, for this reason from now on I shall discuss event involvement with the same features of sport identification.

Individuals derive "strength and a sense of identity" from their connections to social groups, also they are unable to form self-images in the absence of a social identity derived from group affiliations. When individuals are asked to describe who they are, the answer invariably reflects

associations with social groups related to family, occupation, sports and more (Fisher and Wakefield, 1998).

According to Hogg and Turner (1985), the perception of belongingness to a group is necessary to enhance one's self-esteem. Self-esteem in practical terms can be enhanced emphasizing the positive information of the group the individual identifies with and minimizing the negative information; this practice brings into being a so-called "*in-group*" dynamic. For instance, a firm sponsoring for a favored sport team can be considered an in-group member from the individuals. The reverse situation, namely emphasizing the negative and minimizing the positive of the contrasting groups, is called "*out-group*" and it plays a role in enhancing one's self-esteem as well.

Fisher and Wakefield (1998) suggest that a positive social identity can be maintained by the comparison between in-group and out-group, where the in-group results favorably than out-group on several important dimensions. By relying on Social Identity Theory, Gwinner and Swanson (2003) want to enrich previous identification studies presuming that highly involved fans will exhibit higher level of sponsor recognition, patronage, and satisfaction and have a more positive attitude toward the sponsoring brand than less involved fans. Their findings suggest that highly identified individuals, also known as "fans", are more likely to show a positive frame of mind toward the aforementioned constructs; also it has been unearthed that sponsorship is a major promotional tool for companies although it does not influence every fan equally.

Other empirical studies have shown that consumers with affection for a sponsor would be more likely to generate a higher level of sponsor awareness, more positive attitudes toward the sponsor's corporate image, and a preference for choosing that sponsor's product. In Madrigal's (2001) study it appears that when team identification is high, people are more likely to have a positive attitude toward supporting sponsors. The results also show that team identification's effect on purchase intentions is not entirely mediated by an attitude toward that behavior. In effect, it appears that connection to a team has a positive direct effect on intentions toward buying a team sponsor's product irrespective of the specific attitude toward that behavior.

Therefore Meng-Lewis, Thwaites, and Pillai (2013) results of their analysis revealed that attitudes toward the sponsor completely mediated the relationship between event involvement and

willingness to buy. In other words, the level of event involvement only had a positive indirect impact on willingness to buy through attitudes toward the sponsor. Hence, companies sponsoring sports events should utilize various sponsorship/marketing activities, such as celebrity endorsement, public relations and advertising in order to build up positive attitudes among consumers alongside the sponsorship impact.

Smith, Graetz, and Westerbeek (2008) research provides strong support for the believe that team support and consumers' purchase intentions are entwined. Moreover, it supports that the need for affiliation positively affects team identification. If team identification is defined as spectators' perceived connectedness to a team and its performance, then their results indicate that the level of team identification directly and indirectly influences the intention to purchase a sponsor's products.

Previous findings suggest that a higher team identification makes individuals more likely to have a positive attitude toward supporting sponsors and to be more prone in perceiving fit among sponsoring firms. For instance, Madrigal's study (2001), as reported above, suggests that people with higher team identification have a positive attitude toward the sponsoring firm; this assumption relies on "*a beliefs–attitude–intentions hierarchy in which the main features is that beliefs represent the basis for an attitude toward engaging in a specific behavior*" (Madrigal, 2001). Moreover, "*interattitudinal models of cognitive consistency suggest that people's attitudes tend to be linked to one another in molar cognitive struct*ures" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Thus, it is safe to state that research has found social identity with a group to be antecedent to attitude importance (Boninger et al., 1995). This view is also consonant with findings by Shavitt and her colleagues (1990, 1992), who have reported that a distinct function of an attitude is to symbolize and express a person's self-image through identification with salient reference groups; "*people tend to have favorable attitudes toward issues that are congruent with salient aspects of their own identities deemed to be positive and also support the institutions that embody those identities*" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The notion of evaluative consistency suggests, therefore, that there will be "*transference of affect such that identification with a sports team will be positively related to attitudes toward a corporate sponsor of that property*" (Madrigal, 2001). In short, sport identification positively influences sponsor-event fit.

Thus, the hypothesis are built as follows:

H3: *Event involvement positively influences sponsor-event fit*

H4: *Team identification positively influences sponsor-event fit*

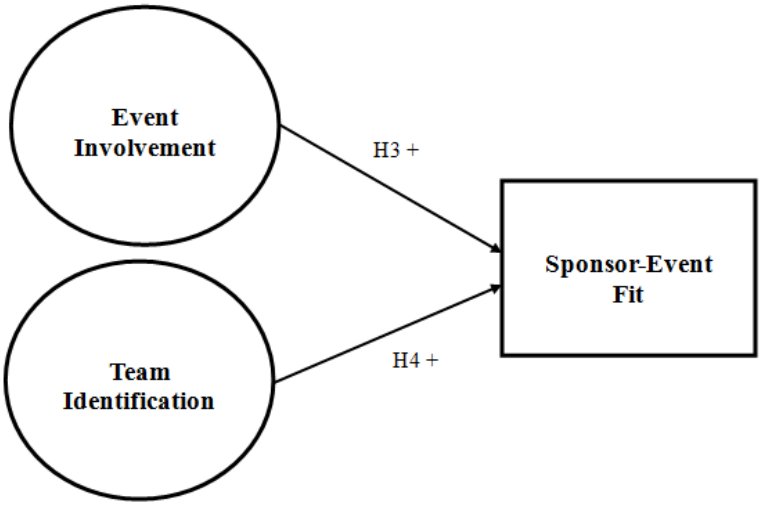


Figure 3 Event Involvement and Team Identification on Sponsor-Event Fit

2.6 Country-of-Origin Effect

Country of Origin effect is a "*complex phenomenon, referring to the influence that the country of origin exerts on the evaluations of a product by the consumer"* (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004; Verlegh, Steenkamp, and Meulenberg, 2005).

A product's Country of Origin (COO) is a variable able to influence consumers' decision processes during the purchase phase, their perceptions about a product and its attributes: the positive or negative evaluations that consumers assign to the country of origin effect can lead to favorable or unfavorable evaluations of products associated with that country (Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000; Maheswaran and Chen, 2006). The "origin" component is a determinant of consumers' engagement who unknowingly use the stereotypes of each country to give attributes and characteristics to the brand linked to that specific country. Brand name is the element that most influences the mental associations between a brand and country of origin. (Chiello, 2015).

Country of Origin research has mainly studied the use of this variable as a cognitive cue (the product's characteristics), which can be further defined as "*an informational stimulus about or relating to a product that is used by consumers to infer beliefs regarding product attributes such as quality"* (Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Steenkamp, 1990). Since country of origin can be manipulated

without changing the physical product, it is regarded as an extrinsic cue (Olson, 1972); it is not different from other extrinsic cues like price, brand name, and retailer reputation. A large number of studies has shown that such cues act as "signals" for product quality (Steenkamp, 1990; Dawar & Parker, 1994). Several other studies, however, have shown that country of origin is not merely a cognitive cue: for instance, Wyer and colleagues (Hong & Wyer, 1990; Li & Wyer, 1994) showed that the impact of country of origin cannot be explained entirely by a quality signaling process; according to their findings, country of origin has a symbolic and emotional meaning to consumers. Fournier (1998) found that country of origin relates a product to national identity, which can result in a strong emotional attachment to certain brands and products; also, according to Grappi (2010) among the factors moderating COO, extremely important is consumers' degree of ethnocentrism: for instance, Grappi's study shows that for consumers' with high levels of ethnocentrism the COO can lead to favorable evaluations no matter what is the product/object degree of quality (Balabanis e Diamantopoulos, 2004; Gurhan-Canli e Maheswaran 2000). COO, as a matter of fact, can trigger ethnocentric belief able to influence product-related evaluations.

Moreover, COO links a product to a rich product-country imagery, with sensory, affective, and ritual connotations (Askegaard & Ger, 1998). In short, Country of origin does influence buyer perceptions of the products involved. Nevertheless, Olson and Jacoby (1972), found that intrinsic cues have a greater effect on quality judgments than did extrinsic cues (considerations associated with the product). This suggests that the country-of-origin (an extrinsic) cue might have only a limited influence on product quality perceptions.

Previous studies, such as Ruth and Simonin's (2003), show that combination of nationality and products' controversy influence event evaluations, suggesting that country-of-origin effects in sponsorship are context-specific. When foreign versus domestic brands are placed in the context of multiple-brand event promotion, evaluations of events are penalized when they are sponsored by domestic rather than foreign brands whose products are controversial. This finding suggests that sponsored events may benefit from a type of immunity carried by foreign brands with referring to their product's controversy. Meng-Lewis et al (2013) provide a study that examine the potential mediating influence of attitudes toward the sponsor in the relationships between event involvement, economic animosity, and willingness to buy: they found out that economic animosity has relevance in an international sponsorship context. A certain country consumers' attitude to a sponsor and subsequent purchase intentions could be influenced by that sponsor's COO effect, since such

information could trigger hostile emotions to a specific foreign country. Consumers in a specific market may reject a brand because of their dislike of its COO, negating sponsorship initiatives. Furthermore, due to the negative impact of economic animosity, international companies expanding into a foreign market need a good understanding of its historical and cultural background. The findings indicated that consumers' attitudes toward the sponsor partially mediated the negative relationship between economic animosity and willingness to buy. Therefore, localizing strategies can improve consumers' attitudes toward the company or the brand, weaken the effects of economic animosity on sponsorship outcomes and eliminate local consumers' cultural and psychological foreign product bias.

The present study aims to explore a sport event supervised by multiple sponsors whose origins are of different nationalities; generally the fit between the nationality of an event and the brand is an overall driver of perceived pertinence, also the present thesis wishes to include in the study the COO variable to test and determine what could be its effect on consumers and their perception of congruence multiple sponsors of different nationalities have with an international sport event. Thus, the hypothesis is built as follow:

H5: *Country-of-origin has a positive effect on fit. If higher the country-of-origin effect, higher the fit*

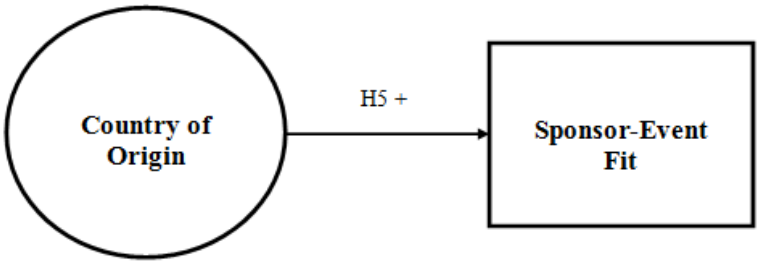


Figure 4 Country of Origin on Sponsor-Event Fit

2.7 Purchase Intentions as Sponsorship outcome

Purchase intensions can be understood as "*the willingness of a customer to buy a certain product or a certain service is known as purchase intention"*. Purchase intention is a kind of decision-making that studies the reason to buy a particular brand by consumers (Shah et al., 2012), and it is usually related to the behavior, perceptions, and attitudes of consumers.

Purchase intensions is a dependent variable that depends on several external and internal factors such as triggers, recommendations, emotional associations and more. There is a significant relationship between brand equity and the willingness to recommend brand purchase to others. Most of previous studies tested the influence of brand image on consumers' purchase intention and showed a significant relationship between these variables (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). Zeeshan (2013) in his study found that brand image has a significant effect on the purchase intention of men. Divolf (2005) states that it is more likely that high brand awareness lead to high brand association in the minds of customers. Consequently, it is more likely that brand awareness leads to the increase of consumers' purchase intentions.

According to Pope and Voges (2000), consumers' intention to purchase can be derived from two predominant influences:

- a positive attitude towards the brand;
- brand familiarity, which is obtained from brand exposure and prior use.

In addition to these two factors, evidence points to the relevance of team support, sponsor integrity and fit.

Previous findings suggest that purchase intentions result and are influenced by many factors among which fit between a sponsor and an event plays an important role. The fit construct, as a matter of fact has shown an important influence on purchase intentions increasing individuals' willingness to buy when the fit is respected. These assumptions relies on several theories such as those revealing six phases before taking decision to purchase a particular product: awareness, knowledge, interest, preference, persuasion and then purchase (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010); among all previous contributions it is here reported Harvery et al.'s study (2006) which suggests that "*sponsorship changes consumers' responses towards a specific sponsor, and develops positive attitudes towards the sponsor, which then leads to increased consumer willingness to buy the sponsor's products".* In this study I am going to replicate previous analysis assuming a positive influence of sponsor-event fit on purchase intentions. Thus, the hypothesis is built as follows:

H6: *Sponsors-event fit positively influences consumers' purchase intentions of the sponsor brand*

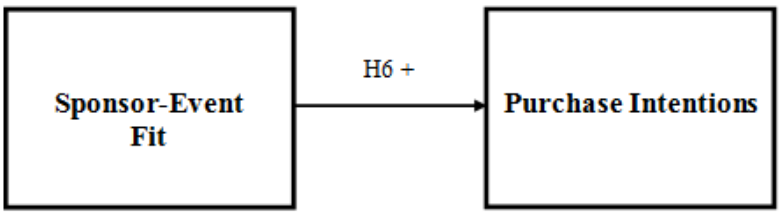


Figure 5 Sponsor-Event Fit on Purchase Intentions

2.8 Control variables

2.8.1 Attitudes toward sponsoring brand

Speed and Thompson (2000) propose to model attitude toward the sponsor in terms of three conceptually constructs*: overall attitude toward the sponsor, perceived sincerity of the sponsor, and perceived ubiquity of the sponsor*.

As regarding the overall attitude toward the sponsor, Speed and Thompson suggest that research about this construct sustain that sponsors who have a favorable image receive a more positive response to their sponsorships than those who do not. Speaking of the perceived sincerity of the sponsor, previous sponsorship research has suggested that sponsors who are perceived to be sincere in their sponsorship and motivated by philanthropy will "*achieve greater responses to their sponsorship compared with sponsors who are seen as purely motivated by commercial considerations"* (D'Astous and Bitz 1995). The stronger the respondent's perception that the sponsorship was pro-social, the more favorable the impact on the sponsor's image.
Finally, it is known that a large number of sponsorship suggest that the organization has multiple, and often competing, commitments. Hence, it is perceived as less committed to each one and therefore has lower credibility as a sponsor. Moreover, Menon and Khan (2003) showed that the way sponsor brands promote their philanthropic activities significantly affect consumers' perceptions of the brand itself.

Hence, understanding the attitudes held about brand event by the audience is crucial in selecting which sponsors to approach for an event and in adding value for those sponsors (Speed and Thompson, 2000).

2.8.2 Attitudes toward sponsorship

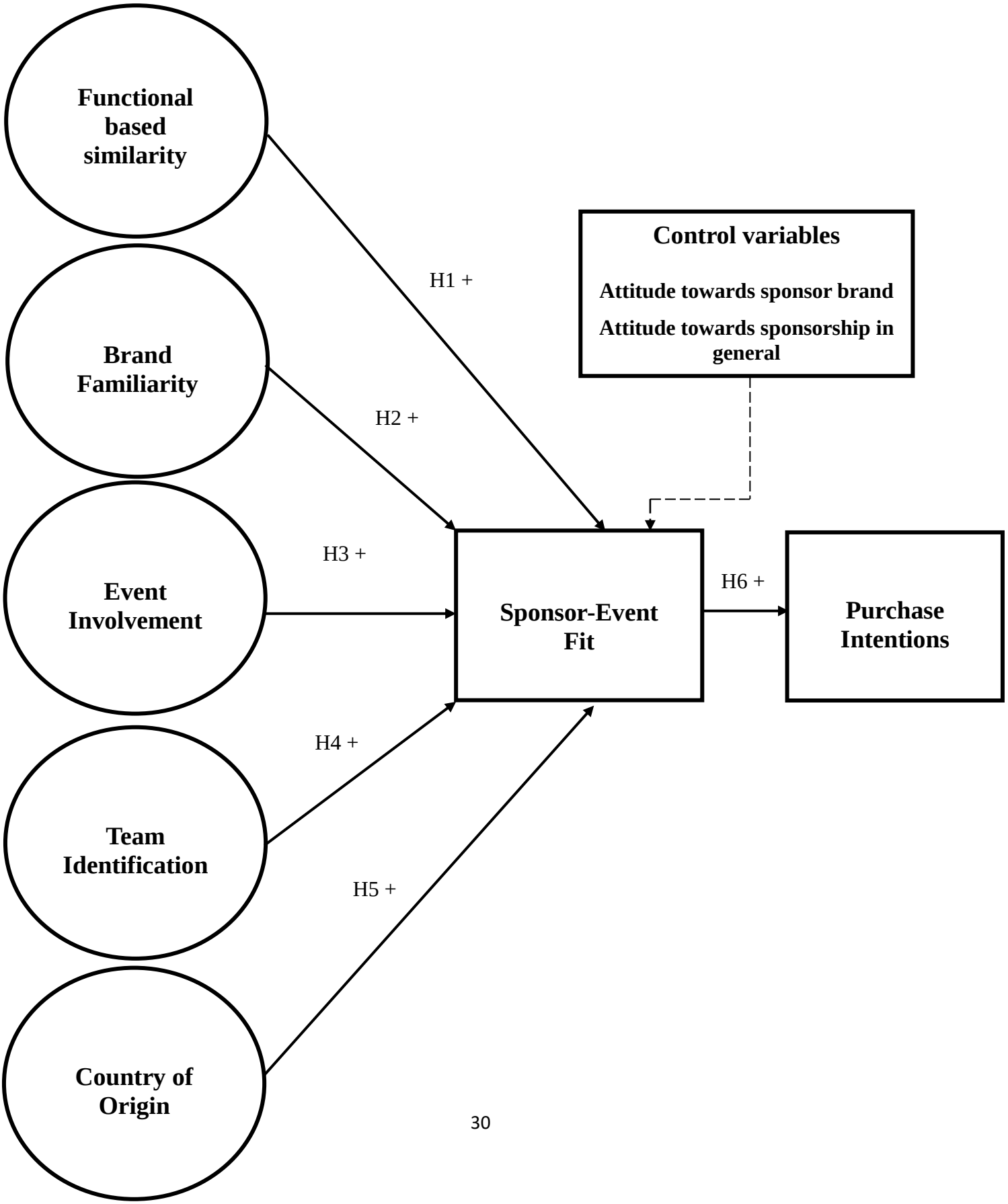
Previous studies show that sponsorship generally leads to positive and linear increases in brand affect and brand trust (which are key drivers of brand commitment and loyalty) over a sport event. Literature has drawn on different theoretical mechanisms to explain sponsorship effects (Cornwell, 2008): among the identified key persuasion processes, the transfer model theory asserts that affect, meaning, or associations transfer from an event to its sponsors through their simultaneous presentation during the event (Gwinner and Eaton, 1999). Hence, the more consumers like a sponsored event, the more they engender positive affect towards the sponsoring brands. On the other hand, Attribution theory affirms that humans cognitively attribute behavior as either self-serving or altruistic.

Consumers attribute sponsorship behavior similarly, thus influencing the perceptions of sponsorship; prior evidence shows that these perceptions *"can lead to outcomes, including attractiveness, trust, identification and, ultimately, purchase behavior"* (Rifon *et al.*, 2004). Meenaghan (2001) suggests that "*attribution theory relates to goodwill effect, where sponsorship first generates goodwill among consumers before positively shaping their attitudes towards the sponsors*". This halo of goodwill stems from individuals appreciating and recognizing the benefits of sponsorship to activities with which they are involved. Both transfer model and goodwill-effect theories contend that sponsorship can improve brand affect.

Lee and Mazodier (2015) study consumer ethnocentrism, animosity, and cosmopolitanism referring to a sponsorship context and found out that consumer ethnocentrism and animosity may mitigate the effectiveness of sponsorship, as a matter of fact the problems with consumer nationalism may be particularly poignant with sporting events with intense sports rivalry, where the majority of sponsorship activities occur. Unlike with consumer ethnocentrism and animosity, cosmopolitanism increases the rate of improvement, although only for brand affect. The improvement in brand trust is not statistically significant, but it is positive.

2.9 Conceptual model

By bringing together the hypothesis and their underlying relationships an overview can be brought to life through a conceptual model proposed hereunder.



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section will provide an overview of the experiment design and will shine a light on the data collection method. This thesis is a quantitative research. Hypotheses are formulated based on previous theory, so conclusive research is the research type. Data will be collected with a survey. Most of the previous research about sponsorship also used this method.

3.2 Analysis Design

Factor analysis will indicate relevant items of the construct load on the right factor or not to test construct validity. If the items of the construct load on another factor, discriminant validity will be violated and decision will be made whether to include or not the item in the scale mean. Each participant will assess three sponsoring brands. Since we are measuring some attitudinal, abstract marketing constructs it will be considered that they are not free from errors due to self-rating. The most suitable method for testing simultaneous relationships between constructs is structural equation modeling. However, since this method requires advanced knowledge about this technique, the suitable method selected is *multiple linear regression*.

For this reason, I will run two regression models: first Fit as the dependent variable and independent variables are Functional based Similarity, Event Involvement, Team Identification, Country of Origin and Brand Familiarity; second purchase intention as the dependent variable and independent variables are Fit, Functional based Similarity, Event Involvement, Team Identification, Country of Origin and Brand Familiarity. Each regression model will be ran twice: first only with control variables and then with control variables and all the independent variables. Gathering data from multiple brands and having people that might be different in terms of sponsoring brand, we will include dummy variables for each brand. First brand's dummy variable will be called DummyTurkish in which the value 1 indicates Turkish Airlines and 0 other brands; the second dummy variable is DummyArmani, in which the value 1 indicates Armani Exchange and 0 other brands; finally, the third dummy variables will be called DummyEfes, in which the value 1 indicates Efes Pilsener and 0 other brands. Only three dummies will be included into the analysis. Then we will inspect the significance and the sign of the regression coefficients to conclude the hypotheses testing.

3.3 Survey Method

Due to the large numbers of participants needed for this study, it was deemed necessary to avoid traditional methods of data collection (for instance, physically collecting data from public places because of too expensive and not practical consequences). Hence, the best option to gather data is through a quicker and broad method: an online survey. The survey is created through the usage of the Qualtrics platform: Qualtrics is a subscription software for collecting and analyzing data for market research, customer satisfaction and loyalty, product and concept testing, employee evaluations, and website feedback (Qualtrics, 2018). This tool gives the opportunity to create and distribute surveys for each type of customer and through any channel; in this specific case the survey will be distribute through social networks and forums in order to gain primary data and to reach the appropriate target for the study.

The survey has been built thanks to the aid of previous scholars and research which provided a wide range of multi-item scales to support the creations of questions and measurement. The reason for selecting multi-item scales from relevant previous literature is that they are already tested and validated. So, they will be very likely reliable due to their usage on other samples; Likert-type and semantic differential scale have been preferred and used to measure the constructs needed for the purpose of this study, moreover these kind of scales are easier to be measured statistically than open-ended or close-ended questions. Also, the scales have been resumed from different context: most of them relate to sport situations while few others relates to different context such as the automotive sector. A table (Table 2) follows hereunder to provide an overview of the scales used and their features. After collecting data, they will be still tested for their reliability using Cronbach alpha and validity will be checked using factor analysis to be sure about data quality.

Table 2. Multi-item scales used for the survey

CONSTRUCT	SOURCE	SCALE	SCALE TYPE
Event Involvement	EuroLeague Official Survey 2015	-I am very interested in EuroLeague -I give particular importance to EuroLeague -EuroLeague is a domain that interests me	5-point Likert-type scale
Functional based Similarity	Gwinner and Eaton (1999)	-It is likely that participants in the EuroLeague see Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener during the event -When I watch the EuroLeague I often see	5-point Likert-type scale

		Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener being used -Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener is not a brand that participants in the EuroLeague would consider using	
Brand Familiarity	EuroLeague Official Survey (2015)	-I know pretty much about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener -Compared to most other people, I know more about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener -I feel very knowledgeable about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener	5-point Likert-type scale
Team identification	Gwinner and Swanson (2003)	-When someone criticize my team it feels like a personal insult -When I talk about my team I usually say "we" rather than "they" -My team's successes are my successes	5-point Likert-type scale
Country-of-Origin	Strutton, True, Rody (1995)	Consumers goods produced in Italy/Turkey, generally are: -Of high quality -Good investments -Reliable	5-point Likert-type scale
Attitude toward Sponsor Brand	Speed and Thompson (2000)	Thinking about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener, please evaluate this company by selecting the point on each scale that best represents your attitude to the company: -Good/bad -Like/dislike -Pleasant/unpleasant	5-point semantic difference scale
Attitude towards Sponsorship	EuroLeague Official Survey (2015)	- The EuroLeague is better because of sponsors -The EuroLeague would not be possible without sponsorship -I would be inclined to give my business to firms that sponsor the EuroLeague	5-point Likert-type scale

Sponsor-Event Fit	Speed and Thompson (2000)	-The image of the EuroLeague and the image of Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener are similar -Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener and the EuroLeague fit together well -It makes sense to me that Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener sponsors the EuroLeague	5-point Likert-type scale
Brand Affect	Mazodier and Quester (2014)	- I have good feeling about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener -I feel favorable about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener -I feel positive about Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener	5-point Likert-type scale
Purchase Intentions	Reams, Eddy, Cork (2015)	-I am likely to recommend Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener products to others -I would consider buying Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener products in the future -I will buy Turkish Airlines/Armani Exchange/Efes Pilsener products in the future	5-point Likert-type scale

3.4 Sampling method

As mentioned before, the survey will be spread mainly through social network and forums frequently visited by individuals passionate about sports (more specifically about basketball) to be congruent with the EuroLeague context. Due to this kind of distribution, the study will rely on a non-probability sample and the method is convenience sampling. A non-probability sampling means that the sample is gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected; this sampling method, also, is low-cost and not time-consuming.

A convenience sampling method is a type of non-probability sampling where the sample is taken from a group of people easy to contact or to reach; there are no other criteria to the sampling method except that people be available and willing to participate. In addition, this type of sampling method does not require that a simple random sample is generated, since the only criteria is whether the participants agree to participate. As well as other methods, convenience sampling has some advantages and disadvantages: the advantages can be summed up by affirming that convenience sampling can be used by almost anyone and it is extremely speedy, easy, readily available, and cost effective, causing it to be an attractive option to most researchers; its disadvantages, on the other hand, usually outweigh the advantages. This sampling technique may be more appropriate for one type of study and less for another. The results of the convenience sampling cannot be generalized to the target population because of the potential bias of the sampling technique due to under-representation of subgroups in the sample in comparing to the population of interest. The bias of the sample cannot be measured. Therefore, inferences based on the convenience sampling should be made only about the sample itself. Convenience sampling is characterized with insufficient power to identify differences of population subgroups.

Due to disadvantages of representativeness, in this analysis this issue will be prevent posting the survey link made to gather information and data only on social network pages frequented by sport lovers, on the EuroLeague page, and on sport related forum. These pages and forums are surely characterized by the presence of sport fans from all over the world requiring the need to focus on an international sample; finally, to ensure a reliable and positive success of this data-hunting it will be necessary to collect data from a sample of at least 150 participants.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Pre-Test

To check the comprehensibility, the fluidity, and the consistency of the entire survey, a pre-test has been made before starting the real data collection needed for the main test. The survey has been shared with friends and family members to help locate any mistake or need to reword any questions. In general, the feedback were positive: participants found the survey quick, interesting, and understandable. However, some changes have been considered necessary. The pre-test was designed with 7 points Likert-type scales, but for a quicker and greater understanding it was deemed necessary to change the scales to 5 points for the main test; still, besides Turkish Airlines and Armani Exchange a further sponsor has been included, namely Efes Pilsener, to give people the chance to randomly answer questions on one sponsor out of three. Question on consumers' habits relating on beer, flights, and clothing have been added to easily lead consumers to specific question about each sponsors. Finally, control questions were subsequently included to check and control unaided brand recall and brand affect. At this point, the survey was ready to be shared for the main data collection. To take full advantage of the data gathered during the pre-test, an analysis has been made: the pre-test accurate design and results can be found at the very end of the thesis, in the Appendix 1.

4.2 Main Test

4.2.1 Main Test Design

Two hundred and nineteen responses have been collected for the main test. The data were gathered through a survey made on Qualtrics and subsequently distribute with an anonymous link in several sport, basket, and EuroLeague related groups on Facebook. The survey consists of questions to test respondents' interest in sport, basketball, and more specifically in the EuroLeague basketball, alongside with randomized questions on three sponsors, namely Armani Exchange, Turkish Airlines, and Efes Pilsener to test this study's variables, followed by a block of questions on respondents' demographics information. To make sure the respondents were sport, basket, or EuroLeague lovers only, a condition has been added to one of the first questions, i.e. all the respondents must have heard of EuroLeague at least once to continue the survey. The questions have been built with the help of 5 points Likert-type scales, semantic differential scales, and a few open questions.

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics

Once the survey has reached a large and sufficient number of respondents (the cutoff to have reliable and significant data is at least 150 participants), the database has been purified and those observations that did not meet the aforementioned condition or those who failed to answer all the questions were excluded, resulting in a total sample size of 153 participants with no item non-responded: as expected the majority – 79.08% - of respondents were men while the 20.92% were women with an overall average of 28 years (Figure 6). It is safe to state that the majority of respondents belongs to the "Millennials" generation ranking from 18 to 34 years old, as matter of fact the 52.59 % of respondents are workers, followed by a 37.25% of students and a 5.23% of unemployed. The remaining 3.92% belongs to other unspecified categories. The participants are mainly European (93.46%), mostly from Italy (39.87%), Spain (7,19%), and France (4.58%) although a small percentage of the participants is located in America (3.26%), Asia (2.61%), and Africa (0.65%).

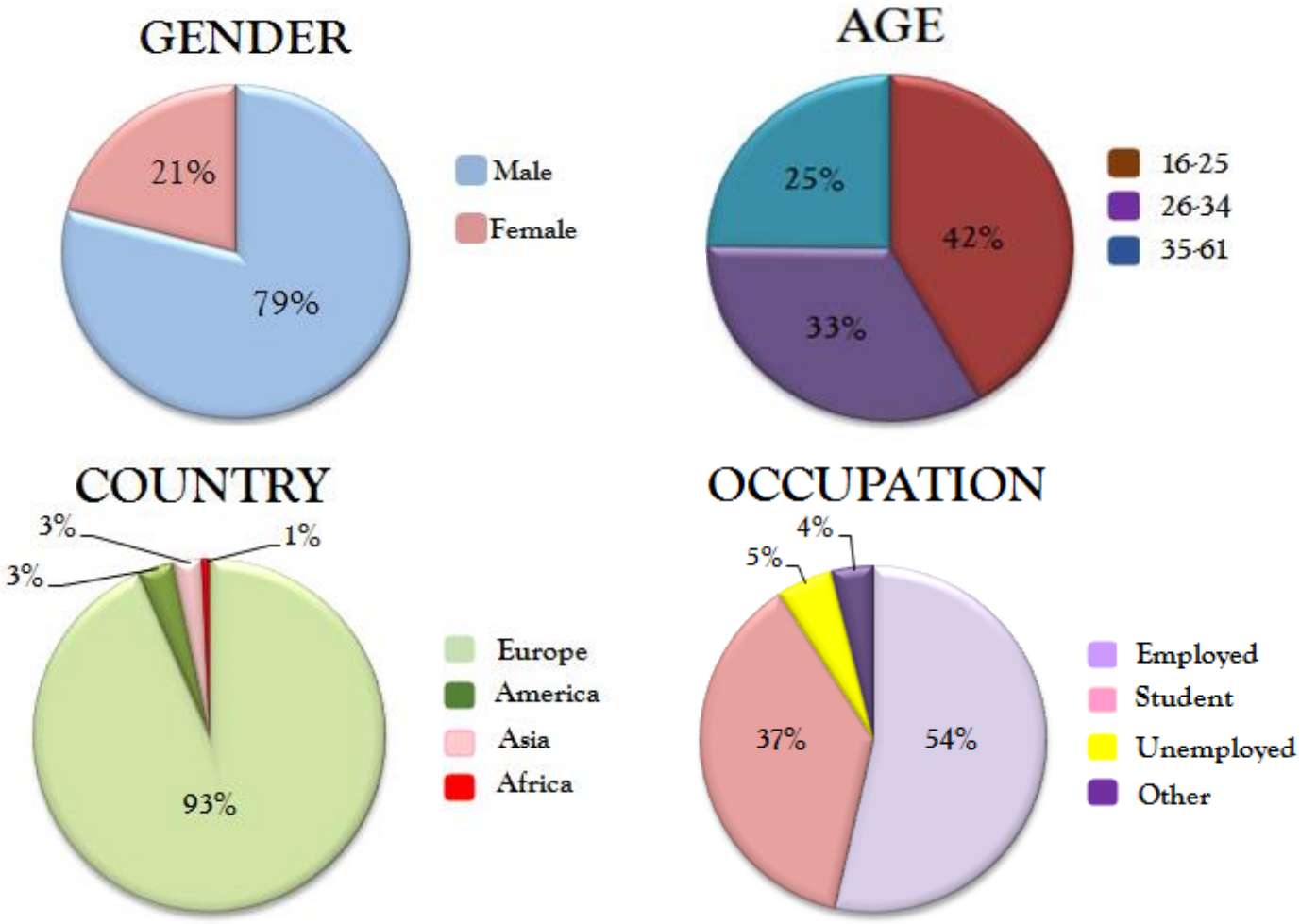


Figure 6 Pie charts of demographics

Overall, the 75.16% of the respondents claims to be a sport lover and the 72.55% of the total sample is strongly interested in basketball: according to the majority of the participants, basketball is a moment to fully enjoy the game (43.79%), the entire team (16.34%), and every single player (16.34%) without forgetting the entertainment (10.46%), the joy of a team's win (9.80%), and the chance to socialize (327%). Surely television (36.81%) is the ultimate vehicle to follow the EuroLeague, followed by on-line magazines (11.11%), newspapers (9.03%), and on-line newspaper (7.64%); therefore, the NBA (49.76%) makes the EuroLeague (26.14%) the second choice when speaking of watching basketball (i.e. NBA is the competitor event). As a matter of fact, most of the respondents do not attend the EuroLeague games (60.13%), some of them go there occasionally (25.49%), go at the 50% of the home-games (5.23%) or at all the home-games (2.61%); only the 3.27% goes to all home-games and away-games. Overall, the experience at the EuroLeague has been rated in the standard from the 56.21% of respondents.

Finally, to test the control variable "Unaided Brand Recall" an open-question has been submitted asking respondents how many sponsors they recalled: the answers showed a strong recall for Turkish Airlines (55.55%) and Armani Exchange (15.68%), while the 12.41% affirmed they did not recall any sponsor. Other few respondents recalled wrong sponsors such as Oscar Mayer, Mondo, Bako, and Kia. Similarly, a multiple choice question with actual and fake sponsors has been included (i.e. aided brand recall) and it appears that 77.78% recalled Turkish Airlines, 16.34% Armani Exchange, and 6.53% Spalding. A small number of respondents did choose the fake sponsors while the 6.53% couldn't recall any of them. Furthermore, a series of question on this year EuroLeague's teams have been administered showing that respondents' favorite teams appear to be AX Armani Exchange Olimpia Milan (28.10%), Fenerbahce Istanbul (13.07%), Real Madrid (7.84%), and Olympiacos Piraeus (6.54%).

Table 3. Summary statistics for three Sponsor Brands

MEAN (SD)	AX ARMANI EXCHANGE	TURKISH AIRLINES	EFES PILSENER	OVERALL
Sponsor-Event Fit	Fit1=3.245; 0.998 Fit2=2.943; 1.081 Fit3=3.396; 1.182	Fit1= 3.489;1.018 Fit2= 3.276;1.077 Fit3= 3.489;1.177	Fit1=3.339;1.036 Fit2=2.943; 1.231 Fit3=3.283; 1.291	Fit1=3.346;1.015 Fit2=3.039;1.129 Fit3=3.379;1.213
Purchase Intentions	PI1= 3; 1.143 PI2= 2.886;1.171 PI3= 2.811;1.177	PI1= 3.191; 0.969 PI2= 3.127; 1.034 PI3= 2.893; 1.026	PI1=2.943; 1.364 PI2=3.132; 1.373 PI3=2.981; 1.379	PI1=3.032; 1.143 PI2=3.026; 1.146 PI3=2.862; 1.124
Attitude toward the Sponsor	ATS1=2.433;1.009 ATS2=2.528;0.932 ATS3=2.754;0.958	ATS1=2.595;0.924 ATS2=2.595;0.851 ATS3=2.553;0.904	ATS1=2.754;1.054 ATS2=2.905;1.005 ATS3=2.867;0.961	ATS1=2.594;1.002 ATS2=2.692;0.961 ATS3=2.732;0.945

4.2.3 Scales Reliability and Validity

All the scales used to test this study's variables have been purified through a Cronbach alpha analysis: overall, the results show a satisfactory and successful reliability, all the scales were measured showing an alpha value larger than 0.6. To check scales validity, a factor analysis has been run confirming the aforementioned situation: overall, construct and discriminant validity is respected. The outputs are included in the Appendix 2.

4.2.4 Main Test Results

The previous section gave an overall view of the data collected in the studies, also demonstrating that reliability and validity have been ensured. Following, it will be reported the result from the main test about the hypothesis:

H1:*Functional based similarity positively influences sponsor-event fit*
H2:*Brand familiarity positively influences sponsor-event fit*
H3:*Event involvement positively influences sponsor-event fit*
H4:*Team identification positively influences sponsor-event fit*
H5:*Country-of-origin has a positive effect on fit. If higher the country-of-origin effect, higher the fit*

Three regression models have been run (Table 3): the first model includes only control variables, such as Attitude towards the Sponsor and Attitude toward the Sponsorship; the second model includes all main effects; the third model investigates some interaction effects as well. To conclude about the hypothesis 1-5, it has been used model 2 results. Model 3 results will be used to give some additional insights, specifically the mediating role of Fit. To run the regression models it was deemed necessary the help of dummy variables: $DummyTurkish$ is equal to 1 if a subject is randomly assigned to sponsor brand " Turkish Airlines", otherwise (Armani or Efes) is equal to 0. $DummyArmani$ is equal to 1 if a subject is randomly assigned to sponsor brand "Armani Exchange", otherwise (Armani or Efes) is equal to 0. The reference category of sponsor brand is Efes. Nationality is also a dummy variable indicating whether a subject is Italian (1) or not (0). Dummy variables for other nationalities are not included into the analysis, especially for Turkey because there were few Turkish respondents. The frequency table for respondents' "Nationality" is in the Appendix 2.
The multiple linear regression equations are:

1. $Fit = \beta 0 + \beta 6 AttitudeSponsorship + \beta 7 AttitudeSponsor + \varepsilon i$ (only control variables)
2. $Fit = \beta 0 + \beta 1 BrandSimilarity + \beta 2 BrandFamiliarity + \beta 3 EventInvolvement + \beta 4 TeamIdentification + \beta 5 CountryofOrigin + \beta 6 AttitudeSponsorship + \beta 7 AttitudeSponsor + \beta 8 DummyTurkish + \beta 9 DummyArmani + \beta 10 Nationality + \varepsilon i$ (control variables and main effects)
3. $Fit = \beta 0 + \beta 1 BrandSimilarity + \beta 2 BrandFamiliarity + \beta 3 EventInvolvement + \beta 4 TeamIdentification + \beta 5 CountryofOrigin + \beta 6 AttitudeSponsorship + \beta 7 AttitudeSponsor + \beta 8 DummyTurkish + \beta 9 DummyArmani + \beta 10 Nationality + \beta 8 DummyTurkish * Nationality + \beta 9 DummyArmani * Nationality + \varepsilon i$ (control variables, main effects, and interaction effect)

Table 4. Multiple linear regression results for Fit

	1)DV = FIT	2) DV = FIT	3)DV=FIT
Constant	β= 2.745 P-Value= 0.000***	β= 0.572 P-Value= 0.127**	β= 0.640 P-Value= 0.098
Attitude Sponsorship	β= 0.331 P-Value= 0.000***	β= 0.157 P-Value= 0.016** a= 0.157 S_a= 0.064	β= 0.151 P-Value= 0.023**
Attitude Sponsor	β= -0.204 P-Value= 0.014**	β= -0.102 P-Value= 0.073	β= -0.109 P-Value= 0.058
Functional based Similarity	-	β= 0.364 P-Value= 0.000*** a= 0.364 S_a= 0.075	β= 0.364 P-Value= 0.000***
Brand Familiarity	-	β= 0.115 P-Value= 0.024** a= 0.115 Sa= 0.050	β= 0.118 P-Value= 0.021**
Event Involvement	-	β= -0.028 P-Value= 0.581	β= -0.0269 P-Value= 0.603
Team Identification	-	β= -0.077 P-Value= 0.092	β= -0.070 P-Value= 0.130
Country-of-Origin	-	β= 0.483 P-Value= 0.000*** a= 0.483 S_a= 0.065	β= 0.479 P-Value=0.000***
DummyTurkish	-	β= -0.036 P-Value= 0.785	β= -0.148 P-Value= 0.376
DummyArmani	-	β= -0.422	β= -0.466

		P-Value= 0.002***	P-Value= 0.005***
Nationality (1=Italy, 0=others)	-	β= -0.063 P-Value= 0.585	β= -0.196 P-Value= 0.300
DummyTurkish*Nationality	-	-	β= 0.284 P-Value= 0.275
DummyArmani*Nationality	-	-	β= 0.121 P-Value= 0.627
F-value (p-value)	F(2, 150)= 11.06 P>F= 0.0000	F(10, 142)= 25.02 P>F= 0.0000	F(12, 140)= 20.83 P>F= 0.0000
R-Squared	0.1285	0.6379	0.6410
Adjusted R-Squared	0.1169	0.6124	0.6102

***p-value<0.01 – **p<0.05

The regression models have explanatory power (Prob>F<0,05), the goodness of fit shows a great overall congruence of the models with an R-Squared ranking from 0.1285 to 0.6410 (Table 4). As we can see from the Table 4, adding the interaction effects did not improve the model 2 fit (interactions effects are also not significant in Model 3). Initially the relation between Fit, as the dependent variables, with Attitude toward the Sponsorship and Attitude toward the Sponsor, as control variables, has been inspected. The findings show that the control variables have a significant influence of Fit (p<0.05), therefore Attitude toward the Sponsor has a negative effect on Fit: the coefficient relating to the control variables show that the increase of 1 unit in Attitude toward the Sponsorship increases Fit of 0.331 while the increase of 1 unit in Attitude toward the Sponsor decreases Fit of -0.204 (Table 4, Model 1).

Afterwards, the relations between Fit, as the dependent variable, with the control variables and the independent variables has been inspected. The findings show that Attitude toward the Sponsorship (β=0.331), Functional based Similarity (β=0.364), Brand Familiarity (β=0.115), and Country of Origin (β=0.483) have a positive and significant influence on Sponsor-Event Fit. Hence, H1, H2, and H5 are supported. Unlike the previous findings, Attitude toward the Sponsor (β= -0.102), together with Event Involvement (β=-0.028), and Team Identification (β=-0.077) have no significant effect on Sponsor-Event Fit. Hence, H3 and H4 are not supported. Dummy variables effects have been added and the findings show that DummyTurkish and Nationality have a p-value>0.5 while DummyArmani has a p-value<0.5, nonetheless they all have a negative coefficient and show a decrease on fit (respectively, -0.036, -0.422, -0.063). Since DummyArmani has a

significant negative effect (b=-0.422), it means that when the sponsor brand is Armani, respondents perceive less fit between Armani and EuroLeague in comparison to Turkish Airlines or Efes and the EuroLeague. This is a very interesting result.

Furthermore, a model investigating the interaction effect between dummy variables has been run. The purpose of the test was to check if Italian respondents perceived fit for sponsor brand-event different than other nationalities (perhaps Italian respondents might perceive higher fit for Armani because Armani is an Italian brand and Turkish Airlines and Efes Pilsener are Turkish brands). The findings show that the interaction DummyTurkish*Nationality (β=, p-value= 0.275), and DummyArmani*Nationality (β=, p-value=0.627) has no significant effect on Fit (p-value>0.05). Thus, there is no difference in sponsor brand-event fit perceptions when the respondent is Italian or not. The findings show that the interaction DummyTurkish*Nationality (β=0.284,p-value= 0.275), and DummyArmani*Nationality (β=0.121, p-value=0.627) has no significant effect on Fit (p-value>0.05). To ensure that the regression model estimates of the coefficients are stable, multicollinearity has been checked. As it can be seen from the outputs in the Appendix 2, the regression models appear stable which means that there is a good linear relationship among the predictors: in every case (Model 1, Model 2, Model 3) the VIF is lower than 10 and the tolerance, defined as 1/VIF and used to check the degree of collinearity, is larger than 0.1. Finally, to conclude about hypothesis testing, model 1 presented below it is sufficient to test H6:

H6: *Sponsors-event fit positively influences consumers' purchase intentions of the sponsor brand*

Three regression models have been run. Despite an hypothesis for a mediating effect of fit has not been considered, a mediating effect will be inspected anyway running the following models (2 and 3). When fit is added into the model 2 as an additional IV (model 3) and the effect of existing significant IVs (in model 2) becomes insignificant, then fit is a full mediator, but if the effect becomes smaller, then fit has a partial mediating effect. (Baron and Kenny, 1986)

1. $Purchase\ intention = \beta 0 + \beta 1 Fit + \varepsilon i$ (effect of fit on purchase intentions)
2. $Purchase\ intention = \beta 0 + \beta 1 BrandSimilarity + \beta 2 BrandFamiliarity + \beta 3 EventInvolvement + \beta 4 TeamIdentification + \beta 5 CountryofOrigin +$

$\beta 6 AttitudeSponsorship + \beta 7 AttitudeSponsor + \beta 8 DummyTurkish + \beta 9 DummyArmani + \beta 10 Nationality + \varepsilon i$ (IVs effect on Purchase Intention without Fit)

3. $Purchase\ intention = \beta 0 + \beta 1 BrandSimilarity + \beta 2 BrandFamiliarity + \beta 3 EventInvolvement + \beta 4 TeamIdentification + \beta 5 CountryofOrigin + \beta 6 AttitudeSponsorship + \beta 7 AttitudeSponsor + \beta 8 DummyTurkish + \beta 9 DummyArmani + \beta 10 Nationality + \beta 11 Fit + \varepsilon i$ (effect of Fit on Purchase Intentions jointly with the IVs)

Table 5. Multiple linear regression results for Purchase Intentions

	1) DV = PURCHASE INTENTIONS	**2) DV = PURCHASE INTENTIONS**	**3) DV = PURCHASE INTENTIONS**
Constant	β= 0.750 P-value= 0.006***	β= 0.872 P-value= 0.091	β= 0.784 P-value= 0.130
Attitude Sponsorship	-	β= 0.045 P-value= 0.610	β= 0.021 P-value= 0.815
Attitude Sponsor	-	β= -0.305 P-value= 0.000*** b= -0.289 $S_{b=}$0.078	β= -0.289 P-value= 0.000*** b=0.045 $S_{b=}$0.089
Functional based Similarity	-	β= 0.230 P-value= 0.029** b= 0.174 $S_{b=}$ 0.070	β= 0.872 P-value= 0.091
Brand Familiarity	-	β= 0.241 P-value= 0.001*** b= 0.223 $S_{b=}$ 0.070	β= 0.174 P-value= 0.122
Event Involvement	-	β= 0.072 P-value= 0.308	β= 0.076 P-value= 0.279
Team Identification	-	β= -0.013 P-value= 0.828	β= -0.001 P-value= 0.979
Country-of-Origin	-	β= 0.508 P-value= 0.000*** b=0.434 $S_{b=}$0.106	β= 0.434 P-value= 0.000*** b=0.508 $S_{b=}$0.090
DummyTurkish	-	β= -0.298 P-value= 0.102	β= -0.293 P-value= 0.107
DummyArmani	-	β= -0.715 P-value= 0.000***	β= -0.650 P-value= 0.001***
Nationality (1=Italy, 0=others)	-	β= 0.022 P-value= 0.888	β= 0.032 P-value= 0.839
Fit	β= 0.701	-	β= 0.153

	P-value= 0.000***		P-value= 0.183
F-value (p-value)	F(1, 151)= 78.69 P>F= 0.0000	F(10, 142)= 15.54 P>F= 0.0000	F(11, 141)= 14.37 P>F= 0.0000
R-Squared	0.3426	0.5286	0.5226
Adjusted R-Squared	0.3382	0.4890	0.4918

**p-value<0.01 – **p<0.05

All of three regression models have an explanatory power (Prob>F<0.05) because the goodness of fit shows a good explanatory power i.e. fit of the models with an R-Squared ranking from 0.3382 to 0.4981. For instance, fit explains 34% variability in purchase intention alone. So, fit between sponsor brand-event is an important factor for sponsorship success in terms of purchase intention. The findings show that Fit (β=0.701) has a significant and positive effect on Purchase Intentions since the increase of 1 unit of Fit, increases 0.701 units of Purchase Intentions. Hence, H6 is supported. Model 2 results show that Brand Familiarity (β=0.241), Country of Origin (β=0.508), Attitude Toward the Sponsor (β=-0.305) and Functional based Similarity (β=0.230) have a positive influence on Purchase Intentions except negative significant effects of Attitude Toward the Sponsor (β=-0.305). Besides, Event Involvement (β=0.072), Team Identification (β=-0.013), and Attitude toward the Sponsorship (β=0.045) do not have a significant effect on Purchase Intentions.

Furthermore, comparing Model 3 (with fit) to Model 2 (without fit) in Table 5, fit appears to have a partial mediating effect for Country of Origin (β=0.434), Attitude toward the Sponsor (β=-0.289) and DummyArmani (β=-0.650). Thus, fit reduces the effect of country-of-origin, attitude toward sponsor and sponsor brand-Armani on Purchase Intentions. Fit is a full mediator between brand familiarity/functional brand similarity and purchase intention. The effect of Brand Familiarity (β=0.174) and Functional based Similarity (β=0.872) on Purchase Intentions becomes insignificant when Fit included (Model 3, Table 4). Thus, the effect of Brand familiarity and Functional brand Similarity on Purchase Intentions intervenes with Fit. Finally, VIF has been checked again and as it can be seen from the outputs in the Appendix 2, the regression models appear stable which means that there is a good linear relationship among the predictors: in every case (Model 1, Model 2, Model 3) the VIF is lower than 10 and the tolerance is larger than 0.1.

Table 6. Summary of hypothesis testing

HYPOTHESIS	DECISION
H1	Supported
H2	Supported
H3	Not Supported
H4	Not Supported
H5	Supported
H6	Supported

4.2.5 Standardized Beta Values

In the following tables the standardized "**β**" values for significant IVs are provided.

Table 7. Standardized Beta values for IVs and Fit as DV

	1) DV = FIT	2) DV = FIT	3) DV = FIT
Attitude Sponsorship	β= 0.301	β= 0.143	β= 0.137
Attitude Sponsor	β= -0.189	-	-
Functional based Similarity	-	β= 0.314	β= 0.314
Brand Familiarity	-	β= 0.134	β= 0.139
Country-of-Origin	-	β= 0.490	β= 0.486

In Model 2, previously used to draw conclusions about hypothesis testing, the increase of 1 unit in Attitude toward Sponsorship, Functional based Similarity, Brand Familiarity and Country-of-Origin respectively increase the DV Fit of 0.143, 0.314, 0.134, or 0.490 units. Highest effect was Country-of-Origin with highest standardized beta (b=0.492), then remaining in order: Functional based Similarity (b=0.314), Attitude toward the Sponsorship (b=0.143), Brand Familiarity (b=0.134).

Table 8. Standardized Beta values for IVs and Purchase Intentions as DV

	1) DV = PURCHASE INTENTIONS	2) DV = PURCHASE INTENTIONS	3) DV = PURCHASE ITENTIONS
Attitude Sponsor	-	β= -0.236	β= -0.223
Functional based Similarity	-	β= 0.166	-
Brand Familiarity	-	β= 0.236	-
Country-of-Origin	-	β= 0.431	β= 0.367
Fit	β= 0.585	-	-

Meanwhile, for Purchase Intentions as DV the increase of 1 unit in Fit increases Purchase Intentions of 0.585. Furthermore, the remaining two models show a decrease of Purchase Intentions when it comes to Attitude toward the Sponsor (-0.236; -0.223) and an increase when it comes to Country-of-Origin (0.431; 0.367). Table 8 shows that in Model 3 Functional based Similarity and Brand Familiarity have no effect on the DV due to the presence of Fit (used as a mediator), while in Model 2 they increase Purchase Intentions of respectively 0.166 and 0.236 units.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions and Discussion

Modern concept of communication in marketing is based on the integration of different marketing activities engaging all components and all external and internal processes of the company. This concept has been developed into integrated marketing communications theory that underlines the importance of diverse and at the same time unifies messages and conjunctions and controlling of all channels of delivering this messages. One important and efficient tools in marketing communications is *sport sponsorship* that is significant especially in increasing the awareness of the company, its products, and customers loyalty thanks to strong emotional connection between audience of the sponsee and the sponsor's brand. As a matter of fact, sponsorship offers the opportunity to connect with people when they are experiencing or undertaking an activity that they enjoy and have chosen to be involved in. Sport sponsorship should be integrated with such marketing-mix elements as product, price, and distribution, that helps to create an appropriate message about the product and/or the company and deliver this message in effective way using marketing communication models.

Nonetheless, this thesis aims to give further insights on the effects of sponsorship when it comes to the fit between a sponsor and a sport event. The results partially confirms previous studies showing that the Fit between the sport event and the sponsor is positively influenced by Functional based Similarity, Brand Familiarity, and Country of Origin. As a matter of fact, the origin of the sponsoring brand does influence the fit although results show that respondents perceive Armani to be less fitting than Turkish Airlines; the reason for this may lie under team supporters' reasons: even though the majority of respondents is from Italy and the favorite team is AX Armani Exchange Olimpia Milan (28.10%), there is a remaining part of supporters that may be influenced by the Milan team's name and "reject" the idea of a brand named Armani as a sponsor of the event. However, the results do not show special negative circumstances that can result from nationalistic fervor when selecting sponsorship event brands. As regarding Functional based Similarity managers should be encouraged to continue in linking their image to the EuroLeague since it appears that the event's image is consistent with the firm's brand positioning goals; also, the familiarity with the sponsoring brand gives a proper fuel to make respondents more predisposed to consider as a sponsor brands of which they have at least a basic knowledge; as a matter of fact, the more familiar a sponsor is, the more likely it is to influence other entities (i.e. Fit). Consumers who have a very

strong attachment to the sport event and the sponsor, frame a positive picture of the sponsoring brand in their mind. On the other hand, Event Involvement and Team Identification do not influence Fit: companies sponsoring sports events should use different sponsorship-linked marketing activities, such as celebrity endorsement, public relations, and advertising in order to build positive attitudes among consumers. Moreover, managers need to consider mechanisms by which consumers can become more involved with the sponsored event: for instance, support for athletes and teams would facilitate their participation in sports events generating higher levels of event involvement by consumers. Furthermore, sports teams should probably be more likely to increase participants' interest in the sport and their identification with the teams. A benefit of using this strategy could be that increasing the contact between fans and players the opportunity for identification bonds to develop can be increased.

As outcome of the sponsorship, Purchase Intentions feels the positive effect of Fit: according to this thesis' result, the marketers would benefit in sponsoring sport events such as the EuroLeague because a higher Fit between the sponsor and the event leads to higher Purchase Intentions for the sponsoring brand. Moreover, Purchase Intentions is positively affected by other entities, this means that it can also be increased when consumers perceive the sponsor brand familiar and the event's image consistent with the sponsor image. Also, the sponsor's Country of Origin can play a positive and influencing role on the DV probably thanks to the sponsoring brand's European origins and its reliable and of quality products. Nonetheless, when the IV are mediate with the presence of Fit, Country of Origin is the only variable that keeps its positive influence on Purchase Intentions.

5.2 Managerial Implications

The results suggest that Sponsor-Event Fit is more effective when the event and the brand have the same image, the sponsor has certain origins, and the brands are familiar. Sponsorship is a good strategy for managers since managers of the sponsor brand could use their brands' familiarity to their advantage and position themselves as an asset in a sponsorship, and claim a stronger position during the negotiation of sponsorship agreements; moreover gaining more and more visibility thanks to a major event like the EuroLeague can help managers to change consumers' attitude toward the brand, gain new customers, and increase Purchase Intentions. When it comes to the sponsoring brand's origin, managers could promote their foreignness and target international events like the EuroLeague for sponsorships to reach populations with high international characteristics.

Finally, according to Gwinner and Eaton (1999), *"…the event selection should be made with degree of similarity in mind. To enhance the strength of image transfer in cases of event sponsorship, it seems plausible that the marketing manager may wish to alter the communication regarding the product prior to the event, to be more congruent (on either a functional or image basis) with the image of the event".* The findings indicate that if the match between the event and the sponsor can be made stronger, then the resulting image transfer will be more pronounced and Purchase Intentions will be increased as well.

All the results should be considered in regarding the control variables Attitude toward the Sponsor and Attitude toward the Sponsorship: the findings show how Fit is positively influenced by Attitude toward the Sponsorship and negatively by Attitude toward the Sponsor underlying the necessity to reshape brand's strategy in order to positively increase the attitude consumers have toward every single brand. On the other hand, people do believe in the power and importance of sponsorship when it come to sport events confirming the important marketing tool that it is for managers and companies.

5.3 Scientific Implications

This study contributes to the already existing knowledge of Fit and Purchase Intentions. It is already known that many variables influencing fit exists, among which some have been used in this study in a different sponsorship context. Basically, this analysis confirms what has been told previously, namely the positive effect brand familiarity and functional based similarity have on Fit; unlikely the previous study, an interesting result shows how event involvement and team identification have not influence on Fit. However, the groundbreaking feature of this study is the analysis of Country-of-Origin influence on Fit, which aims to give a further insight on what construct influence Fit.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

A number of limitations were present in this study. Firstly, the focus was purely on a major event with pre-existing sponsors and was limited to just basketball. By extending the research in other sports field, in smaller sport events, and with less renowed sponsors a different and interesting study could be brought to life. Secondly, the vehicle to share the survey has been Facebook which means that the sharing was limited to only one social media while the future researches may be done by using more social and forums and gain more respondents; also it would be interesting to gather data

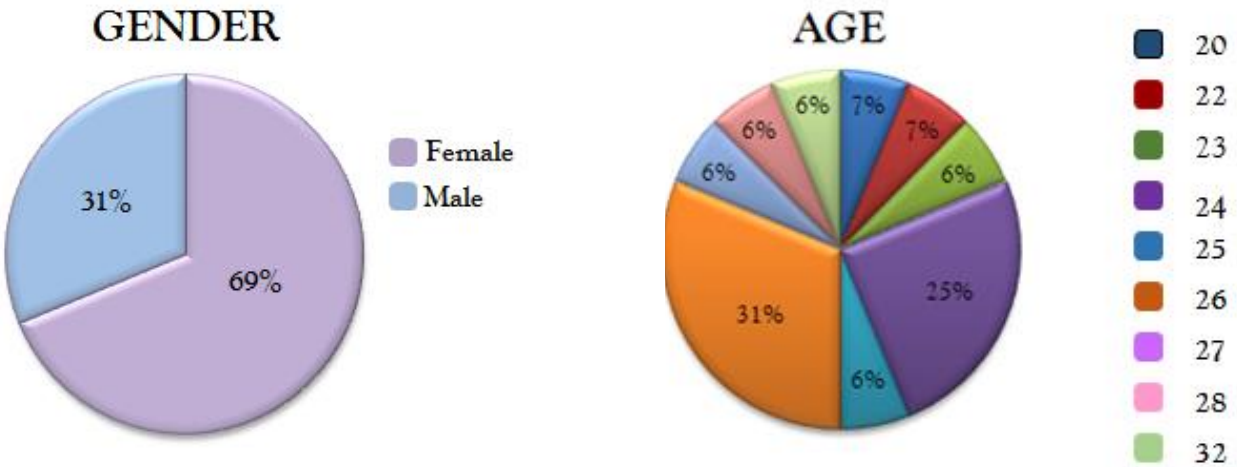
during a sport event to get more truthful information. Thirdly, an area was not deeply studied: although Fit has been used as a mediator, a dedicate hypothesis has not been built. In the future, researchers could think of a dedicated study to understand and improve the several facets of Fit as a mediator and extend the analysis also on Fit as a moderator. Fourthly, as stated before in the thesis, multiple linear regression is a suitable method for hypothesis testing, however the most suitable method for testing simultaneous relationships between constructs is structural equation modeling which could be used by future researchers to give different insights about the study. Finally, as emerged from the main test results, the sponsor brand Armani is perceived as lower fitting, for future studies it could be interesting to go further in analyzing and understanding the effect of Image based Similarity.

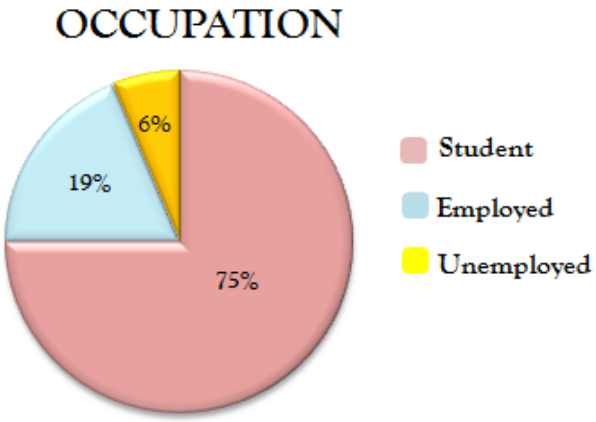
Appendix 1

1. Pre-Test Design

Twenty-eight observations have been made in the pre-test: the respondent were all Italian, mainly friends and family members with at least a basic knowledge of sport and the survey was distribute with an anonymous link through the well-known instant messaging app "WhatsApp" and the "Messenger" app belonging to the social network "Facebook". The data were gathered through a survey made on Qualtrics and the main sponsors were two, namely Turkish Airlines and Armani Exchange; the scales used to measure each construct were built as three items 7 point Likert-type scales and the observations made by the same persons or those who failed to answer all the questions were excluded, resulting in a total sample size of 16 participants.

Hereafter are provided some graphics to summarize respondents' gender, age, and occupation:





Before starting with the analysis, all the scales used to test the variables have been purified through a Cronbach alpha analysis to check their reliability: while 8 scales were successfully

measured with an alpha that goes from 0.75 to 0.93, two scales, namely brand similarity (control variable) and attitude toward the sponsorship (independent variable), showed a Cronbach coefficient of approximately 0.5 which makes them not reliable. Furthermore, to check the validity of the scales and their items a factor analysis has been ran: as for the Cronbach alpha situation, 8 scale have successfully fulfilled the construct validity and discriminant validity criteria while two of them, which are still brand similarity and attitude toward the sponsorship, failed the test resulting not valid. For the sake of clarity, a Cronbach alpha has been ran again to check reliability without the item that are not valid as showed in factor analysis: the scales are still not reliable. For this reason, the two scales won't be included in the scale mean for this pre-test (hence, H1 won't be tested).

2. Pre-Test Results

As mentioned before, each regression model has been run twice: once with the DV and the control variable and once with the DV, the control variable, and all the IVs. In this scenario it was also deemed necessary to create dummy variables for each sponsor: every regression model has been run once with the DummyTurkish variable and once with the DummyArmani variable.

First thing first, a regression model with Sponsor-Event Fit as dependent variable and Attitude toward the sponsor as control variable has been run: the findings show that in both cases (once with DummyTurkish and once with DummyArmani) the entire regression model has no explanatory power (Prob>F=0.6347, p>0.01), the models' goodness of fit shows a poor fit with the set of observations (R-Squared=0.0675), and a control variable p>0.05. The coefficient is positive for Attitude toward the Sponsor (0. 2488479) and for DummyTurkish (0.125192), which means that the increase of 1 unit in Attitude toward the Sponsor is equivalent to an increase of 0.2488479 in Sponsor-Event Fit; on the other hand, the coefficient is positive for the control variable (0.2488479) but negative for the DummyArmani (-0.125192). Hence, the control variable "Attitude toward the Sponsor" has no significant effect on "Sponsor-Event Fit" whether the sponsor is Armani Exchange or Turkish Airlines.

Afterwards a multiple linear regression has been run with Sponsor-Event Fit as DV, the control variable, and all the IVs. The findings in both Turkish Airlines and Armani Exchange cases show that the model has no explanatory power (Prob>F=0.5926, p>0.01), the model's goodness of fit shows a sufficient fit with the set of variables (R-Squared=0.3483), and every independent

variables' p-value is higher than 0.05 which means that Brand Familiarity (p=0.146), Event Involvement (p=0.543), Team Identification (p=0.314), and Country of Origin (p=0.403) have no significant effect on Sponsor-Event Fit. Hence H2, H3, H4, H5 are not supported.

Finally the regression model has been run with Purchase Intentions as DV. First an analysis with Purchase Intentions as DV variable and Attitude toward the Sponsor as control variable has been run once with the variable DummyTurkish and once with the variable DummyArmani. The results show that in both cases the entire regression model has no explanatory power (Prob>F=0.2461, p>0.01), the models' goodness of fit shows a poor fit with the set of observations (R-Squared=0.1940), and a control variable p>0.05. The coefficient is positive for Attitude toward the Sponsor (0.0103687) and negative for DummyTurkish (-1.126728), which means that the increase of 1 unit in Attitude toward the Sponsor is equivalent to an increase of 0.0103687 in Purchase Intentions; on the other hand, the coefficient is positive both for the control variable (0.0103687) and for the variable DummyArmani (1.126728). Hence, the control variable "Attitude toward the Sponsor" has no significant effect on "Purchase Intentions" whether the sponsor is Armani Exchange or Turkish Airlines.

In conclusion, the effect the control variable and the IVs have on Purchase Intentions have been tested. Both models with the variable DummyTurkish and DummyArmani show explanatory power (Prob>F=0.000, p>0.01) and have an excellent fit with the set of variables (R-Squared=0.9828). Team Identification (p=0.000), Brand Familiarity (p=0.008), Sponsor-Event Fit (0.014), and Brand Affect (p=0.002) all show a p-value lower than 0.05 revealing a significant effect on Purchase Intentions. Hence, H2, H4, and H6 are supported. On the other hand, Event Involvement (p=0.154), Country of Origin (p=0.455), and Attitude toward the Sponsor (p=0.868) show a p-value higher than 0.05 having a not significant effect on Purchase Intentions. Hence, H3 and H5 are not supported.

Appendix 2

```
. tab country
```

Country	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Brasil	3	1.96	1.96
Bulgaria	1	0.65	2.61
Canada	3	1.96	4.58
Denmark	2	1.31	5.88
France	7	4.58	10.46
Germany	5	3.27	13.73
Greece	6	3.92	17.65
Hungary	3	1.96	19.61
Ireland	4	2.61	22.22
Italy	62	40.52	62.75
Kenya	1	0.65	63.40
Lithuania	1	0.65	64.05
Netherlands	4	2.61	66.67
Norway	4	2.61	69.28
Philippines	1	0.65	69.93
Poland	3	1.96	71.90
Portugal	4	2.61	74.51
Romania	1	0.65	75.16
Russia	4	2.61	77.78
Slovenia	1	0.65	78.43
Spain	11	7.19	85.62
Sweden	3	1.96	87.58
Switzerland	1	0.65	88.24
Turkey	3	1.96	90.20
UK	6	3.92	94.12
USA	6	3.92	98.04
Ukraine	2	1.31	99.35
georgia	1	0.65	100.00
Total	153	100.00	

```
. alpha bf1 bf2 bf3, detail generate(Familiarity) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)
```

Item	Obs	Sign	item-test correlation	item-rest correlation	average inter-item covariance	alpha
bf1	153	+	0.9517	0.8911	1.299407	0.9285
bf2	153	+	0.9551	0.8982	1.280702	0.9230
bf3	153	+	0.9527	0.8926	1.288743	0.9273
Test scale					1.289617	0.9496

```
Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)
```

	bf1	bf2	bf3
bf1	1.4854		
bf2	1.2887	1.4960	
bf3	1.2807	1.2994	1.5031

```
. alpha fit1 fit2 fit3, detail generate(Fit) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign correlation correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
fit1          | 153    +    0.9103      0.8094     .8402993     0.7589
fit2          | 153    +    0.8554      0.6777     .9599243     0.8679
fit3          | 153    +    0.9031      0.7564     .7692208     0.8005
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                   .8564815     0.8644

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

        fit1    fit2    fit3
fit1  1.0305
fit2  0.7692  1.2748
fit3  0.9599  0.8403  1.4738
```

```
. alpha ba1  ba2 ba3, detail generate(Affect) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign correlation correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
ba1           | 153    +    0.9415      0.8624     .8516942     0.8860
ba2           | 153    +    0.9366      0.8599     .9077657     0.8884
ba3           | 153    +    0.9256      0.8327     .9215686     0.9093
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                   .8936762     0.9272

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

        ba1     ba2     ba3
ba1   1.1703
ba2   0.9216  1.0406
ba3   0.9078  0.8517  1.1012
```

```
. alpha ti1 ti2 ti3, detail generate(Identification) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign correlation correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
ti1           | 153    +    0.8588      0.6649     1.182276     0.8133
ti2           | 153    +    0.8492      0.6762     1.268576     0.7992
ti3           | 153    +    0.9010      0.7669     1.000774     0.7090
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                   1.150542     0.8380

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

             ti1        ti2        ti3
ti1     2.0031
ti2     1.0008     1.6416
ti3     1.2686     1.1823     1.8088
```

```
. alpha coo1 coo2 coo3, detail generate(COO) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign correlation correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
coo1          | 153    +    0.8940      0.7633     .9690402     0.8755
coo2          | 153    +    0.9036      0.7815     .9330495     0.8601
coo3          | 153    +    0.9294      0.8353     .8424923     0.8129
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                   .9148607     0.8949

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

             coo1       coo2       coo3
coo1    1.2221
coo2    0.8425     1.2384
coo3    0.9330     0.9690     1.2508
```

```
. alpha ei1 ei2 ei3, detail generate(Involvement) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          |  Obs  Sign correlation correlation covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
ei1           |  153    +     0.9256      0.8309    .9633643    0.8478
ei2           |  153    +     0.9192      0.8165    .9827141    0.8599
ei3           |  153    +     0.9064      0.7868    1.017802    0.8852
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                     .9879601    0.9053

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

        ei1     ei2     ei3
ei1  1.2755
ei2  1.0178  1.2879
ei3  0.9827  0.9634  1.3303
```

```
. alpha pi1 pi2 pi3, detail generate(Purchase) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                  average
                          item-test     item-rest  inter-item
Item          |  Obs  Sign correlation correlation covariance     alpha
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
pi1           |  153    +     0.8851      0.7460     1.48753    0.9520
pi2           |  153    +     0.9534      0.8906    1.172859    0.8331
pi3           |  153    +     0.9421      0.8691    1.254773    0.8525
--------------+------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                     1.305054    0.9176

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

        pi1     pi2     pi3
pi1  1.6943
pi2  1.2548  1.6835
pi3  1.1729  1.4875  1.5914
```

```
. alpha bs1 bs2 bs3, detail generate(Similarity) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                    average
                          item-test     item-rest    inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign  correlation  correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+-------------------------------------------------------
bs1           | 153    +     0.8576       0.6419     .2690058     0.3599
bs2           | 153    +     0.8453       0.5915     .3099415     0.4249
bs3           | 153    +     0.6198       0.2648     .9118077     0.8287
--------------+-------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                     .4969184     0.6730

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

        bs1      bs2      bs3
bs1  1.2116
bs2  0.9118   1.3657
bs3  0.3099   0.2690   1.0863
```

```
. alpha asponsor1 asponsor2 asponsor3, detail generate(Sponsor) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

                                                    average
                          item-test     item-rest    inter-item
Item          | Obs  Sign  correlation  correlation  covariance     alpha
--------------+-------------------------------------------------------
asponsor1     | 153    +     0.9539       0.8918     .7724028     0.9183
asponsor2     | 153    +     0.9545       0.8975     .7985896     0.9133
asponsor3     | 153    +     0.9424       0.8736     .8418043     0.9317
--------------+-------------------------------------------------------
Test scale    |                                     .8042656     0.9461

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

           asponsor1  asponsor2  asponsor3
asponsor1     1.0058
asponsor2     0.8418     0.9248
asponsor3     0.7986     0.7724     0.8948
```

```
. alpha asponsorship1 asponsorship2 asponsorship3, detail generate(Sponsorship) item

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)
```

Item	Obs	Sign	item-test correlation	item-rest correlation	average inter-item covariance	alpha
asponsorsh~1	153	+	0.8356	0.5758	.4215686	0.5053
asponsorsh~2	153	+	0.6637	0.3926	.8918989	0.7297
asponsorsh~3	153	+	0.8476	0.5822	.3912969	0.4972
Test scale					.5682548	0.6919

Interitem covariances (obs=153 in all pairs)

	asponsorship1	asponsorship2	asponsorship3
asponsorship1	1.4882		
asponsorship2	0.3913	0.8770	
asponsorship3	0.8919	0.4216	1.6169

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6	Factor7	Factor8	Uniqueness
ei1	0.0902	0.6298	-0.4055	0.4197	0.2190	0.1215	0.0352	-0.2080	0.1474
ei2	0.1110	0.6548	-0.4341	0.3848	0.1744	0.1480	-0.0197	-0.1545	0.1458
ei3	0.0738	0.5966	-0.4133	0.4514	0.2599	0.0885	0.0574	-0.0978	0.1757
ti1	0.1761	0.5025	0.0344	-0.5903	-0.3591	0.0764	-0.0101	0.0081	0.2319
ti2	0.0592	0.5102	-0.0338	-0.5246	-0.2810	0.2838	0.1772	-0.1427	0.2485
ti3	0.1414	0.6080	-0.1275	-0.5340	-0.2491	0.2222	0.0567	-0.0980	0.1847
asponsorsh~1	0.3222	0.4931	0.0630	-0.0801	-0.1330	-0.5023	-0.2212	0.1819	0.2907
asponsorsh~2	0.1960	0.3423	0.0378	0.0446	0.0694	-0.5429	-0.0079	0.2371	0.4851
asponsorsh~3	0.3686	0.5308	-0.1593	0.0354	-0.1431	-0.3703	-0.1878	0.3157	0.2632
bs1	0.6361	-0.0745	0.1588	0.0087	0.0142	-0.1550	0.5055	-0.2911	0.2002
bs2	0.6724	-0.0365	0.2110	0.0969	-0.1523	-0.2199	0.2377	-0.3681	0.2291
bs3	0.2252	0.2653	0.4720	-0.0616	0.0485	-0.1216	0.2786	0.0145	0.5574
bf1	0.6596	-0.0513	0.2042	0.4465	-0.4188	0.1624	-0.1292	-0.0250	0.1021
bf2	0.6319	-0.0129	0.2288	0.4016	-0.4235	0.2078	-0.2602	0.0046	0.0967
bf3	0.6971	-0.0274	0.2353	0.3258	-0.4217	0.1872	-0.2245	-0.0372	0.0871
coo1	0.6502	-0.0402	0.0204	-0.2614	0.3767	0.2521	-0.2952	-0.0455	0.2123
coo2	0.7060	-0.0265	0.0335	-0.2559	0.3653	0.0459	-0.3302	-0.0428	0.1879
coo3	0.6503	-0.0469	0.0821	-0.3575	0.3623	0.1709	-0.3006	-0.0411	0.1878
asponsor1	-0.3054	0.3535	0.7666	0.1228	0.2257	0.1231	0.0098	0.0648	0.1087
asponsor2	-0.3200	0.3827	0.7560	0.0821	0.1827	0.1142	0.0647	0.1166	0.1086
asponsor3	-0.3775	0.3446	0.7288	0.1710	0.1587	0.1719	-0.0010	0.0535	0.1208
fit1	0.8232	-0.1188	0.0633	-0.0064	0.1131	-0.1503	0.0434	-0.1213	0.2522
fit2	0.6718	-0.0075	0.3039	-0.0210	0.1531	-0.1819	-0.0723	-0.2461	0.3336
fit3	0.7762	-0.0345	0.0487	-0.0930	0.2003	-0.2045	0.0567	-0.1330	0.2825
pi1	0.7933	-0.1040	-0.1127	0.0137	-0.0032	0.1221	0.1934	0.2444	0.2350
pi2	0.7508	-0.0412	-0.1354	0.0440	0.1103	0.2081	0.3130	0.4297	0.0762
pi3	0.7276	-0.0654	-0.1025	0.0379	0.1047	0.2708	0.2837	0.4498	0.0874

```
. regress FIT SPONSOR SPONSORSHIP
```

Source	SS	df	MS
Model	19.35703	2	9.67851501
Residual	131.257352	150	.875049015
Total	150.614382	152	.990884094

Number of obs	153
F(2, 150)	11.06
Prob > F	0.0000
R-squared	0.1285
Adj R-squared	0.1169
Root MSE	.93544

FIT	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
SPONSOR	-.2047312	.0822999	-2.49	0.014	-.3673481	-.0421143
SPONSORSHIP	.3313265	.083731	3.96	0.000	.165882	.496771
_cons	2.74541	.356453	7.70	0.000	2.041092	3.449727

```
. vif
```

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
SPONSOR	1.00	0.999811
SPONSORSHIP	1.00	0.999811
Mean VIF	1.00	

```
. regress FIT INVOLVEMENT IDENTIFICATION SPONSORSHIP SIMILARITY FAMILIARITY COO1 SPONSOR DUMMYTURKISH DUMMYARMANI Nationality DUMMY
> TURKISH_Nationality DUMMYARMANI_Nationality
```

Source	SS	df	MS
Model	96.5446073	12	8.04538394
Residual	54.069775	140	.386212679
Total	150.614382	152	.990884094

Number of obs	153
F(12, 140)	20.83
Prob > F	0.0000
R-squared	0.6410
Adj R-squared	0.6102
Root MSE	.62146

FIT	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
INVOLVEMENT	-.0269018	.0515703	-0.52	0.603	-.1288591	.0750554
IDENTIFICA~N	-.0706331	.046315	-1.53	0.130	-.1622004	.0209342
SPONSORSHIP	.1511503	.0655334	2.31	0.023	.0215873	.2807134
SIMILARITY	.3640449	.0760029	4.79	0.000	.213783	.5143068
FAMILIARITY	.1189892	.0509419	2.34	0.021	.0182744	.219704
COO1	.4790921	.066515	7.20	0.000	.3475884	.6105957
SPONSOR	-.109094	.0571429	-1.91	0.058	-.2220686	.0038806
DUMMYTURKISH	-.148553	.167276	-0.89	0.376	-.4792666	.1821606
DUMMYARMANI	-.4665267	.1639183	-2.85	0.005	-.790602	-.1424513
Nationality	-.1964968	.1890451	-1.04	0.300	-.5702493	.1772556
DUMMYTURKI~y	.2845544	.2596931	1.10	0.275	-.2288729	.7979816
DUMMYARMAN~y	.1214583	.2492782	0.49	0.627	-.3713782	.6142948
_cons	.6400315	.3841353	1.67	0.098	-.1194247	1.399488

```
. vif
```

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Nationality	3.41	0.293058
DUMMYARMAN~y	3.14	0.318037
DUMMYTURKI~y	2.91	0.344143
DUMMYARMANI	2.41	0.414942
DUMMYTURKISH	2.36	0.423884
COO1	1.78	0.561794
SIMILARITY	1.68	0.595751
SPONSORSHIP	1.39	0.720376
FAMILIARITY	1.39	0.720989
IDENTIFICA~N	1.16	0.862731
INVOLVEMENT	1.14	0.875479
SPONSOR	1.09	0.915349
Mean VIF	1.99	

```
. regress FIT SPONSOR SPONSORSHIP INVOLVEMENT IDENTIFICATION SIMILARITY FAMILIARITY COO1 DUMMYTURKISH DUMMYARMANI Nationality
```

Source	SS	df	MS		
Model	96.0802038	10	9.60802038	Number of obs	= 153
Residual	54.5341786	142	.384043511	F(10, 142)	= 25.02
				Prob > F	= 0.0000
Total	150.614382	152	.990884094	R-squared	= 0.6379
				Adj R-squared	= 0.6124
				Root MSE	= .61971

FIT	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
SPONSOR	-.1021783	.0566323	-1.80	0.073	-.2141296	.0097729
SPONSORSHIP	.1575422	.0648808	2.43	0.016	.0292852	.2857993
INVOLVEMENT	-.028412	.0513489	-0.55	0.581	-.129919	.073095
IDENTIFICA~N	-.0774333	.0455851	-1.70	0.092	-.1675464	.0126798
SIMILARITY	.3642252	.0757871	4.81	0.000	.2144085	.5140419
FAMILIARITY	.1152263	.0504493	2.28	0.024	.0154976	.214955
COO1	.4831037	.0659412	7.33	0.000	.3527503	.613457
DUMMYTURKISH	-.036007	.1317089	-0.27	0.785	-.2963706	.2243567
DUMMYARMANI	-.4223905	.1327477	-3.18	0.002	-.6848076	-.1599733
Nationality	-.0634418	.115821	-0.55	0.585	-.2923981	.1655144
_cons	.5726985	.3726555	1.54	0.127	-.163971	1.309368

```
. vif
```

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
COO1	1.76	0.568402
SIMILARITY	1.68	0.595784
DUMMYARMANI	1.59	0.629132
DUMMYTURKISH	1.47	0.679889
SPONSORSHIP	1.37	0.730813
FAMILIARITY	1.37	0.731008
Nationality	1.29	0.776362
INVOLVEMENT	1.14	0.878087
IDENTIFICA~N	1.13	0.885579
SPONSOR	1.08	0.926696
Mean VIF	1.39	

```
. regress PURCHASE FIT
```

Source	SS	df	MS
Model	74.0593116	1	74.0593116
Residual	142.110623	151	.941129956
Total	216.169935	152	1.42217062

Number of obs	153
F(1, 151)	78.69
Prob > F	0.0000
R-squared	0.3426
Adj R-squared	0.3382
Root MSE	.97012

PURCHASE	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
FIT	.7012237	.0790481	8.87	0.000	.5450405	.8574069
_cons	.7502652	.268982	2.79	0.006	.2188108	1.28172

```
. vif
```

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
FIT	1.00	1.000000
Mean VIF	1.00	

```
. regress PURCHASE INVOLVEMENT IDENTIFICATION SPONSORSHIP SIMILARITY FAMILIARITY COO1 SPONSOR DUMMYTURKISH DUMMYARMANI Nationality
> FIT
```

Source	SS	df	MS
Model	114.258067	11	10.387097
Residual	101.911868	141	.722779204
Total	216.169935	152	1.42217062

Number of obs	153
F(11, 141)	14.37
Prob > F	0.0000
R-squared	0.5286
Adj R-squared	0.4918
Root MSE	.85016

PURCHASE	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
INVOLVEMENT	.0766381	.0705198	1.09	0.279	-.0627747	.2160509
IDENTIFICA~N	-.001697	.0631689	-0.03	0.979	-.1265777	.1231836
SPONSORSHIP	.0213285	.090837	0.23	0.815	-.15825	.200907
SIMILARITY	.1745105	.112107	1.56	0.122	-.0471173	.3961384
FAMILIARITY	.2238752	.0704696	3.18	0.002	.0845615	.3631888
COO1	.4340304	.1061922	4.09	0.000	.2240958	.643965
SPONSOR	-.2896544	.0785775	-3.69	0.000	-.4449968	-.1343121
DUMMYTURKISH	-.2930897	.1807349	-1.62	0.107	-.6503902	.0642109
DUMMYARMANI	-.6507776	.1884929	-3.45	0.001	-1.023415	-.2781399
Nationality	.0323088	.159059	0.20	0.839	-.28214	.3467575
FIT	.1539695	.1151247	1.34	0.183	-.0736241	.3815631
_cons	.7847255	.5154685	1.52	0.130	-.2343203	1.803771

```
. vif

    Variable |       VIF       1/VIF
-------------+----------------------
         FIT |      2.76    0.362078
        COO1 |      2.42    0.412487
  SIMILARITY |      1.95    0.512435
 DUMMYARMANI |      1.70    0.587261
DUMMYTURKISH |      1.47    0.679531
 SPONSORSHIP |      1.43    0.701679
 FAMILIARITY |      1.42    0.705104
 Nationality |      1.29    0.774725
IDENTIFICA~N |      1.15    0.867943
 INVOLVEMENT |      1.14    0.876198
     SPONSOR |      1.10    0.905928
-------------+----------------------
    Mean VIF |      1.62
```

```
. regress PURCHASE INVOLVEMENT IDENTIFICATION SPONSORSHIP SIMILARITY FAMILIARITY COO1 SPONSOR DUMMYTURKISH DUMMYARMANI Nationality

      Source |       SS       df       MS              Number of obs =     153
-------------+------------------------------           F( 10,   142) =   15.54
       Model |  112.965248     10  11.2965248           Prob > F      =  0.0000
    Residual |  103.204687    142  .726793573           R-squared     =  0.5226
-------------+------------------------------           Adj R-squared =  0.4890
       Total |  216.169935    152  1.42217062           Root MSE      =  .85252

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    PURCHASE |      Coef.   Std. Err.      t    P>|t|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
 INVOLVEMENT |   .0722635   .0706393     1.02   0.308    -.067377     .211904
IDENTIFICA~N |  -.0136194   .0627102    -0.22   0.828    -.1375856    .1103468
 SPONSORSHIP |   .0455852   .0892547     0.51   0.610    -.1308545    .222025
  SIMILARITY |   .2305901   .1042582     2.21   0.029     .0244912    .4366889
 FAMILIARITY |   .2416165   .0694017     3.48   0.001     .1044224    .3788106
        COO1 |   .5084136   .0907136     5.60   0.000       .32909    .6877372
     SPONSOR |  -.3053868   .0779075    -3.92   0.000    -.4593951   -.1513784
DUMMYTURKISH |  -.2986336   .1811884    -1.65   0.102    -.6568089    .0595417
 DUMMYARMANI |  -.7158128   .1826175    -3.92   0.000    -1.076813   -.3548125
 Nationality |   .0225406   .1593319     0.14   0.888    -.2924283    .3375096
       _cons |   .8729036   .5126523     1.70   0.091    -.1405131     1.88632
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
. vif

    Variable |       VIF       1/VIF
-------------+----------------------
        COO1 |      1.76    0.568402
  SIMILARITY |      1.68    0.595784
 DUMMYARMANI |      1.59    0.629132
DUMMYTURKISH |      1.47    0.679889
 SPONSORSHIP |      1.37    0.730813
 FAMILIARITY |      1.37    0.731008
 Nationality |      1.29    0.776362
 INVOLVEMENT |      1.14    0.878087
IDENTIFICA~N |      1.13    0.885579
     SPONSOR |      1.08    0.926696
-------------+----------------------
    Mean VIF |      1.39

.
```

Appendix 3

Qualtrics Survey

1 Are you a sport lover?

- ○ 1 = Not at All (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Absolutely Yes (5)

---

2 On a scale from 1 (not interested at all) to 5 (very interested), how are you interested in basketball?

- ○ 1 = Not interested at all (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Very Interested (5)

---

3 Please identify which of the following is the most important for you when watching basketball: **Select one item only**

- ○ Game (1)
- ○ Team (2)
- ○ Players (3)
- ○ Socializing (4)
- ○ Entertainment (5)
- ○ My team wins (6)

4 Have you ever heard about EuroLeague?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Have you ever heard about EuroLeague? = No

5 What do you prefer to watch?

- ○ EuroLeague (1)
- ○ NBA (2)
- ○ National League (3)
- ○ National Team Championship (4)

6 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I am very interested in EuroLeague (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I give particular importance to EuroLeague (2)	○	○	○	○	○
EuroLeague is a domain that interests me (3)	○	○	○	○	○

7 Can you write the name of the EuroLeague sponsors that you know?

8 Which EuroLeague team do you support?

- ○ Anadolu Efes Istanbul (1)
- ○ AX Armani Exchange Olimpia Milan (2)
- ○ Buducnost VOLI Podgorica (3)
- ○ CSKA Moscow (4)
- ○ Darussafaka Istanbul (5)
- ○ FC Barcelona Lassa (6)
- ○ FC Bayern Munich (7)
- ○ Fenerbahce Istanbul (8)
- ○ Herbalife Gran Canaria (9)
- ○ Khimki Moscow Region (10)
- ○ KIROLBET Baskonia Vitoria Gasteiz (11)
- ○ Maccabi FOX Tel Aviv (12)
- ○ Olympiacos Piraeus (13)
- ○ Panathinaikos Athens (14)
- ○ Real Madrid (15)
- ○ Zalgiris Kaunas (16)

9 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
When someone criticize my team it feels like a personal insult (8)	○	○	○	○	○
When I talk about my team I usually say "we" rather than "they" (9)	○	○	○	○	○
My team's successes are my successes (10)	○	○	○	○	○

10 How often do you attend EuroLeague games?

- ○ Go to all home-games and away-games (1)
- ○ Go to all home-games (2)
- ○ 50% of home-games (3)
- ○ 25% of home-games (4)
- ○ Go occasionally (5)
- ○ Never go to games (6)

11 How would you rate the experience at the EuroLeague game?

- ○ 1 = Very bad (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Excellent (5)

12 How do you follow the EuroLeague games?
You can choose more than one option

- [ ] Watch TV (1)
- [ ] Listen to the radio (2)
- [ ] Newpapers (3)
- [ ] Sports Magazines (4)
- [ ] Go to games (5)
- [ ] Online Newspaper (6)
- [ ] Online Radio (7)
- [ ] Online Magazines (8)
- [ ] Official team/club/league websites (9)
- [ ] Sport network websites (10)
- [ ] EuroLeague TV (11)
- [ ] EuroLeague Facebook (12)
- [ ] EuroLeague Twitter (13)
- [ ] Team's Facebook (14)
- [ ] Team's Twitter (15)
- [ ] Player's Facebook (16)
- [ ] Player's Twitter (17)
- [ ] EuroLeague App (18)
- [ ] Other sports app (19)

13 Can you identify the official sponsors of Euroleague from the following list? **You can choose more than one option**

- [ ] 7Days (1)
- [ ] Adidas (2)
- [ ] Singapore Airlines (3)
- [ ] Betfair (4)
- [ ] Versace (5)
- [ ] SportingBet (6)
- [ ] Spalding (7)
- [ ] Turkish Airlines (8)
- [ ] Viagogo (9)
- [ ] Armani Exchange (10)
- [ ] No, I can’t name any (11)

14 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
The EuroLeague is better because of sponsors (1)	○	○	○	○	○
The EuroLeague would not be possible without sponsorship (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I would be inclined to give my business to firms that sponsor the EuroLeague (3)	○	○	○	○	○

16 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
It is likely that participants in the EuroLeague see Turkish Airlines during the event (8)	○	○	○	○	○
When I watch the EuroLeague I often see Turkish Airlines being used (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Turkish Airlines is not a brand that participants in the EuroLeague would consider using (10)	○	○	○	○	○

17 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I know pretty much about Turkish Airlines (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to most other people, I know more about Turkish Airlines (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel very knowledgeable about Turkish Airlines (10)	○	○	○	○	○

18 Do you know that the brand Turkish Airlines is turkish?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

19 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are of high quality (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are a good investment (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are reliable (10)	○	○	○	○	○

20 Thinking about Turkish Airlines, please evaluate this company by selecting the point on each scale that best represents your attitude to the company:

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	
Good	○	○	○	○	○	Bad
Like	○	○	○	○	○	Dislike
Pleasant	○	○	○	○	○	Unpleasant

21 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Turkish Airlines and the EuroLeague fit together well (8)	○	○	○	○	○
The image of Turkish Airlines and the image of the EuroLeague are similar (9)	○	○	○	○	○
It makes sense to me that Turkish Airlines associates itself with the EuroLeague (10)	○	○	○	○	○

22 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I have good feeling about Turkish Airlines (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel favorable about Turkish Airlines (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel positive about Turkish Airlines (10)	○	○	○	○	○

23 Have you travelled by air in the last 12 months?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

24 How many times have you flown in the last 12 months?

- ○ 0 to 5 times (1)
- ○ 6 to 10 times (2)
- ○ More than 10 times (3)

25 In the future, how likely are you to choose to buy from Turkish Airlines?

- ○ 1 = Extremely Unlikely (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Extremely Likely (5)

26 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I am likely to recommend Turkish Airlines products to others (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I would consider buying Turkish Airlines products in the future (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy Turkish Airlines products in the future (10)	○	○	○	○	○

28 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
It is likely that participants in the Euroleague see Efes Pilsener during the event (1)	○	○	○	○	○
When I watch the Euroleague I often see Efes Pilsener being used (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Efes Pilsener is not a brand that participants in the EuroLeague would consider using (3)	○	○	○	○	○

29 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I know pretty much about Efes Pilsener (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to most other people, I know more about Efes Pilsener (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel very knowledgeable about Efes Pilsener (3)	○	○	○	○	○

30 Did you know that the brand Efes Pilsener is turkish?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

31 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are of high quality (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are good investments (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Turkey, generally are reliable (3)	○	○	○	○	○

32 Thinking about Efes Pilsener, please evaluate this company by selecting the point on each scale that best represents your attitude to the company:

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	
Good	○	○	○	○	○	Bad
Like	○	○	○	○	○	Dislike
Pleasant	○	○	○	○	○	Unpleasant

33 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Efes Pilsener and the EuroLeague fit together well (1)	○	○	○	○	○
The image of Efes Pilsener and the image of the Euroleague are similar (2)	○	○	○	○	○
It makes sense to me that Efes Pilsener associates itself with the EuroLeague (3)	○	○	○	○	○

34 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I have good feeling about Efes Pilsener (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel favorable about Efes Pilsener (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel positive about Efes Pilsener (3)	○	○	○	○	○

35 Do you drink beer?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

36 How many beers do you usually drink in a week?

- ○ 0 to 5 beers (1)
- ○ 6 to 10 beers (2)
- ○ More than 10 beers (3)

37 In the future, how likely are you to choose to buy beer from Efes Pilsener?

- ○ 1 = Extremely Unlikely (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Extremely Likely (5)

38 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (7)	5 = Strongly Agree (8)
I am likely to recommend Efes Pilsener products to others (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I would consider buying Efes Pilsener products in the future (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy Efes Pilsener products in the future (3)	○	○	○	○	○

40 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 =Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
It is likely that participants in the EuroLeague see Armani Exchange during the event (1)	○	○	○	○	○
When I watch the EuroLeague I often see Armani Exchange being used (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Armani Exchange is not a brand that participants in the EuroLeague would consider using (3)	○	○	○	○	○

41 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I know pretty much about Armani Exchange (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to most other people, I know more about Armani Exchange (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel very knowledgeable about Armani Exchange (3)	○	○	○	○	○

42 Did you know that the brand Armani Exchange is italian?

- ○ Yes (23)
- ○ No (24)

43 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Consumers goods produced in Italy, generally are of high quality (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Italy, generally are a good investment (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Consumers goods produced in Italy, generally are reliable (3)	○	○	○	○	○

44 Thinking about Armani Exchange, please evaluate this company by selecting the point on each scale that best represents your attitude to the company:

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	
Good	○	○	○	○	○	Bad
Like	○	○	○	○	○	Dislike
Pleasant	○	○	○	○	○	Unpleasant

45 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
Armani Exchange and the EuroLeague fit together well (1)	○	○	○	○	○
The image of Armani Exchange and the image of the EuroLeague are similar (2)	○	○	○	○	○
It makes sense to me that Armani Exchange associates itself with the EuroLeague (3)	○	○	○	○	○

46 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I have good feeling about Armani Exchange (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel favorable about Armani Exchange (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel positive about Armani Exchange (3)	○	○	○	○	○

47 Are you interested in fashion?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

48 How many high-fashion items did you buy in the last 12 months?

- ○ 0 to 5 items (1)
- ○ 6 to 10 items (2)
- ○ More than 10 items (3)

49 In the future, how likely are you to choose to buy from Armani Exchange?

- ○ 1 = Extremely Unlikely (1)
- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 = Extremely Likely (5)

50 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following:

	1 = Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Strongly Agree (5)
I am likely to recommend Armani Exchange products to others (1)	○	○	○	○	○
would consider buying Armani Exchange products in the future (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I will buy Armani Exchange products in the future (3)	○	○	○	○	○

51 Gender

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

52 Age

53 What country are you from?

54 Occupation

- Student (1)
- Employed (2)
- Unemployed (3)
- Other (4)

References

Ajzen, I. (1985). *From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior*. In J. Kuhl & J. Backmann (Eds.), Action-control: From cognition to behavior, pp. 11–39

Aaker, D. A.; Keller, K. L. (1990), *Consumer evaluations of brand extensions*, Journal of Marketing, 54(1), pp. 27–41

Alba, J.W.; Hutchinson J.W. (1987), *Dimension of Consumer Expertise*, The Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. 13, N. 4, pp. 411-454

Arslan, F, M.; Altuna, O, K., (2010). *The effect of brand extensions on product brand image, Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 19(3), pp. 170-180

Askegaard S.; Ger G. (1998), *Product-country images: Towards a contextualized approach, European Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 3, pp. 50-58

Ashforth, B.; Mael, F. (1989), *Social Identity Theory and the Organization*, The Academy of Management Review, Vol. 14, N. 1, pp. 20-39

Balabanis, G.; Diamantopoulos A. (2004), *Domestic Country Bias, Country-of-Origin Effects, and Consumer Ethnocentrism: A Multidimensional Unfolding Approach*, Journal Of The Academy Of Marketing Science, 32 (1), pp. 80–95

Baker, W.; Hutchinson, J.W.; Moore, D.; Nedungadi, P. (1986), *Brand Familiarity And Advertising: Effects On The Evoked Set And Brand Preference*, Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. 13, pp. 637-642

Baron, R.; Kenny, D. (1986), *The Moderator-Mediator Variable Distinction in Social Psychological Research: Conceptual, Strategic, and Statistical Considerations*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 51, No. 6, pp. 1173-1182

Bennet, G.; Gwinner, K. (2008), *The Impact of Brand Cohesiveness and Sport Identification on Brand Fit in a Sponsorship Context*, Journal of Sport Management, 22, pp. 410-426

Bilkey, W. J.; Nes E. (1982), *Country-of-Origin Effects on Product Evaluations*, Journal of International Business Studies, 8, pp. 89-99

Boninger, D. S., Krosnick, J. A., &Berent, M. K. (1995), *The causes of attitude importance: Self-interest, social identification, and values*, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68, pp. 61–80.

Braustein, J.; Ross, S. (2010), *Brand Personality in Sport: Dimension Analysis and General Scale Development*, *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, Vol. 19, pp. 8-16

Bridges, S.; Keller, K.; Sood, S. (2000), *Communication Strategies for Brand Extensions: Enhancing Perceived Fit by Establishing Explanatory Links*, Journal of Advertising, Vol. 29, Issue 4

Chao, W. (2011), *SPORTS SPONSORSHIP EFFECTS: The Role of Logo Visual Fluency, Familiarity, and Sponsor-Event Congruence for Audience Recall of Team Sponsors,* Thesis

Chiello.F (2015), *Il marketing dei prodotti unici: l'effetto country of origin nei prodotti unici di lusso. Implicazioni sul comportamento ed engagement del consumatore,* Thesis

Close, A.; Lacey, R. (2015), *A note to improve outcomes for sponsors and even*t, Journal of Business Research, 68: 2015, pp. 1982-1986

Close, A; Lacey, R. (2013) *How Fit Connects Service Brand Sponsors with Consumers' Passion for Sponsored Event.* International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship;

Close. A. G, Finney. R. Z, Lacey. R. Z, & Sneath. J. Z (2006), *Engaging the Consumer through Event Marketing: Linking Attendees with the Sponsor, Community, and Brand*. Journal of Advertising Research, 46 (4), pp. 420-433.

Cornwell, T.B. (2008), "*State of the art and science in sponsorship-linked marketing*", Journal of Advertising, Vol. 37 No. 3, pp. 41-55.

Cunningham, G.B; Kwon, H. (2003), *The Theory of Planned Behaviour and Intentions to Attend a Sport Event,* Sport Management Review, 2003, 6, pp. 127–145

D'Astous, A.; Bitz, P. (1995), *Consumer evaluations of sponsorship programmes*, European Journal of Marketing, Vol.29, Issues 12, pages 6-22;

Dawar, N., & Parker, P. (1994), *Marketing universals: Consumers' evaluations use of brand name price physical appearance and retailer reputation as signals of product quality,* Journal of Marketing, 58, pp. 81-95. Dichter, E. (1962). The world customer. Harvard Business Review, 40 (4), pp. 113-122.

Deits, G.; Evans Jr., R; Hansen, J. (2012), *Sponsorship and shareholder value: A re-examination and extension*, Journal of Business Research;

Doyle, J.P.; Pentecost, R.D.; Funk, D.C (2013), *The effect of familiarity on associated sponsor and event brand attitudes following negative celebrity endorser publicity,* Sport Management Review, Vol. 17, pp.310-323

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

Fisher, R.J.; Wakefield, K. (1998), *Factor leading to group identifications: a field study on winners and losers,* Journal of Psychology and Marketing, Vol. 15, pp. 23-40

Fleck, N.D.; Quester, P. (2007), "Birds of a feather flock together . . . definition, role and measure of congruence: an application to sponsorship", Psychology & Marketing, Vol. 24 No. 11, pp. 975-1000

Genter, D.; Markman, A. (1997), *Structure Mapping in Analogy and Similarity,* American Psychologist, Vol. 52, No. 1 ., pp. 45-56

Grappi, S. (2010), *Effetto "Country of Origin": il ruolo delle Emozioni Morali,* ResearchGate

Gwinner, K.; Swanson, R. (2003), *A model of fan identification: antecedents and sponsorship outcomes,* Journal of Service Marketing, Vol. 17, Issue 3, pp. 275-294

Gwinner, K.P.; Eaton, J. (1999), "*Building brand image through event sponsorship: the role of image transfer*", Journal of Advertising, Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 47-57.

Gwinner, K. (1997) "*A model of image creation and image transfer in event sponsorship*", International Marketing Review, Vol. 14 Issue 3, pp.145-158

Gurhan-Canli, Z.; E Maheswaran D. (2000), *Cultural Variations in Country of Origin Effects*, Journal Of Marketing Research, 37, Pp. 309-317

Kotler, P.; Armstrong, G. (2010), *Principles of Marketing,* Prentice Hall.

Harvery, B.; Gray, S.; Despain, G. (2006), *Measuring the effectiveness of true sponsorship*, Journal of Advertising Research, pp. 398-409.

Hogg, M.A.; Turner, J.C. (1985), "Interpersonal attraction, social identification, and psychological group formation", European Journal of Social Psychology, Vol. 15, pp.51-66

Hong, S.T.; Wyer, Jr., R. S. (1990), *Determinants of product evaluation: Effects of the time interval between knowledge of a product's country of origin and information about its specific attributes*. Journal of Consumer Research, 17, pp. 277-288

Huijbregts, W.P.J. (2010), *Fit and Familiarity in Cause-Brand Alliances: Research from a Cause Perspective,* Bachelor Thesis

Lardinoit, T.; Derbaix, C. (2001), *Sponsorship and Recall of Sponsor,* Psychology and Marketing, Vol. 18 (2), pp. 167-190

Lee, R.; Mazodier, M. (2015), *The roles of consumer ethnocentrism, animosity, and cosmopolitanism in sponsorship effects,* European Journal of Marketing, Vol. 49, Issue 5/6, pp. 919-942

Li, W.-K.; Wyer, Jr., R. S. (1994), *The role of country of origin in product evaluations: Informational and standard-of-comparison effects*. Journal of Consumer Psychology, 3, 187-212

Madrigal, R. (2001), *Social Identity Effects in a Belief–Attitude–Intentions Hierarchy: Implications for Corporate Sponsorship,* Psychology and Marketing, Vol. 18 (2), pp. 145-165

Maheswaran, D.; E Chen, C.Y. (2006), *Nation Equity: Incidental Emotions in Country-of-Origin Effects*, Journal Of Consumer Research, 33 (3), Pp. 370-76

McInnis, D.; Jaworski, B. (1989), *Information Processing from Advertisments: Toward an Integrative Framework,* Journal of Marketing, Vol. 53, pp. 1-23

Meenaghan, R. (2001), *Understanding Sponsorship Effects*, Psychology and Marketing, Vol. 18 (2), pp. 95-122

Meng-Lewis, Y.; Thwaites, D.; Pillai, K. (2013), *Consumers' responses to sponsorship by foreign companies,* European Journal of Marketing, Vol. 47, N. 11/12

Menon, S.; Kahn, B. (2003), *Corporate Sponsorships of Philanthropic Activities: When Do They Impact Perception of Sponsor Brand,* Journal Of Consumer Psychology, 13(3), pp. 316-327

Olson, E.L.; Thjømøe, H.M. (2011), *Explaining and Articulating the Fit Construct in Sponsorship,* Journal of Advertising, vol. 40, no. 1 pp. 57–70

Papadimitriou, D.; Kaplanidou, K. K.; Papacharalampous, N. (2016), *Sport event-sponsor fit and its effects on sponsor purchase intentions: a non-consumer perspective among athletes, volunteers and spectators,* Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, Vol. 31 Issue: 2, pp.247-259

Park, C. W.; Milberg, S.; Lawson, R. (1991), *Evaluation of brand extensions: the role of product feature similarity and brand concept consistency*, Journal of Consumer Research, 18(2), pp. 185–193

Pitt, L.; Parent, M.; Berthon, P.; Steyn, P. (2010), *Event sponsorship and ambush marketing: Lessons from the Beijing Olympics,* Business Horizons, Vol. 53, Issue 3, pp. 281-290

Pope, N.; Voges, K. (2000), *The impact of sport sponsorship activities, Corporate image and prior use on a consumer purchase Intent,* Sport Marketing Quarterly, Vol. 9 (2)

Porter, M. (1987), *From Competitive Advantage to Corporate Strategy,* Harvard Business Review

Rifon, J., N. et al. (2004), *Congruence Effects in Sponsorship: The Mediating Roles of Sponsor Motive and Credibility,* Journal of Advertising, 33(1), pp. 29-42

Rook, D.W. (1985), The Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior, Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. 12, Issue 3, pp. 251-264

Rumelt, R., (1974), *Strategy, Structure and Economic Performance,* Journal of Behavioral Economics

Ruth, J.; Simonin, B. (2003), *""Brought to you by Brand A and Brand B": Investigating Multiple Sponsors' Influence On Consumers' Attitudes Toward Sponsored Events",* Journal of Advertising, 32:3, pp. 19-30

Shah, H.; Aziz, A.,; Jaffari, A. R.; Waris, S.; Ejaz, W.; Fatima, M.; Sherazi., K.(2012), *The Impact of Brands on Consumer Purchase Intentions*, Asian Journal of Business Management 4(2), pp. 105-110

Shavitt, S. (1990), *The role of attitude objects in attitude functions*, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 26, pp. 124–148.

Shavitt, S., Lowrey, T. M., &Han, S. P. (1992), *Attitude functions in advertising: The interactive role of products and self-monitoring*, Journal of Consumer Psychology, 1, pp. 337–364

Simmons, J.C.; Becker-Olsen, L.K.(2006), *Achieving Marketing Objectives Through Social Sponsorships*, Journal of Marketing, Vol.70, pp. 154-169

Smith, G. (2004), *Brand Image Transfer Through Sponsorship: A Consumer Learning Perspective*, Journal of Marketing Management, 20, 457-474;

Smith, A.; Graetz, B.; Westerbeek, H. (2008) *Sport sponsorship, team support and purchase intentions, Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14:5, pp. 387-404

Speed, R; Thompson, P. (2000), *Determinants of Sports Sponsorship Response*, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science;

Spiggle, S., Nguyen, H. T., & Caravella, M. (2012), *More than fit: brand extension authenticity. Journal of Marketing Research,* 49(6), pp. 967– 983

Steenkamp, J.B.E.M. (1990), *Conceptual model of the quality perception process*, Journal of Business Research, 21, pp. 309-333.

Taylor, V. A.; Bearden, W. O. (2002), *The effects of price on brand extension evaluations: the moderating role of extension similarity*, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 30(2), pp. 131–140

Tsiotsou, R; Alexandris, K. (2009),*Delineating the outcomes of sponsorship: Sponsor image, word of mouth, and purchase intentions*, International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management;

Trail, G.T.; Anderson, D.F.; & Fink, J.S. (2002), *Examination of gender differences in importance of and satisfaction with venue factors at intercollegiate basketball games*, International Sports Journal, 6(1), pp. 51–64.

Van der Lans, R.; Van den Bergh, B.; Dieleman, E. (2014) *Partner Selection in Brand Alliances: An Empirical Investigation of the Drivers of Brand Fit*. Marketing Science 33(4), pp. 551-566.

Verlegh, P.W.J.; Steenkamp, J.B.E.M.; Meulenberg, M.T.G. (2005), *Country-of-Origin effects in consumer processing of advertising claims, international* journal of research in marketing, 22(2), pp. 127-139.

Wakefield, K.; Becker-Olsen, K.; Cornwell, T. (2007), *I SPY A SPONSOR: The Effects of Sponsorship Level, Prominence, Relatedness, and Cueing on Recall Accuracy,* Journal of Advertising, Vol. 36, N. 4, pp. 61-74

Weeks, C.; O'Connor, P.; Martin B. (2017), *When ambush marketing is beneficial to sponsorship awareness: creating sponsor distinctiveness using exclusivity and brand juxtaposition,* Journal of Marketing Management, Vol.33, Issue 15-16

Zdravkovic, S.; Magnusson, P.; Stanley, S.M. (2010), *Dimensions of fit between a brand and a social cause and their influence on attitudes*, International Journal of Research in Marketing, 27, pp. 151-160

Zeeshan, Z.(2013), *The impact of mobile service attributes on males' and females' purchase decision*, Management & Marketing Challenges for the Knowledge Society (2013) Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 669-682

Zhang, J.J.; Pease, D.G.; Smith, D.W. (1998), *Relationship between broadcasting media and minor league hockey game attendance*, Journal of Sport Management, 12, pp. 103–122

Sitography

Sponsorship spending worldwide 2017-2018, Statista, (2008) https://www.statista.com/statistics/196864/global-sponsorship-spending-since-2007/;

Sponsorizzazioni sportive: dati, infografiche, case studies e pdf, RTR Sports Marketing, (2016) https://rtrsports.com/sponsorizzazioni-sportive-dati-infografiche-case-studies-e-pdf/

Singh, A.; Singh, J. (2017), *Exploring The Impact Of Sport-Sponsor Fit On Consumers Purchase Intention: A Case Of Indian Premier League*, Conference World, http://data.conferenceworld.in/SGTB/P831-840.pdf

Qualtrics (2018), https://www.qualtrics.com/it/

RIASSUNTO

CAPITOLO 1: INTRODUZIONE

1.1 Orientamento al problema

Il Fit tra un evento e il suo sponsor, altrimenti detto congruenza, è definito come "*la misura in cui un consumatore percepisce che un evento e il suo marchio-sponsor hanno un'immagine, un valore e una connessione logica simili*", in pratica i consumatori si aspettano che i brand abbiano un qualche tipo di relazione con l'evento per essere considerato come sponsor.

Precedenti studi hanno coperto diverse dimensioni nel campo della sponsorizzazione, ovvero lo sponsorship recall, l'influenza degli sponsor e le intenzioni di acquisto, gli antecedenti dell'efficacia della sponsorizzazione, l'ambush marketing.

Tra i molti studi sugli antecedenti dell'efficacia della sponsorizzazione, il Fit tra eventi e sponsor è stato ampiamente accettato come un fattore quasi fondamentale. Tuttavia, per quanto ne concerne la mia conoscenza, nessuno di questi studi ha studiato i fattori che influenzano il Fit tra evento e sponsor quando si considera un evento sportivo internazionale presidiato da sponsor multipli: il presente studio si propone di misurare l'effetto che elementi come la Functional based Similarity, la Brand Familiarity, la Team Identification, l' Event Involvement e il Country-of-Origin hanno sul Fit. Inoltre, l'output finale del modello proposto in questo studio sarà l'effetto che il Fit tra sponsor ed evento ha sulle intenzioni di acquisto dei consumatori nei confronti dei marchi-sponsor.

La tesi è incentrata su un evento sportivo, l'EuroLeague, in cui ci sono tre sponsor: EX Armani Exchange, Efes Pilsener e Turkish Airlines.

1.2 Background della ricerca

La sponsorizzazione è stata definita come "*fornitura di assistenza finanziaria o in natura a un'attività di un'organizzazione commerciale al fine di raggiungere obiettivi commerciali*".

È essenzialmente il supporto, finanziario o attraverso prodotti e servizi, che un individuo o una società forniscono agli altri. Sebbene non sia un fenomeno moderno (nel 590 a.c. lo stato greco sponsorizzò gli atleti nei giochi Olimpici), la sponsorizzazione è cresciuta e si è trasformata in

un'industria enorme e redditizia: solamente nel 2018 la sponsorizzazione ha raggiunto un valore di mercato di $ 65,8 miliardi. Essa, inoltre, è diventata un luogo comune. È sufficiente menzionare che gli sponsor ora impiegano regolarmente agenzie esterne per assisterli in settori quali la gestione delle proposte o l'ospitalità. Uno studio recente sul sito Web delle aziende di Fortune 500 ha rilevato che un terzo di esse ha reso disponibile la propria politica di sponsorizzazione su Internet.

La sponsorizzazione esiste in due forme: *filantropica o commerciale.* La sponsorizzazione filantropica consiste nel sostegno di cause sociali, mentre la sponsorizzazione commerciale stabilisce un'associazione tra l'impresa e un evento pubblico al fine di consentire all'impresa di ottenere benefici commerciali diretti come aumentare la consapevolezza del consumatore, migliorare l'immagine, aumentare le vendite e molto altro ancora. Nella tesi, mi concentrerò sulla sponsorizzazione commerciale e l'evento pubblico è un evento sportivo internazionale: l'EuroLeague.

L'EuroLeague è la competizione europea per club di pallacanestro organizzata da EuroLeague Basketball, dal 2000, per le società europee di basket. L'EuroLeague si svolge durante tutto l'anno e utilizza un campionato europeo di basket, 16 squadre partecipano a questo evento: ogni squadra si gioca due volte, una volta in casa e una volta fuori, per un totale di 30 partite.

1.3 Problema della ricerca e Domanda di ricerca

Lo scopo di questo studio è quello di esplorare quali sono i fattori che influenzano il Fit tra evento e sponsor quando ci si trova in un contesto di sponsor multipli. Quindi la domanda di ricerca dello studio è:

"Quali fattori influenzano il Fit tra evento e sponsor quando c'è un evento sportivo internazionale con sponsor multipli?"

La domanda di ricerca copre una vasta area dell'argomento, di conseguenza verranno fornite sotto-domande per restringere l'area di interesse:
• *Qual è il ruolo dei fattori legati al marchio, vale a dire la Functional based Similarity, la Brand Familiarity, e l'Event Involvement, sul Fit?*

• *Qual è il ruolo delle caratteristiche dei tifosi sportivi, ovvero la Team Identification, in merito al Fit tra sponsor ed evento?*
• *In che modo il Country-of-Origin del marchio-sponsor influenza lo il Fit?*
• *Qual è il ruolo del Fit sulle intenzioni di acquisto dei consumatori nei confronti degli sponsor?*

1.4 Giustificazione della ricerca

In assenza di precedenti studi sul Fit tra sponsor multipli ed evento sportivo, si è reso necessario uno studio adeguato e dedicato. La sponsorizzazione è uno dei cavalli di battaglia per le aziende: ultimamente coinvolge sempre più marchi nel suo mondo, è uno strumento importante che genera nel pubblico sportivo immagini, sentimenti, ed emozioni, che a loro volta promuovono il riconoscimento dell'azienda per chi sceglie di sponsorizzare una squadra o un atleta. Dato il forte legame tra il pubblico e la squadra, la sponsorizzazione degli eventi sportivi è influenzata dai successi o dai fallimenti di una squadra che porta a cambiamenti del comportamento dei tifosi nei confronti degli sponsor. Quando il team e, di conseguenza, lo sponsor generano un'influenza positiva sul comportamento dei consumatori, ciò porta ad un forte sostegno per il marchio-sponsor; tuttavia, tutto ciò è possibile quando il marchio-sponsor e l'evento sportivo sono congruenti tra loro.

La mancanza di congruenza tra l'evento e lo sponsor si traduce in conseguenze piuttosto dannose per il marchio in quanto porta a una diminuzione delle vendite e, quindi, delle intenzioni di acquisto dei consumatori, comporta anche un minor recall ed immagine del marchio. In breve, una potenziale assenza di congruenza in un evento sportivo internazionale con sponsor multipli rende questo argomento interessante e adatto agli scopi di questo studio. Inoltre, l'approccio utilizzato in questa tesi desidera arricchire gli studi preesistenti, migliorando la conoscenza degli studiosi riguardo all'adattamento tra eventi e sponsor, e mira anche a fornire un valido supporto ai manager desiderosi di entrare nel campo della sponsorizzazione chiarendo come proteggere il loro marchio da eventuali fallimenti

CAPITOLO 2: FRAMEWORK TEORICO

Di seguito verrà riportata la letteratura rilevante in merito, rispettivamente, alla variabile dipendente e alle variabili indipendenti dello studio.

2.1 Fit

La vestibilità è descritta come "*rilevanza, complementarità o compatibilità*" in riferimento alla congruenza tra uno sponsor e un evento sportivo. La corrispondenza tra un'impresa e una causa sponsorizzata è alta quando i due sono percepiti come congruenti, indipendentemente dal fatto che tale congruità derivi da missione, prodotti, mercati, tecnologie, attributi, concetti di marca o qualsiasi altra associazione. Il concetto di Fit incarna l'idea della trasferibilità delle competenze o delle sinergie nelle attività, ad esempio quando vi è somiglianza nei prodotti, nelle tecnologie o nei mercati o nella complementarità delle competenze e delle attività.

Le sponsorizzazioni ad alto livello di Fit possono migliorare l'attitudine al marchio e aumentare la probabilità di intenzioni d'acquisto verso il marchio-sponsor attraverso l'influenza di altri costrutti, come, ad esempio, le risposte cognitive e affettive e la recettività dell'integrità. D'altra parte, le sponsorizzazioni a bassa congruenza incoraggiano associazioni e sentimenti negativi che portano a un trasferimento di immagini negativo per gli sponsor. La questione è importante perché le sponsorizzazioni ad alto Fit sono coerenti con quanto ci si aspetterebbe dall'impresa, mentre le sponsorizzazioni di bassa qualità non lo sono. In effetti, i ricercatori hanno scoperto che i consumatori tendono ad aspettarsi che uno sponsor e un evento siano congruenti tra loro; quindi, un'insolita bassa congruenza porta ad una maggiore elaborazione della sponsorizzazione. Tale elaborazione è influenzata negativamente e comporta atteggiamenti meno favorevoli nei confronti della sponsorizzazione. A differenza di quanto detto, ciò non accade per le sponsorizzazioni con una maggiore congruenza percepita con l'evento e che forniscono coerenza cognitiva.

2.2 Functional based Similarity

Secondo Gwinner "*la Functional based Similarity si riferisce alla potenziale congruenza tra gli eventi e i marchi/aziende che fungono da sponsor*". Egli ha anche suggerito che la Functional based Similarity può verificarsi quando il marchio sponsorizzato "*viene effettivamente utilizzato dai partecipanti durante l'evento*" o quando "*l'immagine dell'evento è correlata all'immagine del marchio*".

Sebbene somiglianza e congruenza siano concetti lessicalmente e concettualmente distinti, il confine tra loro è sfocato e spesso i due termini vengono usati in maniera intercambiabile. In effetti, la somiglianza tra oggetti di confronto deriva dalla comunanza, che include caratteristiche o caratteristiche condivise e differenze allineate; d'altro canto, il Fit si riferisce al grado in cui le associazioni specifiche del marchio-sponsor sono applicabili o vantaggiose per la categoria di prodotto dello sponsor. Inoltre, sono state utilizzate misure idonee per misurare la similarità e sono state utilizzate misure di similarità per misurare l'idoneità. Nondimeno, la similarità può essere considerata uno dei fattori trainanti del Fit: infatti, più associazioni condivise ci sono tra brand, maggiore è la percezione di congruenza.

2.3 Brand Familiarity

"La familiarità del marchio è un costrutto unidimensionale direttamente correlato alla quantità di tempo che è stato impiegato per elaborare le informazioni sulla marca, indipendentemente dal tipo o dal contenuto dell'elaborazione che è stata coinvolta".

La familiarità è anche definita come "l'associazione di un prodotto, marchio o causa che è stata raccolta da un consumatore attraverso un'esperienza diretta o indiretta"; rappresenta le associazioni che esistono nella memoria del consumatore. Quando un marchio è più familiare, il consumatore ha associazioni sempre più forti verso il marchio rispetto a un marchio meno familiare perché le associazioni sono già state raccolte e valutate attraverso l'esperienza diretta e indiretta.

I clienti generalmente ricordano le informazioni sul marchio e sul prodotto quando hanno familiarità con il marchio. Quindi, la familiarità influisce sul richiamo e sul riconoscimento del marchio, ma svolge anche un ruolo importante nella formazione dell'attitudine. La ricerca ha dimostrato che l'atteggiamento nei confronti dei marchi meno familiari è più debole quando si parla di forza e accessibilità, è meno probabile che vengano stabiliti e possano essere considerati più suscettibili ai cambiamenti, rispetto all'atteggiamento verso un marchio più familiare.

Le scoperte precedenti suggeriscono che la familiarità ha generalmente un impatto positivo sull'adattamento all'evento di marca: ciò significa che i consumatori che hanno un forte attaccamento all'evento sportivo e allo sponsor, inquadrano un'immagine positiva del marchio

sponsor nella loro mente che può influenzare il loro atteggiamento verso il marchio e anche le loro intenzioni di acquisto.

2.4 Event Involvement and Team Identification

La Team Identification è definita come "*la percezione che gli spettatori hanno di una squadra e l'esperienza dei successi e dei risultati del team come se fossero i propri*". L'identificazione è stata ampiamente studiata nella Teoria dell'Identità Sociale che propone che "*gli individui si classificano in varie categorie per facilitare l'auto-definizione all'interno del proprio ambiente sociale*".

L'Event Involvement è spesso considerato come "*motivazione, abilità e opportunità che i consumatori devono avere per elaborare un evento*". È un costrutto che non differisce molto dalla Spor Identification, per questo motivo da ora in poi si discuterà di Event con riferimento alle stesse caratteristiche della Sport Identification.

Basandosi sulla Teoria dell'Identità Sociale, Gwinner e Swanson (2003) vogliono arricchire gli studi precedenti di identificazione presumendo che i fan altamente coinvolti mostreranno un livello più alto di riconoscimento degli sponsor, patrocinio e soddisfazione e avranno un atteggiamento più positivo nei confronti del brand sponsorizzato rispetto ai fan meno coinvolti. I loro risultati suggeriscono che individui altamente identificati, noti appunto come "fan", hanno maggiori probabilità di mostrare uno stato d'animo positivo nei confronti dei suddetti costrutti; inoltre è stato diffusa la convinzione che la sponsorizzazione sia uno strumento promozionale importante per le aziende, sebbene non influenzi ugualmente tutti i fan.

Altri studi empirici hanno dimostrato che i consumatori con affetto per uno sponsor sarebbero più propensi a generare un maggiore livello di consapevolezza degli sponsor, un atteggiamento più positivo nei confronti dell'immagine aziendale dello sponsor e una preferenza per la scelta del prodotto dello sponsor. Nello studio di Madrigal (2001) sembra che quando l'identificazione della squadra è alta, le persone hanno maggiori probabilità di avere un atteggiamento positivo nei confronti degli sponsor. I risultati mostrano anche che l'effetto dell'identificazione della squadra sulle intenzioni di acquisto non è interamente mediato da un'attitudine verso quel comportamento. In effetti, sembra che la connessione a una squadra abbia un effetto diretto positivo sulle intenzioni verso l'acquisto di un prodotto dello sponsor della squadra, indipendentemente dall'atteggiamento specifico verso quel comportamento.

Shavitt e i suoi colleghi (1990, 1992), che hanno riportato che una funzione distintiva di un atteggiamento è quella di simboleggiare ed esprimere l'immagine di sé di una persona attraverso l'identificazione con gruppi di riferimento salienti: "*Le persone tendono ad avere atteggiamenti favorevoli verso questioni che sono congruenti con aspetti salienti delle proprie identità ritenute positive e supportano anche le istituzioni che incarnano tali identità*". La nozione di "coerenza valutativa" suggerisce, quindi, che ci sarà un "*transfert di affettività tale che l'identificazione con una squadra sportiva sarà positivamente correlata all'atteggiamento nei confronti di uno sponsor aziendale di quella proprietà*". In breve, l'identificazione dello sport influenza positivamente il Fit tra evento e sponsor.

2.5 Country-of-Origin Effect

L'effetto Country-of-Origin è un "*fenomeno complesso, che si riferisce all'influenza che il paese di origine di un brand esercita sulle valutazioni di un prodotto da parte del consumatore*". Il Paese di origine (COO) di un prodotto è una variabile in grado di influenzare i processi decisionali dei consumatori durante la fase di acquisto, le loro percezioni su un prodotto e le sue caratteristiche: le valutazioni positive o negative che i consumatori assegnano al Country-of-Origin possono portare a valutazioni favorevoli o sfavorevoli dei prodotti associati a quel paese. La componente "origine" è un fattore determinante dell'impegno dei consumatori che utilizza inconsapevolmente gli stereotipi di ciascun paese per attribuire elementi e caratteristiche al marchio collegato a quel determinato paese. Il marchio è l'elemento che maggiormente influenza le associazioni mentali tra un brand e il paese di origine. Studi precedenti, come quelli di Ruth and Simonin (2003), mostrano che la combinazione di eventuali controversie tra nazionalità e prodotti influenza le valutazioni dei consumatori, suggerendo che gli effetti del Country-of-Origin nella sponsorizzazione sono specifici del contesto. Quando i marchi stranieri rispetto a quelli nazionali vengono inseriti nel contesto della promozione di eventi a sponsor multipli, le valutazioni degli eventi sono penalizzate quando sono sponsorizzate da marchi nazionali piuttosto che stranieri i cui prodotti sono controversi. Questa scoperta suggerisce che gli eventi sponsorizzati possono beneficiare di un tipo di immunità trasportata da marchi stranieri in riferimento alla controversia del loro prodotto. L'atteggiamento di certi consumatori nei confronti di uno sponsor e le successive intenzioni di acquisto potrebbero essere influenzati dall'effetto COO di tale sponsor, dal momento che tali informazioni potrebbero innescare emozioni ostili verso un determinato paese straniero. I consumatori in un mercato

specifico possono rifiutare un marchio a causa della loro avversione per il proprio COO, negando le iniziative di sponsorizzazione.

2.6 Purchase Intentions as sponsorship outcome

Le Purchase Intentions possono essere intese come "*la volontà di un cliente di acquistare un determinato prodotto o un determinato servizio è*". Le Purchase Intentions è una sorta di processo decisionale che studia la ragione su cui giace la volontà di acquistare un particolare brand da parte dei consumatori (Shah et al., 2012), ed è solitamente correlato al comportamento, alle percezioni e all'atteggiamento dei consumatori.

Gli studi precedenti suggeriscono che le intenzioni di acquisto risultano e sono influenzate da molti fattori tra cui il Fit tra uno sponsor e un evento, che svolge un ruolo importante. Il costrutto di congruenza, infatti, ha dimostrato un'influenza importante sulle intenzioni di acquisto, aumentando la disponibilità degli individui a comprare quando il Fit è rispettato. Lo studio di Harvery et al. (2006) suggerisce che "*la sponsorizzazione modifica le risposte dei consumatori verso uno sponsor specifico e sviluppa atteggiamenti positivi nei confronti dello sponsor, il che porta ad una maggiore disponibilità dei consumatori ad acquistare i prodotti dello sponsor*".

CAPITOLO 3: ANALISI E DISCUSSIONE DEI RISULTATI

3.1 Metodologia di campionamento e questionario

Poiché lo studio si pone di misurare alcuni costrutti attitudinali, astratti e di marketing, si riterrà che essi non siano esenti da errori dovuti all'autovalutazione. Il metodo più adatto per testare le relazioni simultanee tra costrutti è la structural equation modeling (SEM), tuttavia, poiché questo metodo richiede conoscenze avanzate, il metodo appropriato selezionato è la regressione lineare multipla.

A causa dell'elevato numero di partecipanti necessari per questo studio (almeno 150), si è ritenuto necessario evitare i metodi tradizionali di raccolta dei dati (ad esempio, raccogliere fisicamente dati dai luoghi pubblici a causa di conseguenze troppo costose e non pratiche). Quindi, l'opzione migliore per raccogliere dati è attraverso un metodo più rapido e ampio: un sondaggio online. Il sondaggio è stato realizzato attraverso l'utilizzo della piattaforma Qualtrics: esso è stato diffuso principalmente attraverso i social network (Facebook) visitati frequentemente da persone appassionate di sport (più specificamente sul basket) per essere congruenti con il contesto EuroLeague. Il sondaggio consiste in domande per testare l'interesse degli intervistati nello sport, nel basket e, più specificamente, nella pallacanestro EuroLeague, insieme a domande casuali su tre sponsor, Armani Exchange, Turkish Airlines ed Efes Pilsener per testare le variabili di questo studio, seguito da un blocco di domande sulle informazioni demografica dei rispondenti.

Per assicurarsi che gli intervistati fossero solo amanti di sport, basket o EuroLeague, è stata aggiunta una condizione a una delle prime domande, ovvero tutti gli intervistati devono aver sentito parlare di EuroLeague almeno una volta per continuare il sondaggio. Le domande sono state costruite con l'aiuto di scale a 5 punti di tipo Likert, scale differenziali semantiche e alcune domande aperte. A causa di questo tipo di distribuzione, lo studio si basa su un campione non probabilistico e il metodo è il convenience sampling. Inoltre, il sondaggio è stato realizzato grazie all'aiuto di studiosi e ricercatori precedenti che hanno fornito una vasta gamma di scale multi-item per supportare le creazioni di domande e misurazioni. Il motivo per cui si scelgono le scale multi-item dalla letteratura precedente è che sono già stati testati e validati, infatti il Cronbach Alpha e la Factor Analysis che sono state effettuate nello studio hanno confermato l'affidabilità e la validità delle scale. La caccia ai rispondenti ha prodotto 219 intervistati: il database è stato purificato e

quelle risposte che non soddisfano la condizione summenzionata o quelli che non hanno risposto a tutte le domande sono state escluse, risultando in un campione totale di 153 partecipanti.

3.2 Main Test: ipotesi, metodologia e risultati

Come anticipato in precedenza, il presente studio si propone di determinare quali siano i fattori che influenzano positivamente il Fit tra evento e sponsor, in particolare si analizza l'impatto di Functional based Similarity, Brand Familiarity, Event Involvement, Team Identification e Country-of-Origin. Successivamente, si determinerà qual è l'impatto del Fit sulle Purchase Intentions, nello specifico si vuole capire se l'impatto è di tipo positivo e quindi incrementale.

Per misurare il suddetto effetto, sono stati utilizzati dei modelli di regressione in cui, oltre alle variabili dipendenti e indipendenti, sono state aggiunte delle variabili di controllo (Attitude toward the Sponsorship e Attitude toward the Sponsor) e delle variabili Dummy in grado di far avere degli insight maggiori rispetto ai rispondenti che hanno completato il survey con domande su uno sponsor piuttosto che su un altro (Armani o Turkish Airlines nel caso specifico), e che diano insight maggiori anche sulle risposte relative ai rispondenti italiani che sono la percentuale di presenza maggiore (39,87% sul totale dei rispondenti). Inoltre, un effetto di interazione tra le variabili Dummy sugli sponsor e quella sulla nazionalità è stato considerato.

Quanto appena detto si riferisce alle ipotesi che prevedono l'analisi dell'impatto delle IV sulla DV Fit, in un set di modelli di regressione successivo è stato poi testato l'impatto del Fit sulle Purchase Intentions. Oltre al suddetto singolo effetto, sono stati ispezionati gli effetti di altre entità, ovvero le precedenti variabili indipendenti, e soprattutto come esse siano mediate o meno dalla presenza della variabile Fit.

I risultati confermano in parte studi precedenti che dimostrano che il Fit tra l'evento sportivo e lo sponsor è influenzato positivamente dalla Functional based Similarity, dalla Brand Familiarity e dal Country-of-Origin. Di fatto, l'origine del marchio di sponsorizzazione influisce sul Fit, sebbene i risultati mostrino che gli intervistati percepiscono che Armani è meno adatto come sponsor rispetto a Turkish Airlines; la ragione di ciò potrebbe risiedere in motivi di tifoseria: anche se la maggior parte degli intervistati proviene dall'Italia e la squadra preferita risulta essere AX Armani Exchange Olimpia Milan (28,10%), c'è una parte rimanente di "fan" di altre squadre che potrebbero essere influenzati dal nome del team Milanese e "rifiutare" l'idea di un marchio chiamato Armani come

sponsor dell'evento. Tuttavia, i risultati non mostrano particolari circostanze negative che possono derivare dal fervore nazionalistico nella scelta dei marchi che sponsorizzano gli eventi. Per quanto riguarda la Functional based Similarity, i manager dovrebbero essere incoraggiati a continuare a collegare la loro immagine all'EuroLeague poiché sembra che l'immagine dell'evento sia coerente con gli obiettivi di posizionamento del marchio dell'azienda; inoltre, la familiarità con il marchio di sponsorizzazione fornisce un combustibile adeguato per rendere gli intervistati più predisposti a considerare come marchi degli sponsor di cui hanno almeno una conoscenza di base; in effetti, più uno sponsor è familiare, più è probabile che influisca su altre entità (ad esempio, Fit). I consumatori che hanno un legame molto forte con l'evento sportivo e con lo sponsor, inquadrano un'immagine positiva del marchio sponsor.

D'altro canto, Event Involvement e Team Identification non influenzano il Fit: le aziende che sponsorizzano eventi sportivi dovrebbero utilizzare diverse attività di marketing collegate alla sponsorizzazione, come ad esempio l' endorsement da parte di celebrità, le pubbliche relazioni e la pubblicità al fine di creare atteggiamenti positivi tra i consumatori. Inoltre, i manager devono considerare i meccanismi attraverso i quali i consumatori possono essere più coinvolti nell'evento sponsorizzato: ad esempio, il supporto per atleti e per il team faciliterebbe la loro partecipazione a eventi sportivi generando livelli più alti di coinvolgimento. Inoltre, le squadre sportive dovrebbero avere maggiori probabilità di aumentare l'interesse dei partecipanti per lo sport e la loro identificazione con le squadre. Un vantaggio derivante dall'utilizzo di questa strategia potrebbe essere quello di aumentare il contatto tra i fan e l'opportunità di sviluppare legami di identificazione.

Come risultato della sponsorizzazione, d’altro canto, le Purchase Intentions avvertono l'effetto positivo del Fit: in base al risultato di questa tesi, i marketer trarrebbero vantaggio nella sponsorizzazione di eventi sportivi come l’EuroLeague perché una maggiore corrispondenza tra lo sponsor e l'evento porta a maggiori intenzioni di acquisto per il marchio-sponsor. Inoltre, le Purchase Intentions sono influenzate positivamente da altre entità, questo significa che può anche esserci un incremento quando i consumatori percepiscono il marchio dello sponsor familiare o quando l'immagine dell'evento è coerente con l'immagine dello sponsor. Inoltre, il Paese di origine dello sponsor ha un ruolo positivo e influente sul DV, probabilmente, in questo specifico caso, grazie alle origini europee del marchio che sponsorizza e ai suoi prodotti affidabili e di qualità.

Tuttavia, quando le IV vengono mediate della presenza di Fit, Country of Origin è l'unica variabile che mantiene la sua influenza positiva sulle Intenzioni di Acquisto.

5.4 Limitazioni e ricerche future

Un certo numero di limitazioni sono presenti in questo studio. In primo luogo, l'attenzione è principalmente focalizzata su un evento importante con sponsor preesistenti e limitato al solo basket. Estendendo la ricerca in altri campi sportivi, in piccoli eventi sportivi e con sponsor meno rinomati, è possibile dare vita a uno studio diverso e interessante.

In secondo luogo, il veicolo per condividere il sondaggio è stato Facebook, il che significa che la condivisione era limitata a un solo social media mentre le ricerche future potrebbero essere fatte utilizzando più social e forum e guadagnare più rispondenti; inoltre sarebbe interessante raccogliere dati durante un evento sportivo per ottenere informazioni più veritiere.

In terzo luogo, un'area non è stata studiata approfonditamente: sebbene il Fit sia stato usato come mediatore, non è stata costruita un'ipotesi dedicata. In futuro, i ricercatori potrebbero pensare a uno studio dedicato per comprendere e migliorare le diverse sfaccettature di Fit come mediatore e estendere l'analisi anche su Fit come moderatore.

In quarto luogo, come affermato in precedenza nello studio, la regressione lineare multipla è un metodo adatto per il test delle ipotesi, tuttavia il metodo più adatto per testare le relazioni simultanee tra costrutti è la structural equation modeling che potrebbe essere utilizzata dai ricercatori futuri per fornire diversi approfondimenti sullo studio.

Infine, come emerso dai principali risultati dei test, il marchio sponsor Armani è percepito come inferiore, per gli studi futuri potrebbe essere interessante approfondire l'analisi e la comprensione dell'effetto della Image based Similarity.