

# **ASSESSMENT OF HOW SUPPORTERS BECOME ATTACHED TO A SPORTS TEAM**

by

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**THESIS PRESENTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF COMMERCE**



**IN THE FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES  
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**

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**DECEMBER 2011**

## **DECLARATION REGARDING PLAGIARISM**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In social psychology, social scientists have become interested in explaining social behaviour: how and why individuals become attached and why they pursue on-going close relationships. The investment model was developed that suggests how attachment to a relationship is formed. It has been suggested that the investment model can be applied to a wide variety of interpersonal relationships. In the same way as a relationship is formed between two individuals, the attachment that supporters have to a sports team is also formed.

To understand the psychological connection supporters have to a sports team, the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) was developed. PCM suggests supporters first become aware of a sports team, then supporters may become attracted, this leads to attachment to the sports team and allegiance to the sports team may then occur. Past research has focused on different aspects of the PCM. However, very few studies have yet explained how supporters become attached to a sports team.

This study combines the PCM and the investment model to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team was required thus, the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) was used. How supporters become attached (based on the PCM) to a sports team was further understood by the investment model variables. Thus, the PCM was adapted and applied with the investment model.

The study comprised of a 2x2x2 full factorial experimental research design. For the purposes of the study, respondents were first made aware of the sport, fistball. Respondents completed a questionnaire that was used to measure their attraction and attachment to a fistball team. During the interview, respondents were shown one of eight treatments, in the form of a newspaper clip on a poster that was manipulated using the investment model

variables. The eight posters comprised of fictitious fistball teams to avoid any bias that may have been formed had another sport been chosen.

There were 36 respondents per treatment group, ensuring that respondents could be split between the different levels of supporters. A repeat group was also conducted to ensure the validity of the study. The realised sample comprised of 318 respondents. The target population was South African supporters in LSM groups 8 to 10. Judgement sampling was used as no sampling frame exists for supporters. Respondents were selected in shopping malls in Gauteng due to the culturally diverse nature of the province.

The results revealed that based on the level of support, attachment to a sports team varies. The results suggested that low supporters have a higher attraction than high supporters. High supporters are already attached to a sports team, and are not necessarily interested in being attracted to a different sports team. It would be recommended to attract high supporters by having initiatives that involve teams, where supporters' attachment to the team already exists. High supporters were considered to be those who were attached to a sports team. To package and deliver products and/or services most effectively, sport marketers should appeal to high supporters' attitudes, as it is their attitude that guides their behaviour. Based on the findings, there is an opportunity for sport marketers to encourage low supporters to become attached to a sports team by using the investment model variables.

By incorporating social psychology with sport consumer behaviour, a better understanding of sport supporters was attained. In the same way that a dating relationship has various stages of courtship that may eventually lead to marriage, the relationship that supporters have with a sports team also goes through stages which may lead supporters who show allegiance. The study reveals that, similarly to a dating relationship where an attraction to an individual first needs to be formed, the type of sport plays a role in attracting supporters to a sports team. Likewise, whether an individual pursues a relationship depends on the investment model variables, which is also the case for supporters.

## OPSOMMING

In die sosiale sielkunde stel sosiaal-wetenskaplikes toenemend daarin belang om sosiale gedrag te verklaar: hoe en waarom individue geheg raak aan sosiale objekte en waarom hulle voortgesette verhoudings nastreef. Die beleggingsmodel, wat aan die hand doen hoe gehegtheid deur middel van 'n verhouding tot stand gebring word, is ontwikkel. Daar word voorgestel dat die beleggingsmodel toegepas kan word op 'n wye verskeidenheid van interpersoonlike verhoudings. Op dieselfde wyse waarop 'n verhouding tussen twee individue gevorm word, word die verbintenis wat ondersteuners met 'n sportspan het, ook verwesenlik.

Ten einde die psigologiese verbintenis tussen ondersteuners en 'n sportspan te verstaan, is die Psigologiese Kontinuummodel (PCM) ontwikkel. Die PCM suggereer dat ondersteuners eerstens van 'n sportspan bewus word, dan moontlik aangetrokke voel tot die sportspan. Dit lei tot 'n gehegtheid en moontlik uiteindelik getrouheid aan die sportspan. Vorige navorsing het die soeklig op verskillende aspekte van die PCM laat val, maar baie min ondersoek het al verduidelik hoe ondersteuners 'n verbintenis vorm met 'n sportspan.

Hierdie studie kombineer die PCM en die beleggingsmodel om vas te stel hoe ondersteuners 'n verbintenis vorm met 'n sportspan. Die PCM is gebruik omdat dit nodig was om die psigologiese verbintenis te verstaan wat ondersteuners met 'n sportspan tot stand bring. Deur die veranderlikes van die beleggingsmodel in ag te neem, is daar verder lig gewerp op hoe ondersteuners geheg raak aan 'n sportspan (gebaseer op die PCM). Die PCM is dus aangepas en tesame met die beleggingsmodel toegepas.

In die studie is gebruik gemaak van 'n 2x2x2 volle faktoriale eksperimentele navorsingsontwerp. Vir die doel van die studie is respondente eers bewus gemaak van die sport vuisbal. Die respondente het 'n vraelys voltooi wat gebruik is om hul aangetrokkenheid tot en gehegtheid aan 'n vuisbalspan te

meet. Tydens die onderhoud is agt afsonderlike behandelings aan die respondente vertoon, elk in die vorm van 'n koerantknipsel op 'n plakkaat wat gemanipuleer is met die gebruik van die beleggingsmodel se veranderlikes. Die agt plakkate het fiktiewe vuisbalspanne uitgebeeld om enige vooroordeel uit te skakel wat moontlik sou voorkom as 'n ander sportsoort gebruik was.

Daar was 36 respondente per behandelingsgroep om te verseker dat respondente tussen die verskillende vlakke van ondersteuners verdeel kon word. 'n Herhalingsgroep is ook gebruik om die geldigheid van die studie te verseker. Die gerealiseerde steekproef het uit 318 respondente bestaan. Die teikenpopulasie was Suid-Afrikaanse ondersteuners in LSM-groepe 8 tot 10 aangesien hulle die meeste mediablootstelling ontvang het. Daar is gebruik gemaak van oordeelsteekproefneming, aangesien geen steekproefraamwerk vir ondersteuners bestaan nie. Respondente is in groot winkelsentrums in Gauteng geselekteer vanweë die kultuurdiverse aard van die provinsie.

Die resultate het getoon dat, gebaseer op die vlak van ondersteuning, die vlak van gehegtheid aan 'n sportspan varieer. Die resultate suggereer dat laevlakondersteuners meer geneë is om 'n verbintenis te vorm as hoëvlakondersteuners. Hoëvlakondersteuners het reeds 'n band met 'n sportspan en voel nie noodwendig die behoefte om 'n verhouding met 'n ander sportspan te vestig nie. Daar word dus aanbeveel dat hoëvlakondersteuners aangetrek word deur inisiatiewe aan te bied waarby spanne betrokke is wat reeds vaste aanhangers het. Hoëvlakondersteuners is beskou as diene wat 'n verbintenis met 'n sportspan het. Ten einde produkte en/of dienste op die effektiëste wyse te verpak en te lewer behoort sportbemarkers op hoëvlakondersteuners se ingesteldheid te fokus, aangesien dit hul ingesteldheid is wat hul gedrag rig. Volgens die bevindinge bestaan daar 'n geleentheid vir sportbemarkers om, deur van die beleggingsmodel se veranderlikes gebruik te maak, laevlakondersteuners aan te moedig om hulle aan 'n sportspan te verbind.

Deur sosiale sielkunde met sportverbruikersgedrag te kombineer is 'n beter verstaan van sportondersteuners bereik. Net soos daar tydens 'n liefdesverhouding verskillende stadiums van hofmakery is wat uiteindelik tot 'n

huwelik kan lei, gaan die verhouding wat ondersteuners met 'n sportspan het ook deur stadions wat uiteindelik getroue ondersteuners kan oplewer. Die studie toon ook dat, net soos in 'n verhouding waar individue eers net met mekaar uitgaan, en hulle later sterk aangetrokke raak tot mekaar, daar in sport ook 'n dieper verhouding moet ontwikkel. Dit blyk dat die soort sport 'n belangrike rol speel wanneer ondersteuners tot 'n sportspan aangetrek word. Net soos by 'n liefdesverhouding, hang die sportondersteuner se verbintenis ook af van die veranderlikes van die beleggingsmodel.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*“An investment in knowledge yields the greatest interest.”*

Franklin (1706 – 1790)

- Dr Gerber, my supervisor and mentor, thank you so much for your invaluable knowledge, advice and guidance. Your support emotionally, financially and academically goes beyond words. It has been an honour to get to know someone of such a high calibre. You have made my academic experience over the last two years such a memorable and rewarding one. And for that I am truly indebted to you.
- The Department of Business Management and particularly to Professor Boshoff, thank you for your generous financial support. It has been wonderful to get to know you and it was such a worthy opportunity working in the department this year.
- To Margaret Baker from Interserv Marketing Research, thank you so much for all your trouble and playing such an important role in my research study.
- Jane, for the many hours that you spent editing each chapter on numerous occasions, I am unconditionally grateful to you.
- Thank you also to Helen Allen, for editing my thesis professionally.
- To my mom, dad and brother, thank you for your love and support; for putting up with me through the early mornings, late nights and some of those stressful times. And for knowing when to stand back or when to step in, I appreciate it and love you all very much.
- To Louis, thank you for being my pillar of strength. You have provided tolerance, love and solidarity. And for that, I thank you dearly.



# **ASSESSMENT OF HOW SUPPORTERS BECOME ATTACHED TO A SPORTS TEAM**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

---

*“Marriages come and go. So do jobs, hometowns, friendships. But a guy’s [or girl’s] attachment to a sports team? There’s a bond that holds the heart.”*

Mahony, Madrigal and Howard (2000:15)

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Marketing, as a relatively new field of academic enterprise, lacks the depth and variety in theory possessed by its foundation fields such as economics, sociology, and psychology...[r]ather than formulate new marketing theories, a majority of marketing researchers have concentrated their efforts on applying theories from marketing’s foundation disciplines to specific marketing problems and phenomena” (Murgolo-Poore, Pitt & Berthon, 2003:236). Specifically, the concepts that have been derived from economics and social psychology within the field of marketing, are used by marketers.

In this chapter the reason for this study is discussed. This is followed by the research design which includes the research objectives, the methodology used, and the process of collecting the data. The orientation to the rest of the study is also presented. To assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team, was addressed as the strength of supporters’ psychological connection results in different types of supporters.

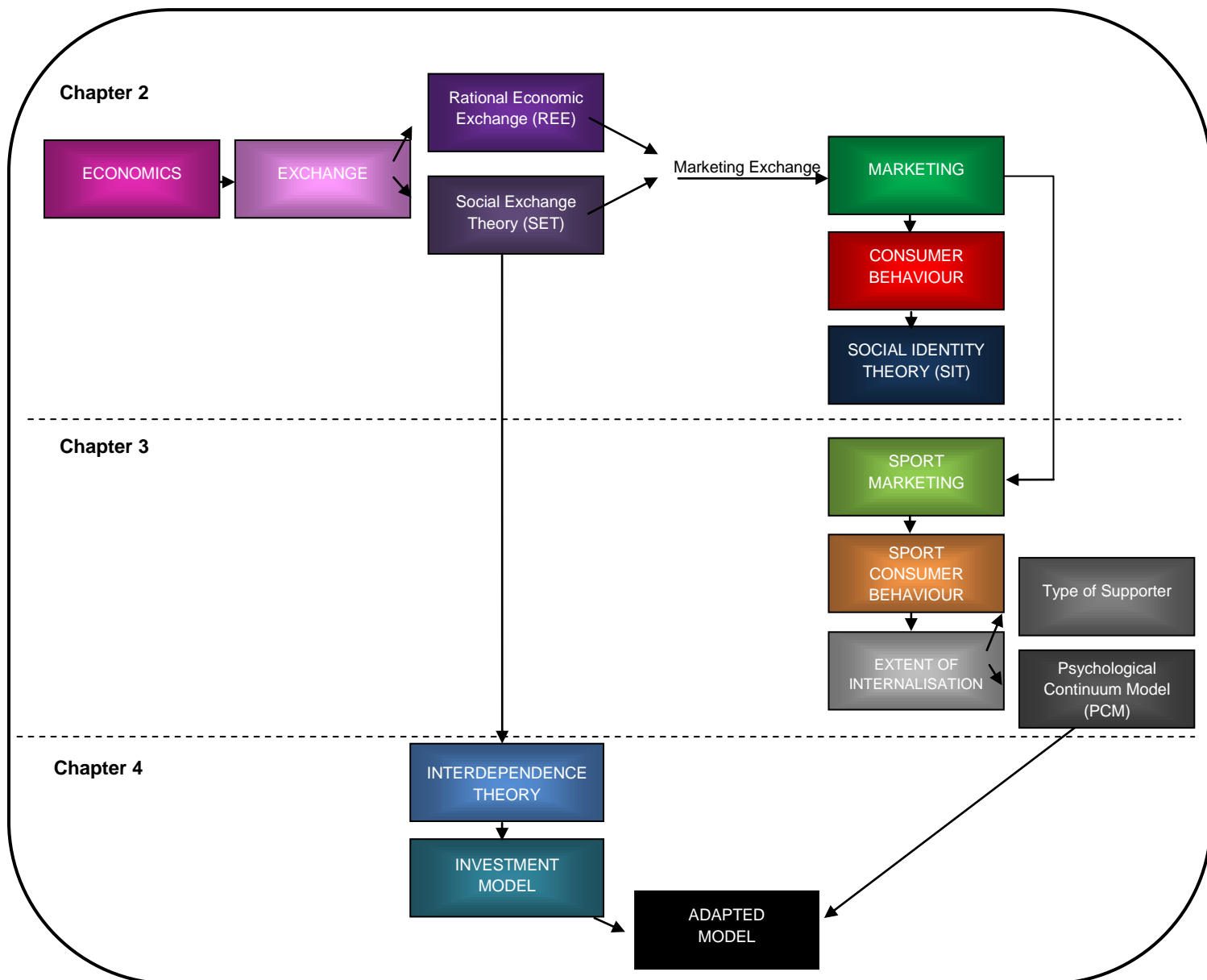
Figure 1.1 gives a graphical presentation of the background topics used for the purposes of this study. The background discussion begins with economics, specifically the concept of exchange, and the different types of exchanges, namely rational economic exchange (REE) and social exchange

theory (SET). The combination of the latter gives rise to a marketing exchange which is dealt with in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 also includes an explanation of marketing. As marketing emphasises the importance of meeting the needs of consumers, to gain an understanding of consumers' purchasing habits, consumer behaviour is addressed. And to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer behaviour, social identity theory (SIT) is also explained (refer to Figure 1.1).

In Chapter 3, a sub-discipline of marketing that was of particular relevance for the purposes of this study was sport marketing. Similarly to how consumer behaviour is used to explain consumers' purchasing habits, sport consumer behaviour is used to explain sport consumers' habits. Likewise, to gain an in-depth understanding of sport consumer behaviour, the extent of internalisation that a supporter has with a sports team is addressed by taking into consideration the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) and the different types of supporters, as shown in Figure 1.1.

For the purposes of this study, the adapted model that was used to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team is discussed in Chapter 4. The adapted model builds on the PCM and Rusbult's (1980a) investment model, which was derived from SET and the interdependence theory (refer to Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1 Overview of study**



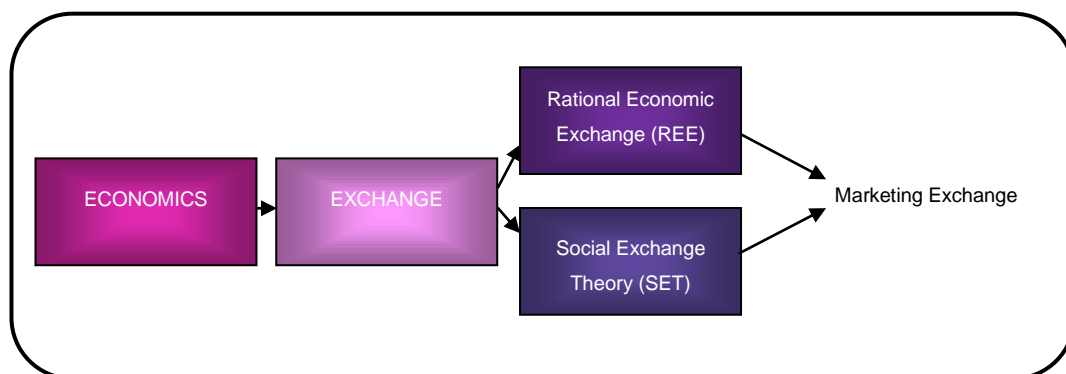
Source: Adapted from Smith (1947); Bagozzi (1975); Deschamps and Devos (1998); Funk and James (2001); Funk, Mahony and Havitz (2003); Hirschman (1987); Homans (1958); Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999); Kotler (1994); Kotler (1974); Kotler and Levy (1969); Mullin, Stephen and Sutton (2000); Rusbult (1980a); Schiffman and Kanuk (2007); Tajfel and Turner (1986); and Thibaut and Kelley (1959)

## 1.2 FOUNDATION THEORIES OF MARKETING

In the field of economics, Smith (1947:13) states that, “give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want, in the meaning of every such offer”. Smith’s quote describes the concept of exchange in which consumers give something of value to another consumer for a return of equal value. The economic field uses the concept of exchange, known as rational economic exchange (REE).

Using similar theoretical principles derived from the concept of REE, the marketing field consists of a marketing exchange. From a marketing perspective, exchange not only consists of a mere transfer of goods or services (utilitarian aspect), but also carries a symbolic (social psychological) aspect for the consumers involved (Hirschman, 1987:98). Thus, from the social psychological field, the concept of social exchange theory (SET) was applied to understand a marketing exchange as depicted in Figure 1.2.

**Figure 1.2 Different types of exchanges**



Source: Adapted from Smith (1947); Bagozzi (1975); Hirschman (1987); Homans (1958); Kotler (1994); Kotler (1974); and Kotler and Levy (1969)

- ***Rational economic exchange (REE)***

As shown in Figure 1.2, the utilitarian aspect of a marketing exchange is rational economic exchange (REE), in which an “exchange cannot take place unless the relative marginal significance of the commodity received exceeds that of the commodity given up for each party in exchange” (Blaug, 1985:309).

Put in other words, REE transactions occur where goods or services are transferred for a return of relative value to the provider in a manner where both parties benefit economically.

The social psychological aspect of a marketing exchange denotes feelings other than what the direct symbol, object, action, word or picture portrays (Bagozzi, 1975:35-36). As stated, a marketing exchange is characterised by more than just the transfer of a product or service for money, and carries a social psychological significance that may be intangible.

Social psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on individuals within a social context. Social psychology is concerned with how and why individuals think, feel and do the things they do depending on the situation they are in (Kong, 1997). The discipline uses scientific methods to understand and explain how individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviour are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of other individuals (Allport, 1985:3). Social psychology can explain how stereotypes are formed, why for example racism exists, how people fall in love, and how individuals can seem like an entirely different person in different situations (Kong, 1997). By taking into account individuals' social perceptions and social interactions, their social behaviour can be understood (Cherry, 2011).

- ***Social exchange theory (SET)***

SET explains social behaviour when individuals partake in an exchange (Homans, 1958:598). SET, as illustrated in Figure 1.2, is embedded in economics and social psychology. A fundamental difference between rational economic exchanges (REEs) and social exchanges is the way in which individuals and organisations are considered.

When considering REE, consumers and organisations are considered as interacting with a market (Emerson, 1976:11). To the contrary, in SET, individuals and organisations are considered as interacting with one another. This can be explained in the words of Blau (1964:91) whereby "actions [are] contingent on rewarding reactions from others". Thus, social exchanges are

different to rational economic exchanges (REEs) in the sense that social exchanges take into consideration individuals, and the way individuals interact with one another.

- ***Marketing as an exchange***

Using economics in the marketing field (refer to Figure 1.2), marketing can be regarded as incorporating the facilitation of the exchange process, regardless of whether economic goods and services, persons, institutions, places, or ideas constitute the object of exchange (Kotler, 1994:13). When marketing is considered as a form of exchange, Bagozzi (1975:36) explains that “people buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean”. Marketing is thus an exchange that involves both a utilitarian and a symbolic (social psychological) aspect.

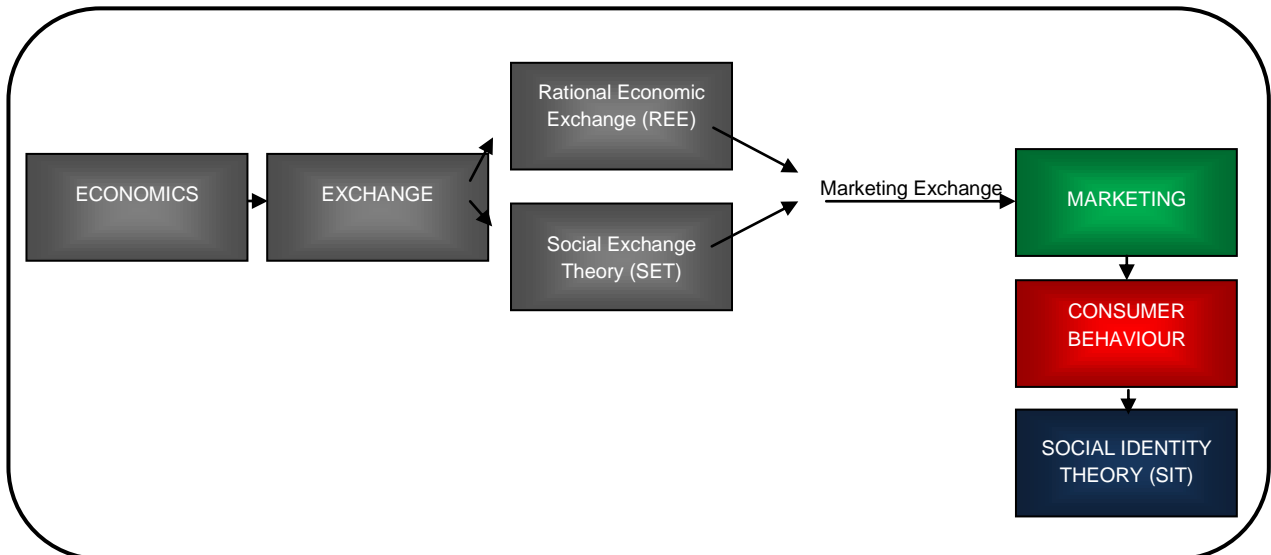
## **1.3 MARKETING**

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating (to create awareness and interest), delivering, and exchanging offerings that contain value for consumers, clients, partners, and society at large (AMA, 2007; Boshoff & Gerber, 2008:1). Bagozzi (1975:32), Hirschman (1987:98) and Kotler and Levy (1969:11) have argued that most human dealings may be understood as a form of market exchange. If marketers understand the social psychological aspect of a marketing exchange, this may help guide the way in which marketers appeal to the various target markets. Marketers being able to appeal effectively to the correct target market, may motivate consumers’ decisions to make purchases, which ultimately result in REEs (the utilitarian aspect of a marketing exchange).

In order for marketers to understand consumers better, consumer behaviour becomes of relevance. Consumer behaviour takes into account consumers’ internal and external factors. As mentioned earlier, to gain an in-depth

understanding of how consumers' may select their internal and external factors, SIT was applied, as illustrated in Figure 1.3.

**Figure 1.3 Marketing and related topics**



Source: Adapted from Smith (1947); Bagozzi (1975); Deschamps and Devos (1998); Hirschman (1987); Homans (1958); Kotler (1994); Kotler (1974); Kotler and Levy (1969); Schiffman and Kanuk (2007)

▪ **Consumer behaviour**

Consumer behaviour can be defined as the behavioural patterns of consumers as well as groups of individuals (such as families) (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2001:6; Harrell, 1986:2). The behavioural patterns of consumers are in terms of the decision process that is made for products, services or ideas that can satisfy their needs. Consumer behaviour takes into account consumers' behavioural patterns before a purchase is made, while consumers are making the purchase, and after the purchase has been made (Du Plessis *in* Du Plessis, Rousseau & Blem, 1990:11).

To succeed in any organisation, marketers need to know everything they can about consumers – what they want, what they think, how they work, and how they spend their leisure time. Marketers need to understand the internal (personal) and external (group) factors that affect consumers' purchasing



decisions and how these decisions are made (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:4). Consumers' internal and external factors may also be explained by applying social identity theory (SIT). SIT clarifies how individuals select the groups to which they belong, which ultimately affects their purchasing decisions.

- ***Social identity theory (SIT)***

Social identity is the way individuals feel about belonging to a specific social group, and the emotional attachment that occurs while being a member of that group (Tajfel *in* Deschamps & Devos, 1998:5). The groups that individuals associate themselves, tend to be individuals who share similar points of view, and have common interests, beliefs and backgrounds to themselves (Tajfel & Turner, 1986:15). An individual may be a member of a number of different groups.

A group in which people find they can relate to one another and feel a sense of belonging, is referred to as an in-group, and a group with which they cannot identify is referred to as an out-group (Turner, 1978:237). An example of a group where individuals may feel a sense of belonging and may be able to identify with others may be a particular sports team. The sports team may be considered as an in-group should they be able to relate in some way, for example, residing in the same city. Another sports team, from another city, may then be considered as an out-group as the individual may not feel a sense of belonging nor share common interests.

It is part of human nature to interact with other individuals. Understanding individuals' social behaviour was explained by SET (SET is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2). The people with whom individuals choose to interact with was explained by SIT (also discussed in more detail in Chapter 2), as people tend to select groups who share interests of their own and with whom they may feel a sense of belonging. One such group that people may identify is a sports team. As the aim of this research was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team (the in-group), and the

strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was addressed (in other words, in terms of how much they feel a sense of belonging with the in-group).

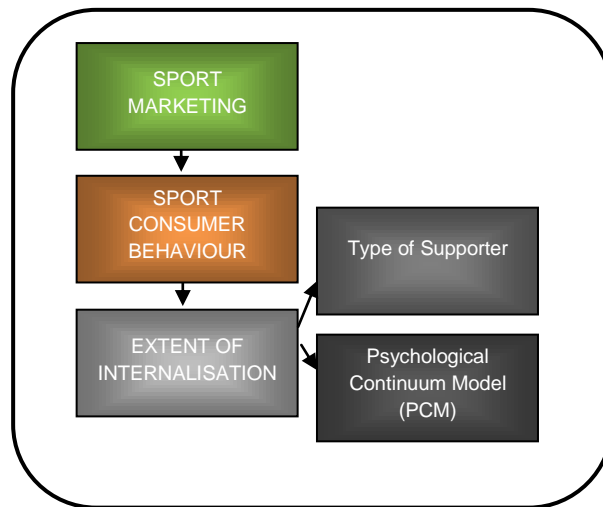
## **1.4 SPORT MARKETING**

A sub-discipline of marketing that has gained momentum over the last 30 years is sport marketing (Shannon, 1999:518). Sport marketing has been described as the anticipation, management and satisfaction of sport consumers' wants and needs through the application of marketing principles and practice (Parkhouse, 2001:301).

Sport marketing is unique in the sense that sport is regarded as a cultural institution that has an extensive history, emotional connections, educational benefits, and significant social relevance, and benefits a large number of communities (Boshoff & Gerber, 2008:2; Smith & Stewart, 2010:11). The sub-discipline of marketing may be regarded as a combination of business and sport, to the extent that both are concerned with widening market share, building profits, and strengthening brands (Gerber & Cant, 2010:18; Shank 2002:36; Smith & Stewart, 2010:11).

Researchers have only begun paying ample attention to the sport marketing field since the early 1980s. Sport marketers have realised the opportunity in this sub-discipline of marketing. The growing interest, particularly in professional sports in South Africa, has grown into a lucrative business (Gerber & Cant, 2010:18). Academics and researchers have been conducting further research in the sport marketing field since sport plays a significant role in consumers' lives (Goldman & Johns, 2009:125; Shannon, 1999:518-541). In recent times (refer to Figure 1.4), marketers have focused their attention on researching and applying the principles of consumer behaviour to sport consumers (Aiken & Koch, 2009:81).

**Figure 1.4 Sport marketing and related topics**



Source: Adapted from Funk and James (2001); Funk, Mahony and Havitz (2003), Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999) Mullin, Stephen and Sutton (2000)

▪ ***Sport consumer behaviour***

Sport consumer behaviour entails the understanding of how sport consumers make decisions to purchase or not to purchase sport merchandise as well as understanding why sport consumers make those choices (Funk, Mahony & Havitz, 2003:201). Sport can bring a community together, which is important in today's society where fewer community and kinship ties seem to exist (Branscombe & Wann, 1991:116). In addition, sport allows individuals to interact with one another and be easily persuaded by their friends in terms of their behavioural and purchasing decisions.

For the purposes of this study a distinction was made between sport consumers and sport supporters. In this study, sport consumers were regarded as individuals who are aware of a sports team. Sport supporters were defined as individuals who are interested in and follow a sport, team, and/or athlete. Supporters are individuals who actively witness a sporting event in person or through some form of media (such as radio and television) (Wann, Melnick, Russell & Pease, 2001:2).

As stated, the purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, therefore an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have was relevant as it results in different types of supporters. The Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) illustrated the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team (as shown in Figure 1.5). And as depicted in Figure 1.6, there are different types of supporters (see section 3.5.2) which were determined by strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team (Hunt, Bristol & Bashaw, 1999:442). Thus, the PCM was used in this study as well as taking into account the different types of supporters.

Consumer behaviour was used to understand consumers and the way in which consumers think, evaluate and act in their decision process to purchase products and/or services. Marketers need to take into account consumers' internal and external factors that may influence how and what consumers' purchasing decisions would be. In addition, to understand why consumers select particular internal and external factors was explained by SIT (see section 1.3). Therefore, by considering consumers' internal and external factors, marketers may be able to understand the social psychological significance within a marketing exchange, which may ultimately help to appeal to the intended target market and result in a REE.

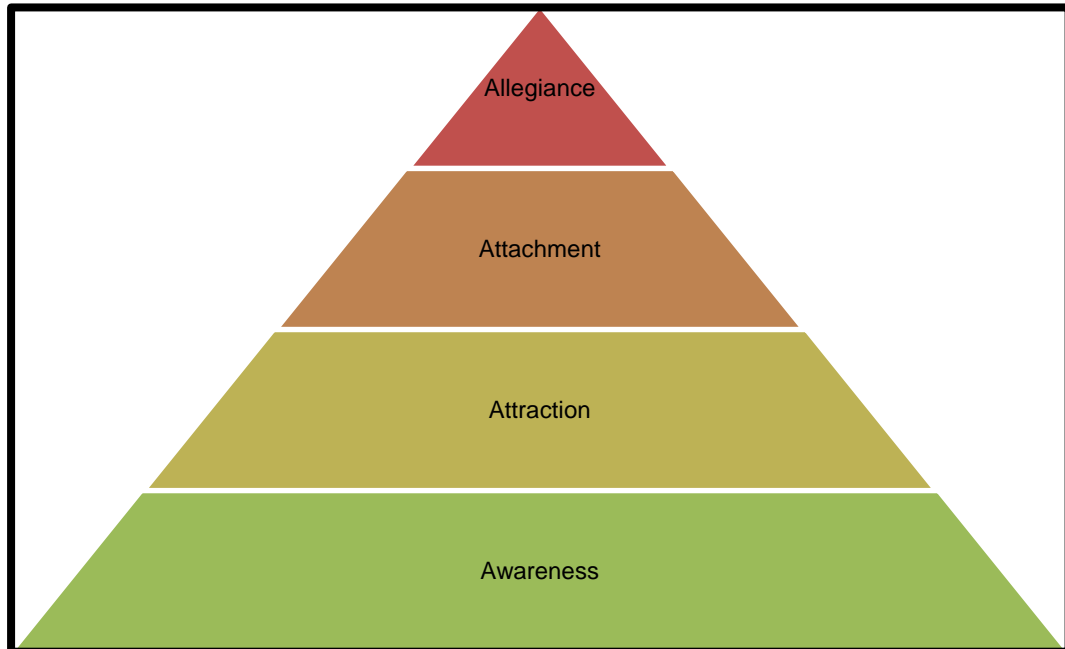
Similarly, sport consumer behaviour was used to understand how supporters make decisions to purchase or not to purchase sport merchandise, as well as understanding why sport consumers make those choices. Sport marketers need to consider the extent of internalisation that supporters have to a sports team. To comprehend the extent of internalisation that supporters have to a sports team, the psychological connection that supporters have is evaluated by means of the PCM. In addition, to gain a further understanding of the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, different types of supporters were considered. Identifying different types of supporters may help sport marketers to distinguish market segments and

be able to appeal most effectively to the different types of supporters (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4; James, Kolbe & Trail, 2002:222).

- ***Psychological continuum model (PCM)***

Funk and James (2001) developed the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) to understand supporters' psychological connection to a sports team. Each stage (refer to Figure 1.5) represents a different level of psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team. Thus, the aim of the PCM is to identify the different factors that are thought to influence the formation of a strong connection to a sports team (Funk & James, 2001:121-122). As stated, the PCM is relevant to sport marketers as it may aid in distinguishing marketing segments, and appropriate marketing activities may be established for supporters, based on the psychological connection that they have to a sports team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4; James, Kolbe & Trail, 2002:222).

**Figure 1.5 Psychological continuum model (PCM)**



Source: Adapted from Funk and James (2001)

According to Funk and James' (2001) PCM, as depicted in Figure 1.5, supporters first become aware of a sports team, followed by an attraction

towards a sports team, which may lead to attachment to the specific sports team and finally to allegiance to the sports team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4).

- *Awareness*

The first stage of the PCM, awareness, occurs when individuals become aware of a certain sports team, but do not yet have a specific favourite sports team (Trail, Robinson, Dick & Gillentine, 2003:218; Funk & James, 2001:121).

- *Attraction*

The next stage, attraction, occurs when supporters acknowledge that they have a favourite sports team. Supporters merely support a favourite team at this stage and do not bring the team into their self-concept (Funk & James, 2001:140). At the attraction stage, supporters may take part in certain activities to show that they are a part of a group and to signify that they are not part of a rival group.

- *Attachment*

Attachment occurs when supporters' psychological connection to a specific sports team strengthens (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218). The strength of the connection supporters have to a sports team is based on psychological aspects associated with the sports team (Funk & James, 2001:121). The strength of the connection that supporters have to a sports team will determine the type of supporter that they are (Bouchet, Bodet, Bernache-Assollant & Kada, 2011:43; Hunt *et al.*, 1999:440; Mahony *et al.*, 2000:16) (see section 3.5.2).

The difference between the attraction stage of the PCM and the attachment stage is that at the attachment stage the sports team becomes psychologically important to supporters. The connection is thus valued and protected by supporters. In addition, the connection that supporters have

to a sports team is linked to other important values, goals and self-interests that supporters have, and the sports team becomes a part of supporters' self-concept.

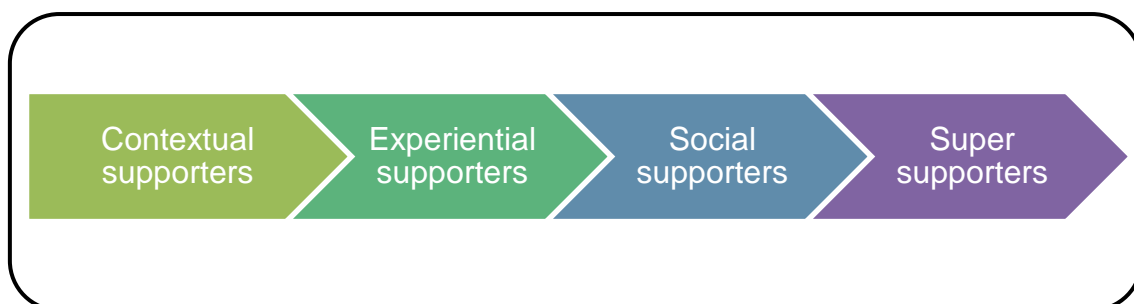
- *Allegiance*

At the allegiance stage of the PCM (see Figure 1.5), supporters have consistent and enduring attitudes and behaviour to a specific sports team. The difference between the attachment stage and the allegiance stage of the PCM is the level of attachment. Supporters who show allegiance become resistant to change over time and will support the sports team no matter what information is heard. The supporter will have a stable and internally consistent evaluation of the relationship with the team.

- ***Types of supporters***

The strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, results in different types of supporters. Identifying different types of supporters may help sport marketers to distinguish market segments and be able to appeal most effectively to the different types of supporters, as shown in Figure 1.6 (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4; James, Kolbe & Trail, 2002:222).

**Figure 1.6 Types of supporters**



Source: Adapted from Hunt *et al.* (1999) and Richelieu and Pons (2005)

Supporters who may not have a strong connection to a sports team and who are interested in the thrill, excitement and social aspects of sport, may be

considered as contextual - or experiential supporters, as depicted in Figure 1.6. For the purposes of this study, contextual and experiential supporters were regarded as low supporters. Supporters who have a strong connection to a sports team may consider the sports team as a part of their self-identification, and may be considered as social - or super supporters (see section 3.5.2). For the purposes of this study, social and super supporters were regarded as high supporters.

Hence, as explained earlier, a marketing exchange takes into account both REE and SET. Marketers may appeal to the relevant target market and encourage purchasing decisions appropriately by understanding the social psychological aspect for consumers. To understand the social psychological aspect for consumers, understanding consumer behaviour was necessary. It was of particular importance, in considering consumer behaviour, to take into account consumers' internal and external factors that may influence their purchasing decisions.

Applying the marketing exchange to sport, sport consumer behaviour became significant for this study in order to understand the social psychological aspect to supporters. To understand the social psychological aspect of a marketing exchange for supporters, their internal and external factors were also taken into account. Supporters' internal and external factors may influence the psychological connection that they have to a sports team, which was represented by means of the PCM. As mentioned earlier, the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team varies, resulting in different types of supporters.

In social psychology, social scientists have used the investment model to explain social behaviour, how and why individuals become attached to social objects, and why individuals pursue on-going close relationships. In addition, in the social psychology field, social scientists have attempted to predict attachment with a variety of forms of on-going relationships. The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The PCM was used because it shows the psychological connection that



supporters have to a sports team. As the investment model has been used in past research to understand how individuals become attached to social objects. The investment model was used to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Therefore, the PCM and the investment model was adapted and applied to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

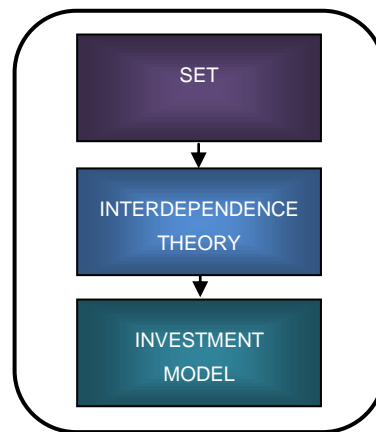
## 1.5 INVESTMENT MODEL

The investment model extends from the concepts developed in the exchange tradition in social psychology (Blau, 1964; LaGaipa, 1977), particularly from the interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Rusbult, 1983:102; Rusbult, Johnson & Morrow, 1986:81).

- ***Interdependence theory***

As stated, SET studies the interactions that occur between individuals. As depicted in Figure 1.7, the interdependence theory has been built and developed based on the concepts from SET and takes into account the interactions between two individuals, namely a dyad-relationship (Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998:358). Interdependence theory explains how and why some relationships survive difficult times whereas other promising relationships end (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993:176) (see section 4.4). Interdependence theory states the importance of satisfaction and dependence in a particular dyad-relationship (Rusbult, 1980a:173, Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81).

**Figure 1.7 Deriving the investment model**



Source: Adapted from Homans (1958); Rusbult (1980a); Tajfel and Turner (1986); and Thibaut and Kelley (1959)

The investment model has been built on the concepts derived from the interdependence theory (refer to Figure 1.7). As stated, the interdependence theory takes into account the satisfaction and dependence in a dyad-relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978:31). The investment model goes further, and suggests that in a relationship, attachment is formed not only as a consequence of satisfaction but also owing to the available alternatives and the numerous important resources that are invested in the relationship (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993:176; Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81; Rusbult, 1980a:173).

- ***Investment model***

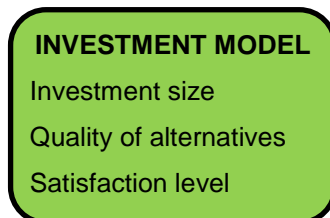
Researchers have used the investment model to explain social behaviour, how and why individuals become attached to social objects (such as to another individual), and why they pursue on-going close relationships (Rusbult, 1980a:173; Rusbult, 1998:358).

One of the aspects that social scientists and psychologists have been interested in is the interpersonal attraction in on-going relationships (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Levinger & Snoek, 1972, Rusbult *et al.*, 1986). Social scientists have become increasingly interested in understanding the determinants of attachment in order to maintain on-going relationships (such as Johnson, 1973; Levinger, 1974; 1979; Rusbult, 1980a; 1983, Rusbult *et al.*, 1998).

The purpose of the investment model is to predict the degree of attachment in a variety of forms of on-going relationships, such as romantic relationships (Rusbult, 1980a; 1983), friendships (Rusbult, 1980b) and business relationships (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981), with wide ranges of duration and involvement (Rusbult, 1980a:173).

Rusbult (1980a) developed the investment model to measure attachment based on three factors (see Figure 1.8). The first factor, investment size, suggests that attachment to the relationship should be stronger the more the individual has invested numerous resources in the relationship, either intrinsically (such as time, effort and self-disclosure) and/or extrinsically (such as mutual friends, shared memories and material possessions). Secondly, the quality of alternatives, in terms of relationships, should be less attractive than the one in which individuals are currently involved. Thirdly, the more satisfying the relationship, the stronger the attachment should be (Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:82).

**Figure 1.8 Investment Model Variables**



Source: Adapted from Rusbult (1980a); Rusbult (1983); Rusbult *et al.* (1986); and Rusbult *et al.* (1998)

According to Rusbult (1980a:174), the investment model has the potential to be applied to other issues in the study of interpersonal relationships. Rusbult's (1980a) research involving the use of the investment model has been shown to be particularly robust in its ability to predict attachment in a wide spectrum of relationships (Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81). The investment model has been adapted and applied to sport participants, and their attachment to, and involvement in, a specific sport (Scanlan, Carpenter, Schmidt, Simons, & Keeler, 1993a; Scanlan, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt, & Keeler, 1993b;

Casper, Gray & Babkes Stellino, 2007). For the purposes of this study, Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was used in order to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

The investment model variables were thus adapted for the purposes of the study. Investment size influencing supporters' attachment to a sports team was assessed by manipulating the number of hours supporters devote in following a sports team (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011:43; Funk & James, 2001:120). The quality of alternatives was assessed by manipulating the number of teams that supporters could support. Finally, satisfaction level, as the last variable in the investment model, was assessed by manipulating a sports team's performance in a sporting event.

## **1.6 REASON FOR THE STUDY**

The scope of this study focused on sport marketing. The PCM, developed by Funk and James (2001), suggested that supporters first become aware of a sports team, followed by an attraction towards a sports team, which may lead to attachment to the specific sports team and finally to allegiance to the sports team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4). Past researchers have focused their attention on the movement that supporters go through from awareness to attraction; and how supporters move from attachment to allegiance. Research concerning the transition from attraction to attachment is scarce. Previously no researcher has used the investment model variables to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218).

As stated, social scientists have become increasingly interested in understanding the determinants of attachment to maintain relationships. Of particular relevance for the purposes of this study was Rusbult's (1980a) investment model. Rusbult (1980a:185) opines that the investment model can be applied in a variety of interpersonal relationships. The investment model consists of three variables: satisfaction level, investment size, and quality of alternatives (see section 1.5).

Previous researchers attempted to explain sport participants' attachment to a particular sport by using the Sport Commitment Model (SCM). Attachment was believed to be the underlying force that motivates individuals to persist in sport, and was viewed as a psychological state (Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a:2-3). Attachment was believed to best described as individuals' behaviour and psychological state regarding a sport (Casper *et al.*, 2007:256).

The SCM used SET, interpersonal relationships, and Rusbult's (1980a) investment model to describe the variables that make up sport participants' attachment to a team (Casper *et al.*, 2007:256). Sport enjoyment, involvement opportunities, personal investments, social constraints, and involvement alternatives were proposed to make up the sport attachment construct (Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a:5; Casper *et al.*, 2007:256). The study involving the use of SCM hypothesised that the above-mentioned factors increased sport attachment, while involvement alternatives were hypothesised to decrease sport attachment (Casper *et al.*, 2007:256).

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. In past research, the SCM used the investment model variables in terms of how it applies to sport participants. Thus, the SCM demonstrated that the investment model variables can be applied to aspects relating to sport. For the purposes of this study, the investment model variables were applied to assess how sport supporters (not sport participants) become attached to a sports team.

## **1.7 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Marketing can be considered as a form of marketing exchange where people not only buy things for utilitarian purposes but also because of the symbolic (social psychological) aspect that the product and/or service may carry (Bagozzi, 1975:36). To take into account the social psychological aspect in a marketing exchange, consumers' influences needed to be understood. Consumer behaviour was used to understand the decisions consumers make

in purchasing decisions and also to identify who or what consumers' internal and external factors are, which might influence their purchasing decisions. To understand consumers' internal and external influences, SIT was addressed. Researchers use SIT in an attempt to explain how and why individuals select certain groups. Individuals tend to select groups where people share common interests, backgrounds and beliefs to their own, and where they can feel a sense of belonging. One such group where individuals can feel a sense of belonging is a sports team.

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Therefore, a sub-discipline of marketing, namely sport marketing, was of relevance. In consumer behaviour, consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by internal and external factors (see section 2.5). Sport consumer behaviour works in a similar manner (see section 3.4). For the purposes of this study, to understand the internal and external factors that may influence supporters' decisions to support a particular sports team and to partake in sport-related purchasing decisions, sport consumer behaviour was examined.

**Figure 1.9 Adapted model**



Source: Adapted from Casper *et al.* (2007); Crosby and Taylor (1983); Funk and James (2001); Iwasaki and Havitz (1998; 2004); Johnson (1973); Mahony *et al.* (2000); Rusbult (1980a; 1983); Scanlan *et al.* (1993a); Scanlan *et al.* (1993b); Trail and James

In the endeavour to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was addressed, as the strength of supporters'

psychological connection results in different types of supporters. The PCM has been used by past researchers to understand the psychological connection supporters have to a sports team. The investment model has been used by past researchers to understand how individuals become attached to social objects. Therefore, to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team the PCM and the investment model were adapted and applied for the purposes of this study.

If an understanding of sport supporters' psychological connection to sport can be established, it may assist sport marketers in distinguishing marketing segments, and appropriate marketing activities may be established for supporters, based on the psychological connection that they have to a sports team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4; James, Kolbe & Trail, 2002:222). Thus, this study was undertaken to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

## **1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The main objective of the study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The secondary objectives of the study were to:

- assess how investment size influences supporters' attachment to a sports team;
- assess how quality of alternatives influences supporters' attachment to a sports team;
- assess how satisfaction level influences supporters' attachment to a sports team.

Propositions are statements explaining the logical linkage among certain concepts (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2010:656). Propositions are a basis for a logical approach to the evaluation of evidence (Aitken & Taroni, 2004:214).

For the purposes of this study, the following propositions were postulated.

- P<sub>1</sub>: Investment size has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>2</sub>: Quality of alternatives has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>3</sub>: Satisfaction level has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>4</sub>: Any combination of the above has an effect on sport supporters' attachment

## **1.9 METHODOLOGY**

A research design is the plan of action of how the research is going to be carried out. It specifies the objectives, methods and procedures as to how data will be collected, measured and analysed (Churchill, Brown & Suter, 2007:79; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:64). This section gives a brief overview of the method that was applied in this study and discusses the secondary and primary research that was conducted.

### **1.9.1 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH**

Exploratory research was first conducted to explore the problem situation and opportunities for research. In-depth interviews with experts and the collection and analysis of already published information are ways of obtaining background information (Malhotra, 2002:16; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:60). For the purposes of this study, to gain an understanding of how individuals become attached to anything in a broad sense, psychologists and sociologists were approached to explain such a phenomenon. Articles and textbooks were also read that explored the idea of attachment in any sense, such as in friendships and marriages.



## **1.9.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH**

Secondary information is research that has been collected and recorded from prior studies (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:161). The marketing researcher should keep in mind the purpose of the study at all times, and identify what information is needed and how it will be used to make decisions (Malhotra & Birks, 2000).

In this study an extensive literature review was undertaken as outlined in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The literature review entailed researching journal articles and books and aided in assessing relations, contradictions, gaps, strengths and inconsistencies in social psychology, consumer behaviour and, specifically, the sport marketing field (Ward, 2008:12). The information found, touched on the issue of supporters' psychological connection to a sports team and allowed the researcher to gain valuable insight into relevant aspects that needed to be explored in more detail; however, no material sufficed in giving a thorough explanation of how supporters become attached to a sports team.

## **1.9.3 PRIMARY RESEARCH**

Primary data is data that is specifically collected for the project (Struwig & Stead, 2001:80). The three basic quantitative methods for collecting and analysing data are surveys, experiments and observation (McGown, 1979:127). Experimental research allows the experimenter to control and manipulate certain variables (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:56). An experimental design holds the greatest potential for establishing a cause-and-effect relationship. As the aim of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, an experimental research design was chosen as the primary research method to assess what causes supporters to become attached. As stated, there are three variables in the investment model (see section 1.5), therefore more than two factors were relevant, and thus a full factorial design was deemed most appropriate for the purposes of this study

(Shiu, Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2009:293; Malhotra, 2002:237; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:284).

As stated, Rusbult (1980a) developed the investment model to explain how individuals become attached in dating relationships, friendships, and business organisations (Rusbult, 1980a:173; Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81; Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:358; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a:4; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993b:17). The investment model has not, however, been applied to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

The sport that was chosen for the purposes of this study was fistball, a sport similar to volleyball but using tennis rules. The reason fistball was selected was that the sport is unfamiliar in South Africa, and respondents would therefore not have a predisposed opinion about the sport or be attached to any fistball team; thus no bias could have been formed.

A 2x2x2 full factorial design was conducted for the purposes of this study. Respondents were required to complete a questionnaire that measured their attraction (after the fieldworker having shown the respondent a video and reading information about fistball) and attachment (after the respondent had been exposed to the experimental manipulations by means of a newspaper clip on a poster). The factorial design was implemented by means of the respondent being shown one of eight scenarios in the form of a newspaper clip on a poster (see Appendix B).

The manipulations were suggested to influence respondents' attachment to the fistball team. The manipulations (see Table 1.1) included investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level. Based on these manipulations, some of the respondents were exposed to posters with high manipulations that were assumed would attach respondents to the fistball team in comparison to other posters that had low manipulations. Respondents who were exposed to posters that had low manipulations were assumed to cause respondents' attachment to be less than respondents who were shown posters where the posters included high manipulations.

Investment size was manipulated by assessing whether the supporter devoted more than eight hours per week (high manipulation) or less than one hour per week (low manipulation) to a fistball team. The appropriate number of hours was achieved by means of exploratory research. As explained in section 1.5, quality of alternatives should be less attractive for attachment to be high. Therefore, quality of alternatives was manipulated in terms of whether there were less than two teams worth supporting (high manipulation) or more than 24 teams worth supporting (low manipulation) in comparison to the respective fistball team that they were shown (refer to Table 1.1). Satisfaction level was manipulated in terms of whether the fistball team had won all their matches (high manipulation) or if the fistball team they were exposed to in the poster had lost all their matches (low manipulation). Table 1.1 is a summary of the manipulations that were used in the study.

**Table 1.1 Investment model manipulations**

<b>INVESTMENT SIZE</b>	Devotes more than 8 hours watching fistball on a weekend
	Devotes less than 1 hour watching fistball on a weekend
<b>QUALITY OF ALTERNATIVES</b>	Less than 2 teams worth supporting
	More than 24 teams worth supporting
<b>SATISFACTION LEVEL</b>	Team performs well and has won all their matches
	Team performs poorly and has lost all their matches

Source: Adapted from Rusbult (1980a; 1983); Rusbult *et al.* (1986); Rusbult *et al.* (1998); and Rusbult and Van Lange (2003)

A questionnaire was used to measure the respondents' attraction as well as attachment that respondents had to the fistball team that they had been exposed to in a poster. The scale items were five-point, semantic differential items (see Appendix A). For the purposes of this study, respondents' attraction was measured by items that related to the entertainment value that the sports team provided and the social interaction that might occur between individuals while devoting time to a sport. According to Funk and James' (2001) PCM, at the attachment stage, supporters would have a psychological connection to a sports team. Therefore, respondents' attachment was measured with items that pertained to supporters' attitude, behaviour and cognition to a fistball team.

Previous research has investigated individuals' attraction and attachment. Therefore, questionnaires that were already available were used, and adapted for the study. Specifically, the questionnaire that was used to measure the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) (Woo, Trail, Kwon & Anderson, 2009) was used to measure respondents' attraction. Questionnaires by Casper *et al.*, (2007) and Kim, Scott and Crompton (1997) were used for the purposes of this study to measure respondents' attachment (refer to Appendix C).

#### **1.9.4 SAMPLING**

The target population in this study was South African sport supporters in LSM groups 8 to 10, irrespective of gender or age as sport unites a country (SA info, 2009). Respondents were selected in shopping malls in the Gauteng region. The realised sample consisted of 318 respondents (see section 5.5.4).

#### **1.9.5 DATA COLLECTION**

Data was collected in shopping malls in the Gauteng region by fieldworkers from an independent marketing research company, Interserv Market Research. The fieldworkers first asked consumers whether they were sport supporters or not. If they were sport supporters then they were asked if they would like to participate in the research study. Consumers were then asked if they had heard of the sport fistball. If they had not heard of fistball, they could take part in the experiment.

Each fieldworker was assigned to one respondent. The fieldworker would then read information about fistball as well as showing the respondent a short video clip about what fistball entails. The questionnaire was then used to measure respondents' attraction to fistball. One of eight newspaper clips on a poster was shown to each respondent after the items pertaining to attraction were asked. After being shown the newspaper clip on a poster, the respondent was required to complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was used to examine respondents' attraction and their attachment to the fistball team. The questionnaire took eight to ten minutes to complete. The completed questionnaire was handed back to the fieldworker, and the respondent was allowed to leave. A repeat group was used to test the validity of the experiment; thus one of the posters in each of the three shopping malls was repeated on two groups (in other words, one of the posters was shown to 24 respondents rather than 12 respondents in each shopping mall).

### **1.9.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Once all the questionnaires were completed, the data was cleaned, coded and analysed using the statistical programme SPSS statistics version 19. Reliability and validity were also assessed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted. The data was organised and summarised by measures of central tendencies. To make inferences about the population, inferential statistics were used by means of Pearson correlations, and ANOVA - n-way and repeated measures. Data was then reported and conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

## **1.10 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

A brief overview of what will be discussed in each chapter will now be provided.

- ***Chapter 1: Introduction***

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the background of the study and stated the research problem and objectives, as well as the method and data collection process that was implemented.

- ***Chapter 2: Marketing as an exchange***

In Chapter 2, marketing's foundation theories as well as consumer behaviour and social identity theory (SIT) are explored.

- ***Chapter 3: Sport marketing***

Chapter 3 focuses on sport marketing and what the sub-discipline of marketing entails. In addition, sport consumer behaviour and supporters' extent of internalisation with a sports team is discussed.

- ***Chapter 4: Attraction and attachment to a sports team***

In Chapter 4, the adapted model that the research study was based on is explained in detail. Specific attention is given to the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) and the investment model.

- ***Chapter 5: Methodology***

The marketing research process is explained in Chapter 5. This includes how the research was conducted in this study and how the primary data was collected. Tests of reliability and validity were conducted and are also discussed in this chapter.

- ***Chapter 6: Results***

In Chapter 6, the results of the research is presented by means of descriptive and inferential statistics.

- ***Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations***

Chapter 7 includes the findings from the study, interpretations, conclusions and recommendations. In addition, areas of future research and the limitations of the study are addressed.

# CHAPTER 2

## MARKETING AS AN EXCHANGE

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*“[T]here appears to be a growing consensus that exchange forms the core phenomenon for study in marketing.”*

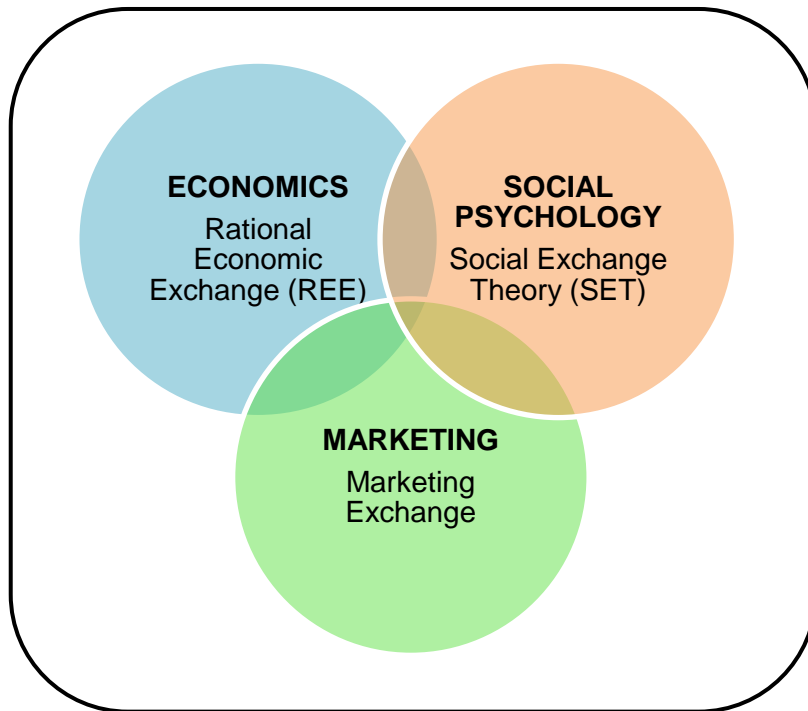
Bagozzi (1975:32)

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing lacks the depth and variety in theory possessed by its foundation disciplines, such as economics and social psychology (Murgolo-Poore *et al.*, 2003:236). In marketing, therefore, the concepts from these foundation disciplines are used (Walters, 1978:25-29). The concept of exchange originated in the field of economics (Emerson, 1976:337) (refer to Figure 2.1). According to Gillis (1999:162), a rational economic exchange (REE) occurs when a transaction involves a provider giving goods or services for a return of relative value from the receiver, in a manner that benefits the economic interests of both parties.

The concept of social exchange originated in the field of social psychology (refer to Figure 2.1). According to Blau (1964:91) and Emerson (1976:336), social exchange theory (SET) is an attempt to understand the interactions between individuals from a non-economic perspective. The combination of REE and SET forms the concept of a marketing exchange. Thus, REE deals with the transaction of goods and/or services for money, whereas SET is used to understand the symbolic (social psychological) aspect for the individuals when a transaction occurs (Bagozzi, 1975:35). (refer to Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 Marketing and its sub-disciplines**



Source: Adapted from Bagozzi (1975); Emerson (1976); Hirschman (1987); and Murgolo-Poore *et al.* (2003)

As marketing has borrowed theories from economics and social psychology (Murgolo-Poore *et al.*, 2003:236; Walters, 1978:25-29), this chapter will elaborate on REE and SET. A marketing exchange will then be explored. The combination of social psychology and marketing gives rise to the importance of consumers. The chapter will thus conclude by discussing consumer behaviour.

## **2.2 THE RATIONAL ECONOMIC EXCHANGE (REE)**

Economics is the study of how society manages the limited nature of its resources (Mankiw & Taylor, 2006:3). Economic activity is any kind of action that aims to satisfy human needs and provides compensation for one of the parties in such a way that minimum sacrifices are made (de Klerk, 1997:2). Smith (1947:12) states that, “It is the necessary, though very slow and gradual, consequence of a certain propensity in human nature which has in view no such extensive utility; the propensity to truck, barter, and exchange



one thing for another". It is part of human nature to interact and exchange goods and services with other individuals.

Rational economic exchange (REE) deals with the transfer of goods for money. In other words the costs and quantities are of importance (Blau, 1964:93). Schumpeter (1951:xvii) points out that human behaviour is left out of economics. A REE merely examines the results of behaviour in terms of variations in the quantities of goods and prices (Kirzner, 1960:80; Schumpeter, 2006:110). It is only in the social psychological disciplines that human behaviour is observed.

Walters (1978:25) explains that the understanding of consumers and their behaviour has never been a central issue of economics, and it was bound to break away. By taking into account consumers and their behaviour, marketing applies concepts founded in social psychology. Thus, SET was used to explain a marketing exchange from a social psychological viewpoint.

## **2.3 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY**

From a social psychological perspective, the exchange approach is considered as the economic analysis of non-economic social situations (Emerson, 1976:336). As already mentioned, understanding the social psychological significance is of importance to marketing because marketing exchanges have both an economic (utilitarian) and a symbolic (social psychological) aspect (see section 1.2). SET attempts to understand the behaviour of individuals when they interact with one another (Blau, 1964:91). Social interactions can take place between two individuals or within a group of individuals. Thus, SET was applied to understanding the interactions among social groups.

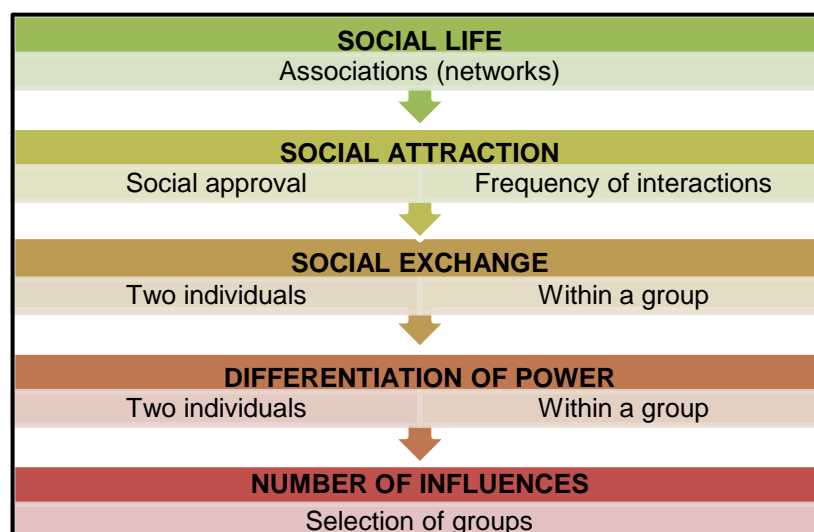
SET refers to the voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they expect to receive from others (Blau, 1964:91; Homans, 1958:606; Homans, 1961:3). Homans (1958:606), a creator of SET, explains that

individuals give in order to receive. The exchange works out to equilibrium in the sense that what may be a cost to one individual is a reward for another individual. Similarly to REE, social exchange involves costs and rewards from which the exchange tends to work out to a situation in which both parties end with a profit. Economics deals with the average consumer and does not delve into the physical or emotional characteristics of consumers.

Social psychology seeks to define and describe human behaviour in groups and social settings (Walters, 1978:26-29). Figure 2.2 depicts the stages of social interactions in the theory of social exchange (i.e. the stages that most individuals go through when interacting with others). The stages indicate the potential dynamics and influences in social interactions.

During social interactions, individuals interact with one another and can express their interests and beliefs, as well as sharing their desires. Understanding the need of individuals to interact with others stems from Murray (1938) and Maslow (1954), who contend that joining common interest groups helps individuals to enrich their lives (Donavan, Carlson & Zimmerman, 2005:33). The stages are social life, social attraction, social exchange, differentiation of power, and number of influences (as shown in Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2 Stages of social interactions**



Source: Adapted from Blau (1964); Donovan *et al.* (2005); and Homans (1958)

- **Social life**

Most human pleasures are embedded in social life (Blau, 1964:14). Social life is the associations (or networks) between people. The extent and intensity of associations depend on mutual social attraction. A social attraction is the intrinsic liking of another person and having positive feelings towards him or her.

- **Social attraction**

Individuals may be attracted to other individuals or groups because of the symbolic behaviour or social approval they receive by associating themselves with the individual or group. Alternatively, individuals may be attracted to an individual or group because of the frequency of interaction that occurs (Homans, 1958:599), as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Processes of social attraction lead to the processes of social exchange (Blau, 1964:12-21).

- **Social exchange**

Social exchange can take place between two individuals or within a group of individuals (Murgolo-Poore *et al.*, 2003:237). Hence, social exchange can be observed everywhere, not only in market relations, but also in friendships and dating relationships (Blau, 1964:88). By looking at SET from a human dating perspective, it is believed that individuals, who possess valued traits that another partner seeks or that are similar to one's own values, may end up marrying (Hirschman, 1987:100).

A good match is believed to form through some sort of selection process. Individuals select a partner on the same, similar or complementary traits that they both value. These traits are usually derived from their parents' beliefs or the way in which they have been brought up (Oppenheimer, 1988:563). Milardo, Johnson and Huston (1983:965) explain that as a couple become more involved with one another, their involvement in other social networks decreases while their attachment to their partner increases.

Whether the interaction occurs between two or more individuals (refer to Figure 2.2), for an exchange to occur, one individual must have something that another individual views as having some form of value. The individual who has an object, idea or anything of value that another individual may benefit from, will have some form of power.

- ***Differentiation of power***

Exchange processes give rise to differentiation of power (refer to Figure 2.2). An individual may have an influence over another individual. This principle applies to exchanges that are most intimate as well as to exchanges that involve the most distant social relations (Blau, 1964:22). There are fundamental differences between the dynamics of power in a collective situation and the power of one individual over another.

- ***Number of influences***

As opposed to one individual only having an influence on another individual; more than two individuals may also be in a position to influence one another. These social structures lead to the formation of classes, firms, communities, groups and societies (Homans, 1958:597).

Individuals may belong simultaneously to a number of groups and can change groups at their discretion (Blau, 1964:289). To escape isolation and be a part of social life, an individual must be able to become a member of a group. The ability to relate easily to others is not inborn, but is the result of experience and training.

The way in which individuals select a group begins early in the family, where children learn the basic imperatives of their society (Homans, 1951:314). Large groups of individuals (such as communities or entire societies) differ from smaller groups (such as a dating relationship between two individuals or immediate families).

As stated earlier, the way in which individuals interact with each other has attracted the attention of both academics and practitioners in the marketing field, in terms of issues surrounding complex exchanges, many of which can be classified as “marketing exchanges” (Murgolo-Poore *et al.*, 2003:238).

## **2.4 MARKETING AS AN EXCHANGE**

Marketing is “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that contain value for consumers, clients, partners, and society at large” (AMA, 2007). Marketing has been demarcated as a philosophy in which all activities in organisations are based around the needs and wants of consumers (Grönroos, 1989:52).

The exchange concept has predominantly been accepted in literature and suggested as an appropriate perspective from which to examine marketing transactions of both a traditional economic and non-economic nature (Hirschman, 1987:98). Thus, the concept of exchange has been included in the definition of marketing. Murgolo-Poore *et al.* (2003:237) suggest that most human dealings can be understood as a form of market exchange. In order to satisfy human needs, people and organisations are compelled to participate in social and economic exchanges with other people and organisations (Bagozzi, 1975:35).

As illustrated in Figure 2.3, when dealing with social psychology and marketing, the consumer becomes a central concept; therefore consumer behaviour plays a vital role in research. Consumer behaviour is the study of human behaviour (Williams, 1982:3). In addition, consumer behaviour focuses on how consumers make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money and effort) on consumption-related items (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:3).

**Figure 2.3 Consumer behaviour**



Source: Adapted from Bagozzi (1975); Emerson (1976); Hirschman (1987); Murgolo-Poore *et al.* (2003); Walters (1978); and Williams (1982)

## 2.5 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Human behaviour involves the entire process in which consumers interact with the environment (Walters, 1978:8). Consumer behaviour can be defined as the behaviour patterns of consumers as well as groups of consumers (such as families and organisations) in terms of the decision process, in discovering, evaluating, acquiring, consuming and disposing of products and/or services (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001:6; Du Plessis *in* Du Plessis *et al.*, 1990:11; Harrell, 1986:2). In other words, it is the study of how consumers think, evaluate and act (Foxall, 2005:15; Harrell, 1986:2).

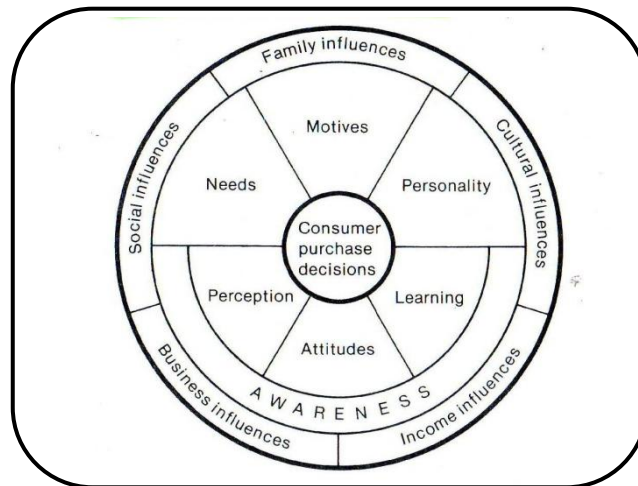
The field of consumer behaviour has advanced from a broad spectrum of disciplines, particularly from psychology and economics (Harrell, 1986:9; Walters, 1978:24; Williams, 1982:8). Consumer behaviour plays an important role in marketing. “Almost everyone is a consumer, and consumers are at the heart of the marketing process” (Harrell, 1986:9). In order to satisfy consumers’ desires, marketers should have an understanding of consumers and why they purchase certain products and/or services.

The study of consumer behaviour provides a sound basis for identifying and understanding consumers' needs (Williams, 1982:11). It is important for organisations to satisfy customers in order to increase an organisation's sales and revenues (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001:10; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:7). Marketers can use the information about consumer behaviour to design new products and services, determine appropriate prices, select methods of distribution, and build effective promotions and advertising (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001:10; Harrell, 1986:2). In addition, marketers knowing how and why consumers make certain purchase decisions, can better address the needs and wants of consumers, and generate greater customer satisfaction (Harrell, 1986:2)

To succeed in any organisation, marketers need to know everything they can about consumers – what they want, what they think, how they work and how they spend their leisure time. Marketers need to understand the personal (internal) and group (external) influences that affect consumer decisions and how these decisions are made (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:4). Marketers should know something about consumers who may ultimately become customers. To learn about consumers, an examination of the characteristics and needs of the target market should be carried out, which includes consumers' lifestyles and purchase decisions (Gerber-Nel, 2004:103; Parkhouse, 2001:306).

Figure 2.4 gives an overview of the factors that influence consumers when making a purchasing decision. Consumers are influenced by personal (internal) and group (external) factors (Gerber-Nel, 2004:83; Mullin, Stephen & Sutton, 2000:58-72; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:339). There are four basic variables that control an individual's internal thought process (refer to Figure 2.4). Internal factors influence how and to what extent people become involved and attached to a product and/or service (Gerber-Nel, 2004:83; Mullin *et al.*, 2000:56). The internal thought process includes the individual's needs, motives, personality and awareness.

**Figure 2.4 Influences on consumers' purchasing decisions**



Source: Adapted from Walters (1978)

- *Needs*. Any physical or emotional body requirement. A need is a lack of something useful, required or desired for any reason.
- *Motives*. Consumers' awareness of their needs, which give consumers a reason to act upon them.
- *Personality*. Human characteristics or traits that make consumers different.
- *Awareness*. Having knowledge of something through the senses, namely what consumers see, hear, touch, smell or feel.

Awareness can be further broken up into three variables, namely perception, attitudes and learning.

- *Perceptions*. The interpretation consumers have of objects or ideas that are observed or brought to the consumers' attention through their senses.
- *Attitudes*. Innate human feelings or points of view that pattern behaviour.
- *Learning*. Change in consumers' thoughts, responses or behaviour as a result of practice, experience or intuition.

Individuals do not function in a vacuum, and are constantly influenced by the environment. Environmental (or external) factors may influence consumers'



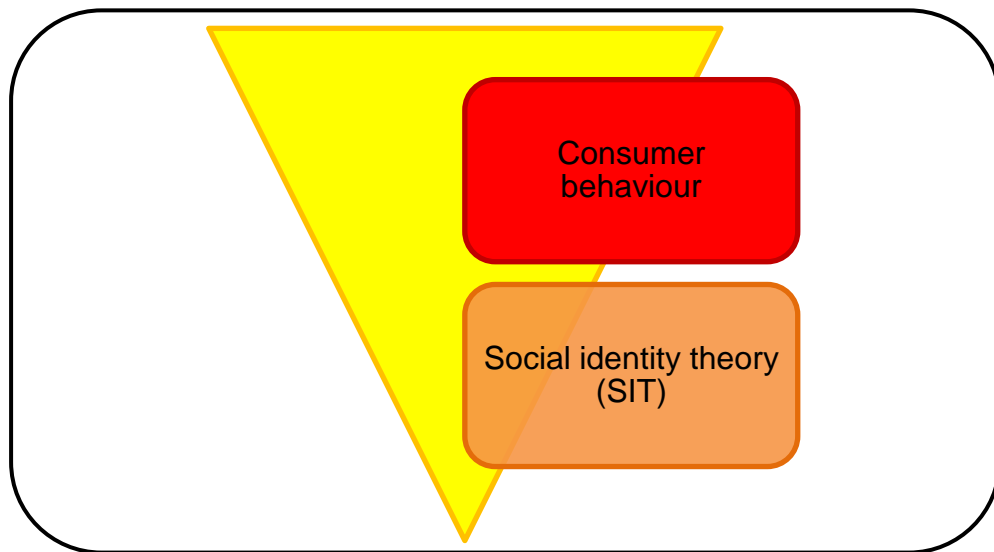
decisions with regard to a product and/or service involvement (Gerber-Nel, 2004:85; Mullin *et al.*, 2000:58). Figure 2.4 depicts the aspects that play a role and have an influence on consumers when they make their purchasing decisions (Walters, 1978:14-17). External factors that influence the individual include social, family, cultural, income and business influences.

- *Social*. Result from personal contacts other than family or business, such as church, the neighbourhood or school.
- *Family*. Influences that come from members of the household.
- *Cultural*. Shared values, beliefs, languages, symbols and traditions passed on from generations by members of society.
- *Income*. Constraints on consumers in terms of money and similar factors.
- *Business*. Direct contact consumers have with businesses, such as advertising and personal selling.

A marketing exchange is more than a mere transfer of goods; it also carries a symbolic (social psychological) aspect for consumers (see section 1.2). Understanding the symbolic (social psychological) aspect may affect the marketers' approach in terms of appealing to the relevant target market. If marketers understand the symbolic (social psychological) aspect to the target market, this may assist marketers in understanding the best way to appeal to the intended target market in terms of marketing activities (such as advertising campaigns), which ultimately could influence the consumers' decisions to make purchases (the utilitarian aspect of a marketing exchange).

It is clear that both internal and external factors influence consumers' purchasing decisions. External factors include consumers' family, culture and social influences. Individuals have a need to interact with others and join common interest groups in order to enrich their lives (see section 2.3). For a further understanding of how individuals select these groups, and also why consumers are influenced by external factors, social identity theory (SIT) was used.

**Figure 2.5 SIT in context**



Source: Adapted from Deschamps and Devos (1998); Tajfel and Turner (1986); Walters (1978); and Williams (1982)

## **2.6 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY (SIT)**

Social identity is the way individuals feel about belonging to a specific social group and the emotional attachment that occurs while being a member of that group (Tajfel *in* Deschamps & Devos, 1998:5; Tajfel, 1982:2). Hogg (2006:111) explains further that SIT is a social psychological description of how individuals become members of social groups, and the relations and processes that take place within those groups.

Individuals' self-concept is defined in terms of certain social categories, which include nationality, political affiliation or a sports team (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995:259). Individuals' self-concept is formed when individuals feel a sense of belonging. Being a part of a certain social category provides guidance for individuals in terms of who they are, what they should feel and think, and how they should behave (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011:1; Cialdini, Borden, Thorne, Walker, Freeman & Sloan, 1976:370; Hogg *et al.*, 1995:259). Thus, internal and external factors play a role in terms of which social categories individuals select.

In order for individuals to identify who they are, and to promote a positive image of themselves, they become members of social groups (Baumeister, 1991:80). The groups with which individuals associate tend to share similar points of view, common interests, beliefs and backgrounds of their own (Deschamps & Devos, 1998:2).

Individuals are able to define themselves in comparison to, and in distinction from, other social groups (Donavan *et al.*, 2005:32). Individuals have more than one “personal self” and can change slightly in order to fit into a number of groups (as explained in section 2.2.1) to which they belong (Deschamps & Devos, 1998:8; Tajfel, 1986:61). Individuals may be members of a number of different groups.

There are both in- and out-groups that exist. A group where certain individuals find they may relate to one another, and feel a sense of belonging, is referred to as an in-group. According to Turner, Brown & Tajfel (1979:187), the in-group that individuals select is based on motives other than the circumstances that are visible. Individuals will choose a particular group based on motives that relate to their personality, which in turn enhances their self-image. Groups with which they may not be able to identify are referred to as out-groups (Tajfel & Turner *in* Deschamps & Devos, 1998:8).

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

A marketing exchange is characterised not only by monetary transactions (utilitarian aspect), but also by the symbolic (social psychological) aspect. A core feature that is common in social psychology and marketing is human behaviour; thus consumers are of central significance. To understand human behaviour, consumer behaviour was used. In the consumer behaviour theory, the internal and external influences on consumers, which impact on consumers' purchasing decisions, were identified. The utilitarian aspect in a marketing exchange deals with the decisions consumers make about

purchases. Therefore, it is important to identify who influences consumers when they make their purchasing decisions.

Marketing also takes into account the symbolic (social psychological) aspect in a transaction. To gain an in-depth understanding of why consumers' purchasing decisions may be affected by certain influences, SIT became useful. According to SIT, individuals partake in social interactions and choose certain groups in order to feel a sense of belonging. Understanding the symbolic (social psychological) aspect may affect the marketers' approach in terms of marketing activities that appeal to the respective target market, which may influence the consumers' decision to make purchases (the utilitarian aspect of a marketing exchange). In the next chapter, the concepts that were discussed in this chapter will be applied to the a sub-discipline of marketing, namely sport marketing.

# CHAPTER 3

## SPORT MARKETING

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*“In sports marketing, sports represents just 50% of the equation; marketing is the other 50%, and in marketing, the cornerstone of any strategy is the customer.”*

Richelieu and Pons (2005:161)

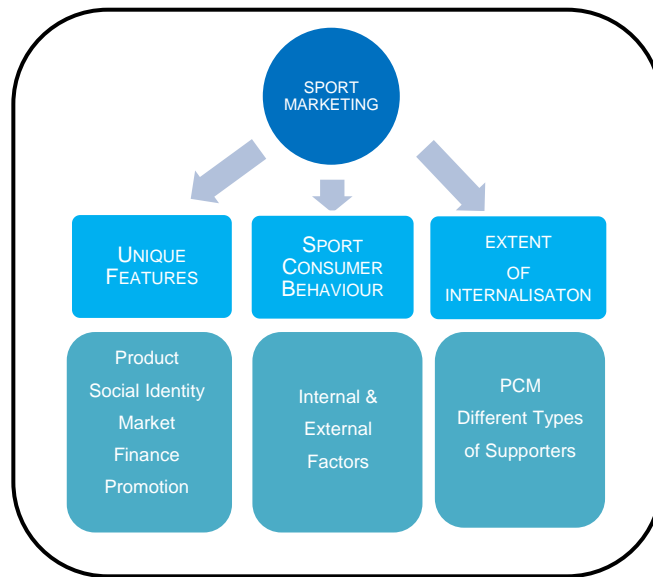
### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding of consumers is paramount no matter which sub-discipline of marketing is discussed. Consumers purchase products that not only offer some economic value to them but also offer them some social psychological benefit, such as feeling a sense of belonging (see section 1.3).

A sub-discipline of marketing that has become increasingly popular is the field of sport marketing (Gerber-Nel & Strydom, 2006:43; Madrigal, 1995:205; Shannon, 1999:518; Shank, 2002:6). Applying SIT (refer to section 2.6) to sport means explaining the way supporters feel about belonging to a specific social group (such as supporters of a particular sports team) and the emotional attachment that occurs from being a member of that group (Tajfel *in* Deschamps & Devos, 1998:5). Sport marketing is unique in the sense that supporters have a psychological connection to the product (i.e. the sports team).

In this chapter the focus is on sport marketing and supporters. The unique features, sport consumer behaviour and the extent of supporters' internalisation with a sports team, as shown in Figure 3.1, will be discussed.

**Figure 3.1 Components of sport marketing**



Source: Adapted from Funk and James (2001); Hunt *et al.* (1999); Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (2007); Richelieu and Pons (2005); and Walters (1978)

## 3.2 SPORT MARKETING

Sport marketing may be regarded as a combination of business and sport, in that both are concerned with widening their market share, building profits, and strengthening the brand (Gerber & Cant, 2010:18; Irwin, Zwick & Sutton, 1999:1; Smith & Stewart, 2010:11). Sport marketing is a process of building a highly identifiable fan base. Supporters, sponsors, media and government, pay to promote and support an organisation for the benefits of social exchange and personal, group and community identity in a co-operative competitive environment (Wakefield, 2002:5). Sport marketing has been described as the anticipation, management and satisfaction of supporters' wants and needs through the application of marketing principles and practice (Gerber & Cant, 2010:19; Parkhouse, 2001:301).

Sport plays a momentous role economically, culturally and socially, in many countries (Laverie & Arnett, 2000:225; Pons, Mourali & Nyeck, 2006:276; Richelieu & Pons, 2005:151). In many countries, sport contributes significantly to the economy, particularly in the entertainment and service industries (King,

2004; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 2007:4). In terms of culture, sport plays an important role in supporters' lives, and gives an emotional value to supporters. Sport brings the members of a community together irrespective of race, age, gender, social or economic status, which is important in today's society where fewer community and kinship ties seem to exist (Branscombe & Wann, 1991:116). In terms of the social aspect that sport carries, sport requires a high level of involvement, and provides entertainment and other sensations that are rewarding to supporters (Richelieu & Pons, 2005:151). Sport marketers are constantly trying to increase their understanding of supporters and what it is that keeps supporters' passion for sport alive.

Sport marketing is the marketing of sport products, which includes events, services and equipment (Gerber-Nel, 2004:112; Mullin *et al.*, 2000:8). Sport marketing is unique, as the elements that make up the product are different from the conventional product and/or service (Mullin *et al.*, 2007:17; Shannon, 1999:541; Smith & Stewart, 2010:3).

### **3.3 UNIQUE FEATURES OF SPORT MARKETING**

Sport marketers agree that sport has certain core characteristics that make the sport product and/or services unique (Gerber & Cant, 2010:19). Therefore, a different approach to traditional goods and/or services marketing is required. Mullin *et al.* (2007:17) suggest that sport is unique in the following areas (as depicted in Figure 3.1).

- ***Sport product***

When considering the sport product, one needs to take into account that sport players (athletes) require physical training, as well as specific facilities and equipment. The competition is playful, there is a separation from "normal" space and time, and regulation is conducted by special rules. Furthermore, sport is unique because the performance is unpredictable in the sense that the outcomes are unknown before the competition begins (Madrigal,

1995:206; Smith & Stewart, 2010:11). This means that constant hands-on management is needed to ensure an acceptable level of quality.

Sport marketing can include aspects such as ticket sales, parking, and stadium comfort. Such issues are based on services marketing. Thus, sport marketing should also include an understanding of services marketing, since supporters equate value with high levels of consumer service (Gerber-Nel, 2004:107; Shank, 2002:30).

- ***Social identity***

Supporters not only follow and/or support sports teams, they may identify with a sports team so strongly that it will form a part of their self-identity (see section 2.6). Thus, sport marketing is unique, as supporters may become psychologically connected to a sport product (i.e. a sports team).

- ***Generic market aspect***

Sport has a universal appeal in the sense that it attracts millions of viewers, both male and female, around the world (Gerber-Nel, 2004:71; Goff & Spence, 2003:2; Madrigal, 1995:205). Evidence suggests that steadily more individuals are becoming supporters (Laverie & Arnett, 2000:225). In addition, sports are global commodities, and need little translation or alteration for acceptance across cultures (Gerber-Nel, 2004:71; Wakefield, 2002:4).

- ***Financial aspect***

Sport players' performance and behaviour may sometimes be linked with their income-earning abilities. This feature is more predominant in the sports industry than in any other business enterprise (Smith & Stewart, 2010:11). In addition, athletes are scrutinised and criticised for their performances on and off the field.



The financial aspect of sport is connected to the costs involved. Sport promotions are complicated in the sense that there is an excessive amount of exposure in the media every day with regard to sport players, so much so that there is a risk that supporters may become bored with what happens in sport players' lives.

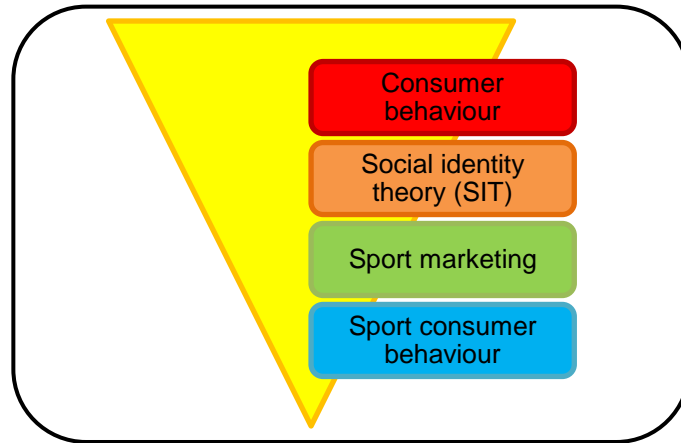
- **Promotional aspect**

Sport differs from traditional goods and/or services marketing in the sense that sport gets free promotion on a daily basis in newspapers, on radio, and on television (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011:1; Gerber-Nel, 2004:68; Mullin *et al.*, 2000:16; Smith & Stewart, 2010:8). In addition, supporters promote their teams indirectly by purchasing, wearing or displaying licensed team merchandise.

The marketing of sport consists of a bundle of elements (Gerber-Nel & Strydom, 2006:43; Mullin *et al.*, 2007:149). The core sport product has become surrounded by services and merchandise that are used to provide a more consistent and multi-faceted sporting experience (Smith & Stewart, 2010:11).

When focusing on social psychology and marketing, the central aspect is consumers, so consumer behaviour is centrally important (see section 2.4). To have a better understanding of the internal and external factors of consumer behaviour, a more in-depth consideration of consumers was needed, and SIT was used to achieve the latter. Of particular relevance in this study, was the sub-discipline of marketing, namely sport marketing. Marketers need to consider the unique features of sport marketing as well as the theory of consumer behaviour (and SIT) and relate the theory to sport consumers. Figure 3.2 puts into context how the topics touched on so far are linked.

**Figure 3.2 Sport consumer behaviour in context**



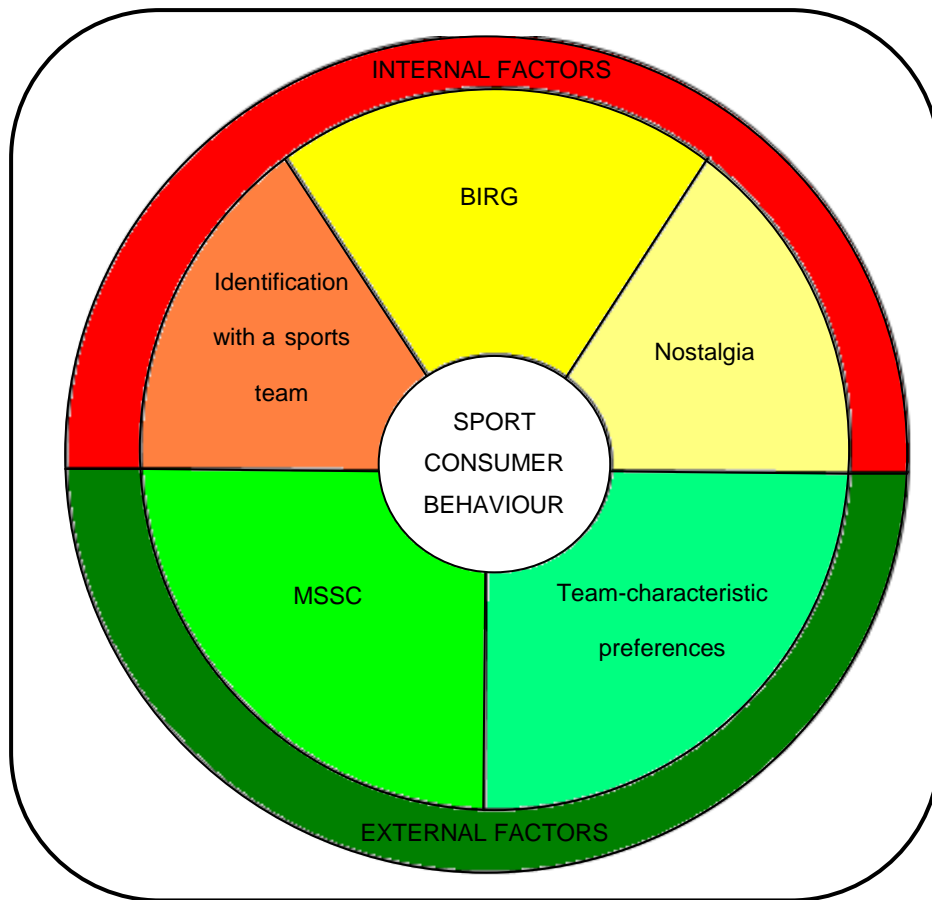
Source: Adapted from Deschamps and Devos (1998); Funk *et al.* (2003); Mullin *et al.* (2007); Parkhouse (2001); Tajfel and Turner (1986); Walters (1978); and Williams (1982)

### 3.4 SPORT CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Similarly to consumer behaviour (discussed in section 2.5), sport consumer behaviour focuses on understanding supporters' desires and needs (Gerber-Nel, 2004:83; Funk *et al.*, 2003:200; Parkhouse, 2001:304). As the aim of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, sport consumer behaviour was of relevance. Sport consumer behaviour seeks to understand supporters of competitive sports teams, in terms of their attitudes and behaviour towards sports teams and sporting events, in order to enable sport marketers to package and deliver sport products and services most effectively (Funk & James, 2006:189).

Both internal and external factors may influence supporters' purchasing decisions (refer to Figure 3.3) (Gerber-Nel, 2004:84). In terms of supporters' internal factors, the psychological aspects that were examined included supporters' identification with a sports team, Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) and nostalgia. The aforementioned factors deal with supporters' needs, motives, personality and awareness (see section 2.5). External factors that may influence supporters' motives for making sport-related purchases were explained by the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) and team-characteristic preferences.

**Figure 3.3 Sport consumer behaviour**



Source: Adapted from Aiken and Koch (2009); Cialdini, Borden, Thorne, Walker, Freeman and Sloan, (1976); Kollat, Blackwell and Engel (1970); Sierra and McQuitty (2007); Trail and James (2001); and Walters (1978)

### **3.4.1 INTERNAL FACTORS**

As mentioned earlier, similar to consumer behaviour (see section 2.5), sport consumer behaviour has internal factors related to supporters' needs, motives, personality and awareness (refer to Figure 3.3).

- *Needs*. Supporters may feel the need to support a particular sport. This is explained by the identification that supporters have with a sports team.
- *Motives*. Motives are internal forces that direct behaviour towards fulfilling needs. Although motives are considered to be internal factors,

the motives for consuming sport are particularly influenced by external factors, which are explained in the next section by the MSSC.

- *Personality*. The type of sport that supporters follow may be a reflection of their personality. For example, aggressive individuals may be drawn to sports such as rugby or boxing. This is also explained by the identification that supporters have with a sports team (refer to Figure 3.3).
- *Awareness*. This means having knowledge of something through the senses, meaning what supporters see, hear, touch, smell or feel.

As mentioned in section 2.5, awareness can be further broken up into three variables, namely perception, attitudes and learning.

- *Perception*. The interpretation that supporters have of objects or ideas (such as sports teams and certain stadiums) is a complex process of selecting, organising and interpreting information based on supporters' past experiences (Shank, 2002:161). This can be further explained by the concept of nostalgia (refer to Figure 3.3).
- *Attitude*. Supporters' internal feelings or points of view that may pattern behaviour are expressed by the concept of BIRGing, which is discussed in detail in the following section.
- *Learning*. When supporters have knowledge about a certain sports team, they often become more involved and attached to the respective sports team. This attachment that may be felt by supporters is explained by the identification that supporters have with a sports team.

Based on the above components, every supporters bond may differ in terms of the identification that is formed with a sports team, the extent of BIRGing, and the amount of nostalgia that is felt (refer to Figure 3.3).

#### **3.4.1.1 Identification with a sports team**

Reference groups are formed when an individual or a group of individuals interact and influence the attitudes or behaviour of one another (Kollat,

Blackwell & Engel, 1970:456, Walters, 1978:409). Social psychologists believe that it is in such reference groups that individuals gain their values, norms and perspectives (Kollat *et al.*, 1970:458). Supporters may identify with sports teams which enhance their self-image and give them a sense of belonging to society (Wann, Keenan & Page, 2009:113). Therefore, sports teams were considered to be reference groups.

Supporters' identification is a deep psychological affiliation that is formed with a sports team or sport player, and forms a basis for supporters to determine their self-esteem and self-worth (Gerber-Nel, 2004:68; Wakefield, 2002:2). The amount of social interaction that suits each supporter varies (O'Connor & Rosenblood, 1996:515). When the amount of interaction deviates from the supporters' desired range, they will try to either increase or decrease their social association with the sports team (Donavan *et al.*, 2005:40; Niedenthal, Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1985:576; Setterlund & Niedenthal, 1993:769).

The reasons for following sport differ among supporters. This affects the way in which supporters follow and identify with a sports team (see section 2.6). If supporters have similar characteristics to those of a sports team, supporters would be able to relate more closely to the team (Donavan *et al.*, 2005:31; Pritchard, Stinson & Patton, 2010:68).

The similarity that supporters have with a sports team may be subtle. The identification with a successful sports team or sport player may be due to sharing the same city or country, race, gender, religion, physical similarities (for example a tall person), or having incidental contact with a sport player (for example seeing a sport player at a restaurant). Such similarities may cause supporters to BIRG with the team or the sport player (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976:366).

### **3.4.1.2 Bask in Reflected Glory (BIRG)**

Another internal factor (as illustrated in Figure 3.3) is to Bask in Reflected Glory (BIRG), which is to share in the glory of another individual's success.

Schafer (1969:65) explains that supporters see their team as an extension of the self, and the team's success is interpreted as personal success. The team's failure is regarded as personal failure (Donavan *et al.*, 2005:32; Madrigal, 1995:210). Thus, BIRGing may enhance supporters' self- and social image. The phenomenon may occur even if supporters have not helped to bring about the sports team's success (James *et al.*, 2002:215; Stets & Burke, 2000:227). Cialdini *et al.* (1976:367) explain that supporters display such behaviour not only because it builds their own self-esteem but also because supporters may believe it enhances their image in the eyes of observers.

Supporters are usually attracted to qualities such as teamwork, strength and success. When a sports team portrays these characteristics, supporters will often attach themselves psychologically to that sports team (Pritchard *et al.*, 2010:67). Supporters' attachment, to a sports team that has the qualities mentioned, may portray their connection with the sports team by gloating over the winning sports team's success and chanting "We have won," not "They have won".

In addition, wearing face paint and clothes with the colours or the logo of the team, and using bumper stickers, banners and flags, proclaim supporters' affiliation to the winning team. The reason for purchasing team-related paraphernalia is to remind supporters of the connection that they have with something good; this in turn will positively affect supporters' self-esteem (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976:375). Supporters may also take part in behaviour such as engaging in verbal or even physical conflict with supporters of opposing teams (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976:367; Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson & Kennedy, 1992:724; Madrigal, 1995:207; Wann & Branscombe, 1990:112).

Sport marketers should try to get supporters to BIRG with a sports team. When supporters relate strongly to a team, they are less price-sensitive, more reluctant to switch to another team, and resistant to negative press, and may partake in purchasing team-related merchandise (Pritchard *et al.*, 2010:68). The reason supporters choose to support a sports team or purchase team-

related merchandise may also be explained, in part, by the concept of nostalgia.

### **3.4.1.3 Nostalgia**

Nostalgia, depicted in Figure 3.3 as an internal factor, is the bittersweet yearning for the past (Baker & Kennedy, 1994:169; Hirsch, 1992:390). Nostalgia is a complex feeling, emotion or mood that stems from the reflection of the past by means of objects, people, experiences or ideas, which individuals connect with a pleasant past event in their lives (Holak & Halvena, 1998:218; Sierra & McQuitty, 2007:105).

Nostalgia does not relate to a specific memory but rather to an emotional state. This idealised state means that individuals can never return to this past joy, because it has never truly existed. The present reality, no matter how good, can never be as good as an ideal image that is recalled in the mind (Davis, 1979:37; Hirsch, 1992:390).

Family, friends and home serve as powerful stimuli for nostalgia (Baker & Kennedy, 1994:169; Holak & Halvena, 1992:380). It has been suggested that childhood and adolescence are particularly fruitful periods for nostalgic meditation (Holak & Halvena, 1992:380). Nostalgia can contribute to an individuals' identity because of the shared memories that they may have experienced in a particular social group (Brown & Humphreys, 2002:143; Tajfel, 1978:62). Within certain contexts, there are layers upon layers of symbolic meanings that objects may represent, which are usually derived from experiences in the past (Baker & Kennedy, 1994:169).

Researchers agree that nostalgia frequently occurs when remembering leisure activities such as sporting events (Feldman & Hornik, 1981:416; Goulding, 2001:565). It is believed that nostalgia plays a role with supporters who tend to look back at personal experiences. This helps in the development of a psychological attachment to a sports team (Funk & James, 2006:190). Whether the specific team wins or loses is irrelevant to supporters, although

winning is an important factor. When supporters look back, they recall personal meanings and periods that relate to the sport both on and off the field (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:3).

The importance of nostalgia in sport marketing is that it allows sport marketers to break away from the clutter of advertising that individuals are exposed to every day (Holbrook & Schindler, 1991:330). Sport marketers are continuing to research nostalgia because of the influence it has on sport consumer behaviour (Muehling & Sprott, 2004:25). Nostalgia may play a role in influencing supporters' motives for purchasing sport-related goods and services, as nostalgia brings back memories from the past.

### **3.4.2 EXTERNAL FACTORS**

External factors are environmental variables that may influence supporters (see section 2.5). These factors include social, family, cultural, income and business influences.

- *Social*. There are homogeneous groups of individuals in society who share similar values, lifestyles and behaviour. Social class is important to sport marketers as it is a predictor of the types of sport that supporters may follow.
- *Family*. Supporters may be influenced to follow a particular sport or team because members of their family follow that specific sport.
- *Cultural*. Supporters may follow a certain sport because it is a common recreation in their society.
- *Income*. Income may determine the way that supporters follow sport, such as listening to the broadcast on the radio, or looking in the newspaper or on the Internet, or going out to watch sport in public places or with friends.
- *Business*. Direct contact that supporters may have with businesses or reference groups may influence their desire to follow certain sports.



External factors may guide supporters' sport-related purchase decisions. The MSSC and team-characteristic preferences will now be discussed as this may encourage supporters' decision to take part in consuming sport.

#### **3.4.2.1 Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC)**

Supporters' motives when selecting their favourite sports team usually exist because of individuals' social psychological needs (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218). Motives describe why a goal is pursued, and express individuals' enduring interests and values. Motives influence individuals' drive to act (Funk, Mahony & Ridinger, 2002:34; Gore & Rogers, 2010:561). The MSSC was used to describe the external factors which may help explain supporters' behaviour (refer to Figure 3.3).

The MSSC was developed by Trail and James (2001) and has been used by Wann, Grieve, Zapalac and Pease (2008) in order to understand consumers' motives for partaking in sport-related behaviour. The MSSC consists of the following elements.

- *Achievement*. Supporters may enjoy the entertainment that sport provides by watching their team beat rivals, or their team succeeding.
- *Acquisition of knowledge*. Some supporters may enjoy acquiring knowledge about the team in terms of the statistics and previous records of the wins and losses that the team has experienced. This was similarly explained by the internal factor, learning (see section 3.4.1).
- *Aesthetics*. Aesthetics is explained as supporters enjoying the artistic elegance or skills and techniques of the sport.
- *Escape*. Supporters may have the motive of watching sport to get away from their everyday routine, or to distract them from personal difficulties or stressful times.
- *Eustress*. Eustress is the feeling of positive stress, also known as drama or arousal. This can be regarded as a motive for supporters who want to experience excitement and stimulation by watching sport.

- *Family*. Family is an external factor (see section 3.4.2). Some supporters may watch sport in order to spend quality time with other family members.
- *Physical attractiveness*. Supporters may be motivated to follow sport because of the sex appeal of players who are regarded as being physically attractive.
- *Physical skills*. Supporters may enjoy watching good performance and skilled execution by the team, as well as the techniques used by the players.
- *Social interaction*. Many supporters enjoy watching sport with other people and the social situation that sport provides.

#### **3.4.2.2 Team-characteristic preferences**

Another external factor used in this study (refer to Figure 3.3) was supporters' perspective of what they feel are the essential characteristics for a sports team to possess. Gaining such information may help sport marketers to have a better understanding of what supporters look for in a team.

Previous research conducted by Aiken and Koch (2009) has identified the characteristics in team preferences as the following:

- *Geographic Association*. Geographic association identifies the country in which supporters live, and the nostalgia that may be felt. This influences supporters' preference to support a particular sports team.
- *Key Players*. This factor assesses whether supporters perceive key players as an essential element in their choice of a sports team to support.
- *Social Affiliation*. Social affiliation stems from the SIT (refer to section 2.6) and whether supporters select sports teams based on psychological reasons. Social affiliation focuses on whether the choice of team that supporters make is based on supporters' affiliation with certain group memberships.
- *Tradition*. Aiken and Koch (2009) identify tradition as playing an important part for supporters, as it brings back nostalgia, and this is something that supporters cherish because it relates generally to positive feelings (see

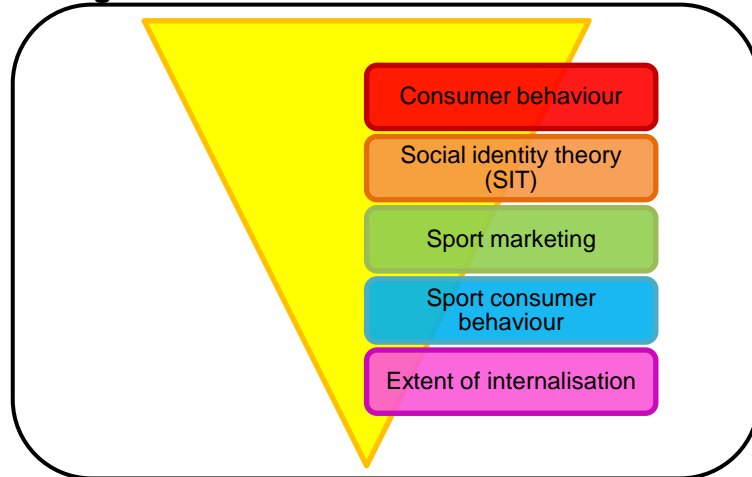
section 3.4.1.3). Tradition deals with the history that supporters associate with a sports team. They are able to identify the logo, the motto, sponsors, and the team's nickname, and have knowledge of the team's past victories (Bridgewater & Stray, 2002).

- *Winning Percentage*. Winning can be considered the most intuitive factor influencing supporters' team preference. Supporters' ultimate desire is to see their team succeed, and to enjoy the positive feelings that come from winning (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976:366). This enhances their self-image, causes supporters to BIRG (see section 3.4.1.2), and ultimately keeps supporters backing a specific team.

Thus far, consumer behaviour has been dealt with, and the sub-discipline of marketing, namely sport marketing, was presented (refer to Figure 3.4). The features of sport marketing were highlighted, as the features of sport are unique, sport marketers should pay particular attention to supporters and their sport consumer behaviour. Having knowledge about sport consumer behaviour may help sport marketers to gain a better understanding of what supporters look for in a sports team. The internal and external factors that were of particular relevance to supporters were addressed.

In addition, sport marketers should understand that there are various types of supporters with varying expectations to be achieved, in order to meet the respective supporters' satisfaction levels (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011:50). In other words, sport marketers should be aware that the crowds of supporters are not homogeneous (Robinson, Trail, & Kwon, 2004:168). To gain a clearer understanding of the different types of supporters that sport marketers may wish to target, knowledge of the extent of internalisation that supporters have to a sports team is necessary. In the following section, the extent of internalisation that supporters feel towards a sports team is discussed (refer to Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4** Flow diagram

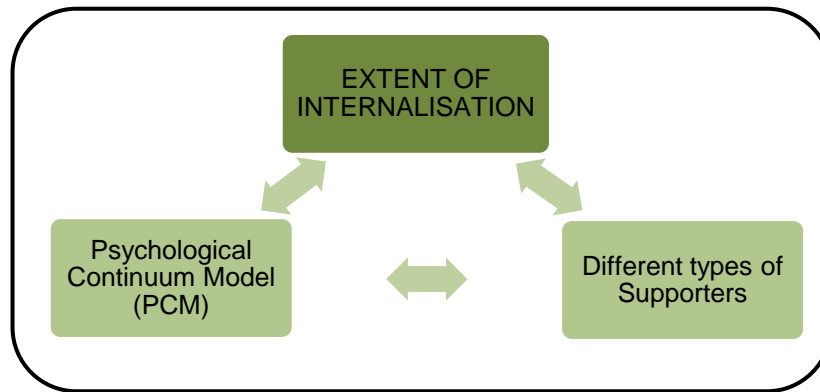


Source: Adapted from Deschamps and Devos (1998); Funk and James (2001); Funk *et al.* (2003); Hunt *et al.* (1999); Mullin *et al.* (2007); Parkhouse (2001); Richelieu and Pons (2005); Tajfel and Turner (1986); Walters (1978); and Williams (1982)

### **3.5 EXTENT OF INTERNALISATION**

As stated, the purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, therefore an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have was relevant as it results in different types of supporters. The Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) was used to assess the extent of supporters' internalisation with a sports team. In addition, the different types of supporters were considered to assess the strength of the psychological connection that different types of supporters have to a sports team (refer to Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.5 Components that make up supporters' extent of internalisation with a sports team**

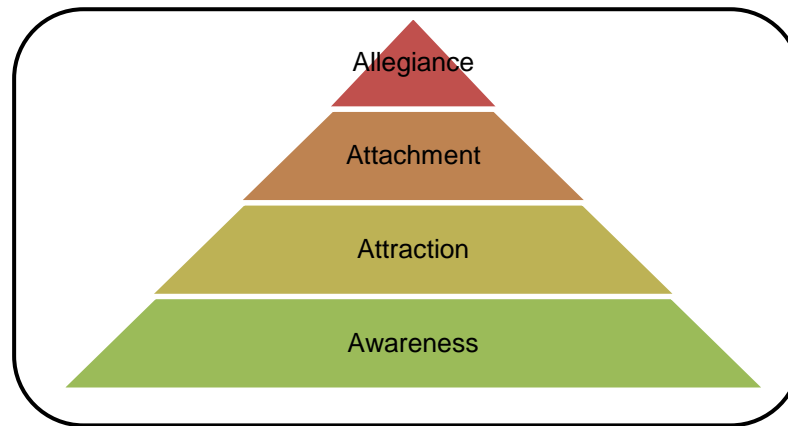


Source: Adapted from Funk and James (2001); Hunt *et al.* (1999); Richelieu and Pons (2005); and Tajfel and Turner (1986)

In section 3.4 the internal and external factors in sport consumer behaviour were discussed. Identification with sports teams, BIRGing and nostalgia have been used to explain the internal factors that may influence the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team (see section 3.4.1). The external factors in terms of the MSSC and team-characteristic preferences (section 3.4.2) were explained in order to understand supporters' willingness to consume sport. Similarly to the way SIT was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the social psychological significance in a marketing exchange (see section 2.5), the PCM was used to understand how the internal and external factors of sport consumer behaviour influence supporters' psychological connection to a sports team.

### **3.5.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTINUUM MODEL (PCM)**

Funk and James (2001) developed the PCM (see section 1.7) to understand supporters' psychological connection to a sports team (as depicted in Figure 3.6) and how the connection ultimately changes from mere awareness to allegiance to a specific team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4).

**Figure 3.6 Psychological Continuum Model (PCM)**

Source: Adapted from Funk and James (2001)

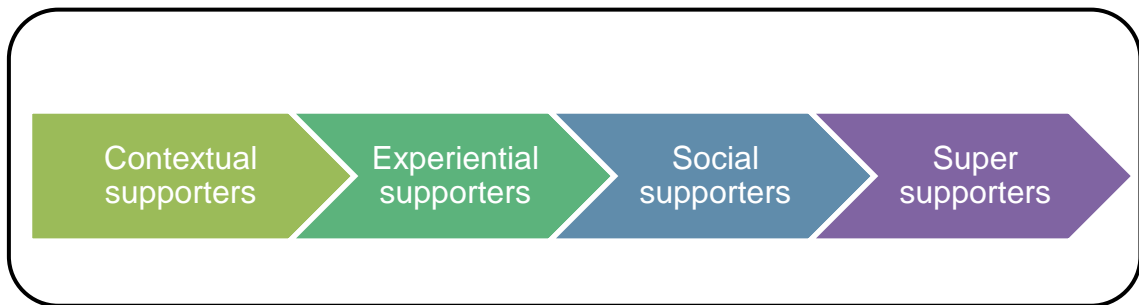
Each stage represents a different level of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team. Figure 3.6 suggests that a supporter first becomes aware of a sports team, then attracted to a sports team which leads to attachment and hopefully allegiance would finally occur. By understanding that supporters develop a psychological connection to a sports team in this way, sport marketers are able to segment consumers based on their psychological connection they have (using the PCM), and can develop marketing activities that best meet the needs and desires of supporters in these stages (James *et al.*, 2002:222; Volkov *et al.*, 2008:1). Thus, sport marketers should understand that there are various types of supporters who have varying expectations to be achieved in order to meet their satisfaction levels (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011:50).

### **3.5.2 DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUPPORTERS**

There is little agreement among academics and practitioners in terms of defining a supporter, given the uniqueness of sport and of the sport consumers (Funk *et al.*, 2002:34; Tapp, 2003:203). Consumers are individuals with specific needs that have to be satisfied, and who have the financial ability to satisfy them (Gerber-Nel, 2004:74). For the purposes of this study, a distinction is made between sport consumers and supporters (see section 1.4). Supporters fall along a continuum in respect of the strength of the psychological connection they have to a sports team, as shown in Figure 3.7 (Hunt *et al.*, 1999:442; Richelieu & Pons, 2005:153).

Supporters can be classified anywhere between the two extremes of the continuum, where contextual supporters are considered as having a weak psychological connection with a sports team and super supporters have a strong psychological connection. The different categories depicted in Figure 3.7 are now discussed.

**Figure 3.7**                      **Types of supporters**



Source:     Adapted from Hunt *et al.* (1999) and Richelieu and Pons (2005)

- ***Contextual supporters***

Contextual supporters will support a particular aspect of the game (for example an event such as the World Cup) and when that aspect disappears, they are no longer supporters, thus they are limited by time considerations. In addition, contextual supporters will support their local teams and only go to matches in their area, thus contextual supporters are also limited by geographic constraints (Hunt *et al.*, 1999:443-444).

This group of supporters watch or attend a match for the social aspect, in other words to spend time with family, friends and groups, and to share in the experience (Richelieu & Pons, 2005:155). Contextual supporters are interested in the quality of the match, and would like a high-scoring game.

- ***Experiential supporters***

Experiential supporters have an attachment to the team and can identify strongly with the in-group, namely the sports team (see section 2.6) (Hunt *et*

*al.*, 1999:444). Experiential supporters represent a high level of sensation-seeking. These supporters attend and watch a lot of sporting events, but rarely purchase sport magazines. They participate and watch sports frequently for the thrill and excitement, thus they watch sport to experience the sensations (Richelieu & Pons, 2005:154).

- ***Social supporters***

Social supporters have a higher degree of attachment and self-identification with the in-group (Hunt *et al.*, 1999:446). This group of supporters will buy medium to high amounts of memorabilia (in order to express their sense of belonging to a team) and will attend a fair number of matches while also watching a fair number of live matches on TV (Richelieu & Pons, 2005:154). Social supporters are interested in learning about the sports team and gaining knowledge (see section 3.4.1).

- ***Super supporters***

Super supporters feel that the way in which they can portray their self-identification with the in-group is by partaking in activities such as attending matches, spending lots of money on tickets, paying for sport channels such as DSTV, buying sport-related magazines and the memorabilia associated with the sports team, and purchasing brands associated with the sports team (Hunt *et al.*, 1999:446; Richelieu & Pons, 2005:153).

Sport marketers should identify different types of supporters as it may aid in distinguishing marketing segments, and appropriate marketing activities may be established for supporters, based on the psychological connection that they have to a sports team (Volkov *et al.*, 2008:4; James, Kolbe & Trail, 2002:222). As stated, the purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, therefore an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have was relevant as it results in different types of supporters.



Although many academics and practitioners agree that attachment is a psychological connection, it is important to consider an individual's behavioural patterns which precede and follow attachment. In addition, supporters' attitudes are of relevance, as their attitudes guide their behaviour (Boninger, Krosnick & Berent, 1995:62; Funk, Haugvedt & Howard, 2000:126; Krosnick, Boninger, Chuang, Berent & Carnot, 1993:1132). Thus, by acknowledging that there are different types of supporters, and particularly taking into account their behavioural patterns, sport marketers may gain a sense of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this chapter was to exemplify the uniqueness of sport marketing. The unique features of sport in terms of the product, the financial and promotional aspect were examined. It is clear that sport holds an emotional and psychological meaning for supporters.

Supporters were thus a central topic in this chapter. In order to conceptualise sport consumer behaviour, supporters' internal and external factors were explored. The extent of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team was explained further by means of the PCM. In addition, the different types of supporters were addressed, because the focus of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

The next chapter will pay particular attention to the attraction stage of the PCM and explain how Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was used for the purposes of this study.

# CHAPTER 4

## ATTRACTION AND ATTACHMENT TO A SPORTS TEAM

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*“One can assume that if [individuals] are happy in their relationship, they are most likely to persist in the relationship. Attachment is believed to be the key issue in understanding why some relationships last while others fade.”*

Rusbult *et al.* (1998:358)

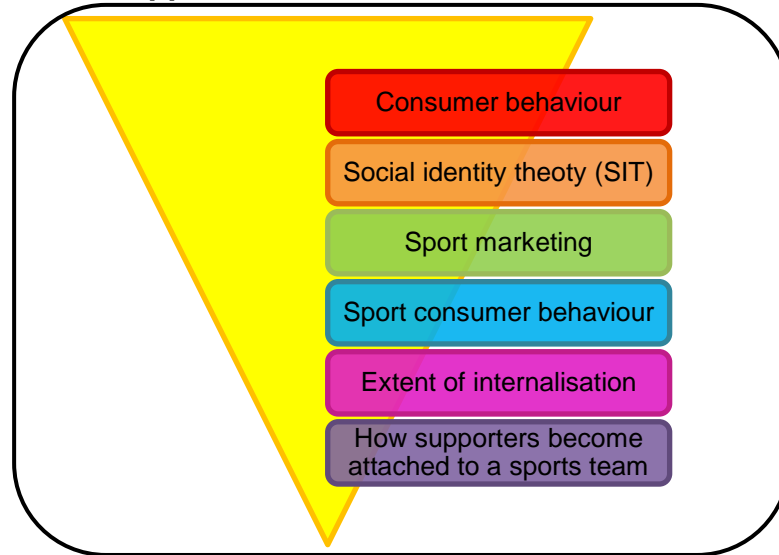
### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Many researchers use SIT (see section 2.6) to explain the way supporters feel about how they belong to a specific social group (such as supporters of a particular sports team) and the emotional attachment that occurs while being a member of that group (Tajfel *in* Deschamps & Devos, 1998:5). As this study focused on how supporters become attached to a sports team, an understanding of supporters' psychological connection that they have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was relevant as it results in different types of supporters. The extent of supporters' internalisation with the in-group (or in this case the team) was examined (refer to Figure 4.1). In addition, the scope of this chapter was the attraction stage of the PCM (see section 3.5.1) which ultimately leads to the attachment stage.

Very few researchers have examined the progression from the attraction stage to the attachment stage and the factors that may cause attachment of a relationship with a sports team (Funk & James, 2001:140). The research that has been conducted by academics and practitioners will be discussed. This will be followed by an explanation of the model that was used in this study,

which was derived from Funk and James' (2001) PCM and Rusbult's (1980a) investment model. Rusbult's (1980a) investment model will also be explained.

**Figure 4.1 How a supporter becomes attached in context**



Source: Adapted from Deschamps and Devos (1998); Funk and James (2001); Funk, Mahony and Havitz (2003); Hunt *et al.* (1999); Mullin *et al.* (2007); Parkhouse (2001); Richelieu and Pons (2005); Tajfel and Turner (1986); Walters (1978); and Williams (1982)

## 4.2 STRENGTH OF THE BOND

Researchers have used SIT (see section 2.6) to explain how individuals may become members of a certain in-group, and that in-group can have a social psychological effect on the individuals, in that individuals take the values and/or beliefs of that in-group as an aspect of their self-concept. Thus, some individuals may, to some degree, internalise an in-group as a part of who they themselves are.

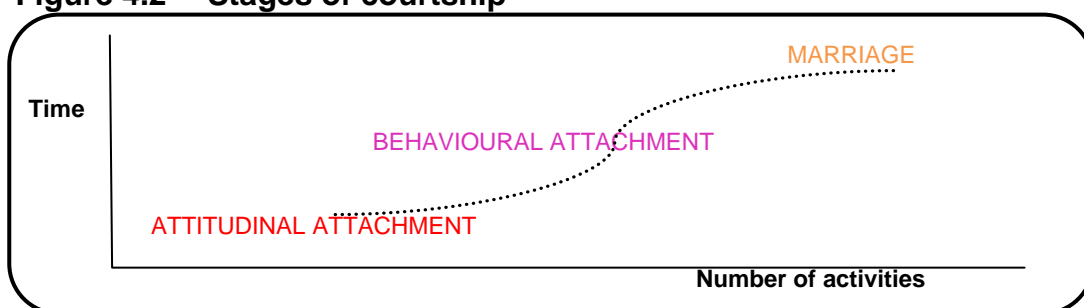
In section 2.3, an example of a social exchange was illustrated with a dating relationship and how individuals select partners with similar traits to their own. When individuals become more attached to one another, relationships with other social networks decrease, while the attachment to their chosen partner increases (Huston, Surra, Fitzgerald & Cate, 1981:56). The relationship may eventually result in marriage. In the opening quote of Chapter 1, supporters'

attachment to a sports team was compared to a marriage (Mahony *et al.*, 2000:15).

As stated in section 1.5, social scientists have become increasingly interested in understanding the determinants of attachment in order to maintain on-going relationships (such as Johnson, 1973; Levinger, 1974; Rusbult, 1980a; 1983, Rusbult *et al.*, 1998). The westernised approach to the stages of courtship may differ somewhat across western sub-cultures, however the common stages of courtship involve a certain level of emotional attachment (an attitude) and behavioural attachment to the maintenance of the relationship. Likewise, attitude and behavioural aspects may be considered important to the maintenance of attachment that supporters have to a sports team.

Johnson (1973:399) suggests that the courtship begins when individuals start to form an emotional (attitudinal) attachment (refer to Figure 4.2) to another individual. At this beginning stage, there is the minimal amount of behavioural attachment that occurs. Over time, attitudinal attachment increases in order to maintain the relationship, and this leads to increasing levels of behavioural attachment. When individuals become aware of the amount of behavioural attachment they have contributed to the relationship, their attitudinal attachment may further increase because of the awareness of the amount invested in the relationship and the costs involved should the relationship end. In this way the decision of marriage may be made.

**Figure 4.2 Stages of courtship**



Source: Adapted from Huston *et al.* (1981) and Johnson (1973)

Similarly to the courtship process, supporters can form a relationship with a sports team. If supporters have a favourite sports team, they may invest more into that relationship. For those supporters who have strong, favourable attitudes towards a sports team, the sports team will become psychologically important to supporters, and they will progress to the next stage in the PCM (Funk & James, 2001:119) (see section 3.5.1).

In a study conducted by James *et al.* (2002:223), it is explained that the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team takes place regardless of income, gender or age. In the next section, other research that has been conducted by academics and practitioners is discussed, and how it was relevant to this study.

#### **4.3 SUPPORTERS AND IDENTIFICATION WITH A SPORTS TEAM**

To gain a thorough understanding of the research that previous researchers have conducted, journal articles and books were accessed to understand the relevant topics to this study and to assess gaps and opportunities in the literature (see section 1.12.1). Funk and James' (2001) Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) has been used and adapted in this study.

For the purposes of this study, the PCM is thus considered as the foundation stages that a supporter goes through before allegiance to a sports team is attained. Based on the PCM stages, namely the stages of awareness, attraction, attachment, and allegiance (see section 3.5.1), prior research has been conducted by academics and practitioners within the sport marketing literature that have focused on different aspects of these stages. As the objective of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, particular attention was on past research concerning attraction and attachment.

Various researchers have focused on the determinants of attraction, as it is believed that the motives for consuming sport influence supporters' attachment to a sports team (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Hill & Green, 2000; Kwon, Trail & Anderson, 2005; Madrigal, 1995; Robinson *et al.*, 2004; Ross, 2006; Trail *et al.*, 2003). Thus, based on the findings from research studies, the motives that attract supporters to a sports team were identified (see section 4.6.2).

Researchers have investigated the components that make up attachment (Kwon & Armstrong, 2004; Matsuoka, 2001; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993b). Other researchers have focused on the underlying properties that make up an attitude (Bassili, 1996; Funk & James, 2004; Funk & Pastore, 2000; Funk *et al.*, 2000; Krosnick *et al.*, 1993) (see section 4.6.3). It may be of interest for sport marketers to understand why individuals become attached to a sports team, because attachment reflects persistence in an activity and can also be used as a guide for retention strategies in order to retain supporters (Casper *et al.*, 2007:254; Gerson, 1999:52). It is much more costly to get new customers than to keep existing ones (Rosenberg & Czepiel, 1983:47; Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004:46).

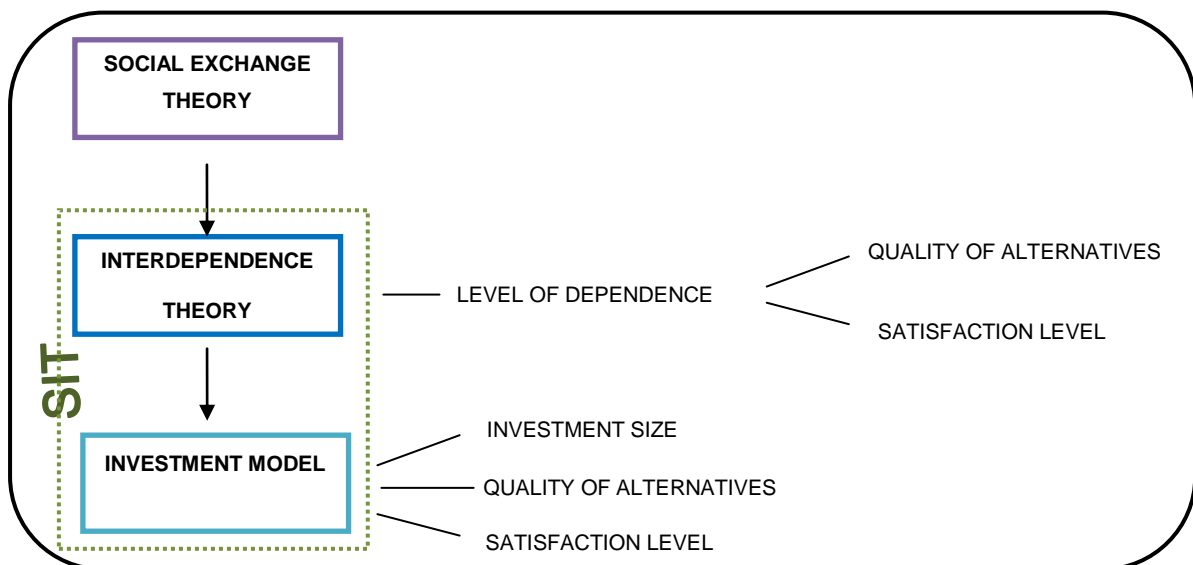
Funk and James (2006) have revised their PCM. The revised PCM paid particular attention to the attachment to a sports team, but the method, model and constructs differed from this study because the investment model was not used. What their study found, which is particularly relevant to this study, was that nostalgia and winning play a role in the formation of attachment to a sports team (see section 3.4).

As stated, the model that was adapted and used in this study to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, was based on Funk and James' (2001) PCM and Rusbult's (1980a) investment model. How Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was derived will first be discussed. Then how it has been adapted with the PCM is explained for the purposes of this study.

## 4.4 INTERDEPENDENCE THEORY

As mentioned, social scientists have become increasingly concerned with identifying the variables that determine attachment, to understand why individuals maintain and persist in relationships (Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81) (see section 1.5). Many researchers feel that in order to understand why individuals persist in a relationship, the variables should consist of the determinants and consequences of positive affect such as attraction, satisfaction or love (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:358). The variables that social scientists have suggested may also be applied to supporters and used to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Figure 4.3 shows the development of three theories that have been derived within social sciences that were of particular relevance to this study.

**Figure 4.3 Development of the investment model**



Source: Adapted from Rusbult (1980); Tajfel and Turner (1986); and Thibaut and Kelley (1959)

Interdependence theory has been adapted from SET (see section 2.3). The interdependence theory is based on a dyad (a two-person) relationship. As stated earlier, the way in which individuals select another individual to form a relationship can be described in terms of SIT (see section 2.6). The purpose of the interdependence theory is to analyse, predict and explain interactions in

the relationship, and the consequences of the two individuals concerned, by using an outcome matrix (similar to benefits and costs that are used in SET) (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959:10; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:369).

**Figure 4.4 Interactions and consequences in a dyad relationship (outcome matrix)**

		Prisoner A's Decision	
		Confess	Remain Silent
Prisoner B's Decision	Confess	Prisoner A gets 8 years Prisoner B gets 8 years <b>CELL 1</b>	Prisoner A gets 20 years Prisoner B goes free <b>CELL 2</b>
	Remain Silent	Prisoner A goes free Prisoner B gets 20 years <b>CELL 3</b>	Prisoner A gets 1 year Prisoner B gets 1 year <b>CELL 4</b>

Source: Adapted from England (2008); and Mankiw and Taylor (2006)

As mentioned earlier, the interdependence theory is founded in the social sciences literature. That being said, the interdependence theory uses the same concept as the game theory - which is derived from mathematical and economic disciplines (Ross, 2010). Thus, the game theory, and likewise the interdependence theory, is the study of how individuals behave in a situation in which each individual, when deciding what actions to take, must consider how others might respond to that action. To explain this theory in practical terms, the prisoner's dilemma is often used, and it is illustrated by means of an outcome matrix, as shown in Figure 4.4 (Mankiw & Taylor, 2006:329; Thibaut & Kelley, 1978:31).

Mankiw and Taylor (2006:329) explain the prisoner's dilemma as being the following. The police have enough evidence to convict two prisoners of a minor crime, and each prisoner is to spend a year in jail (refer to cell 4 in Figure 4.4). However, the police suspect that the two prisoners are also involved in another, more serious robbery, but lack the evidence to convict them of the major crime. The two prisoners would be questioned by the police in two separate rooms.



At the moment, prisoner A can be locked up in jail for one year. However, if prisoner A confesses to the major crime and implicates prisoner B, prisoner A has immunity and will go free, while prisoner B will get 20 years in jail (cell 3 in Figure 4.4). If both prisoners confess to the major crime, no testimony is needed, the cost of a trial can be avoided, and each prisoner will get a sentence of 8 years (cell 1 in Figure 4.4).

Each prisoner has two strategies available (refer to Figure 4.4): either to confess or to remain silent. The sentence each prisoner gets depends on the strategy that he or she chooses and also on the strategy chosen by the other prisoner.

The outcome matrix thus represents the respective consequences should one of the four choices be made by one of the prisoners (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:353). The consequences distinguish between the positive components (rewards) and the negative components (costs) (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959:10).

The interdependence theory relates to individuals' social situations and their particular goals and motives, and aims to explain individual's behaviour in long-term relationships (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:352). Similar to the prisoner's dilemma, individuals will persist in a relationship if they feel that the outcome value of the relationship exceeds what they expect if they end it (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959:10; Rusbult, 1980a:173).

#### **4.4.1 LEVEL OF DEPENDENCE**

In addition to the outcome matrix, the interdependence theory takes into consideration the level of dependence that one individual has on another individual. The level of dependence is the extent to which individuals need, or rely on, a relationship to attain desired outcomes (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). The level of dependence is important as individuals' outcomes are influenced to a certain extent by their partner's actions (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:355).

An individual's dependence on another individual increases when two conditions are met: satisfaction and quality of alternatives (refer to Figure 4.3). The first condition is that high satisfaction is achieved in a relationship, which determines the extent to which the partner fulfils the individual's needs. The second condition is the decision which is the best option of the quality of alternatives, which takes into consideration whether the individuals' needs may be fulfilled in a better way outside the current relationship (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). Increased dependence might cause persistence in interactions as well as longevity in relationships, because the partner is fulfilling important needs for the other individual (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:369).

## **4.5 INVESTMENT MODEL**

The investment model has been formed from the concepts derived from the research that was based on the interdependence theory (refer to Figure 4.3). Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was used to understand social behaviour, how and why individuals become attached, and why they pursue on-going close relationships (see section 1.5). The investment model, like the interdependence theory, uses satisfaction level and quality of alternatives to explain why individuals persist in relationships. However, rather than taking into consideration rewards and costs, it takes into consideration investment size (Rusbult, 1980a:173; Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:358).

Rusbult's (1980a) investment model measures four constructs. Attachment is the independent variable and investment size, satisfaction level and quality of alternatives are regarded as the dependent variables (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:358). Attachment is the tendency to maintain a relationship and feel psychologically attached to the respective relationship (Rusbult, 1983:101-102).

**Figure 4.5 Investment model**



Source: Adapted from Rusbult (1980a; 1983)

### **4.5.1 INVESTMENT SIZE**

According to Rusbult (1980a), becoming attached involves investing numerous resources into a relationship. Rusbult's (1980a) investment size variable is used to measure the resources that are attached to a specific relationship that would decline in value or be lost should the relationship terminate. Researchers use the interdependence theory to take into account the outcome value, which consists of costs and rewards (Rusbult, 1980a:173), and they use the investment model to consider investments. The difference between rewards and costs and investments is that once invested, investments cannot be removed from the relationship, whereas rewards and costs are not as strongly tied to a relationship (Rusbult, 1983: 102-103).

The size of the investment will thus be based on the size and importance of the resources attached to the relationship (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). Researchers use the investment size to take into consideration both intrinsic and extrinsic resources. Intrinsic investments are resources that are directly put into the relationship; these include time, money and emotional effort.

Extrinsic investments arise when a relationship is formed. Such investments include mutual friends, shared memories, material possessions and activities, and objects or people uniquely associated with the relationship (Rusbult, 1980a:174; Rusbult, 1983:102). Investments increase the likelihood of individuals becoming attached and help in keeping an individual in the relationship (Rusbult, 1983:102).

## **4.5.2 QUALITY OF ALTERNATIVES**

Researchers use quality of alternatives to consider what is perceived by individuals to be the best alternative. Individuals base their decisions on the extent to which their most important needs may be met by other relationships (such as friends, family members or being alone) as opposed to the relationship in which they are currently involved (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). Individuals become attached when they view the alternatives which they have to be poor in comparison with what they have currently. Rusbult (1983:102) contends further that individuals' perceptions of their alternatives decline over time, and the individuals become attached to the current relationship (see section 4.2).

## **4.5.3 SATISFACTION LEVEL**

Satisfaction is the feeling that a product, object or service has met or exceeded an individual's expectations (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2008:5). In terms of a relationship, satisfaction takes into consideration the positive and negative experiences. Satisfaction is influenced by the way in which a partner fulfils the other partner's most important needs (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). Greater satisfaction in a relationship should increase the likelihood of attachment and the willingness to maintain the relationship (Rusbult, 1983:102). Individuals become increasingly attached when high satisfaction is experienced (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359).

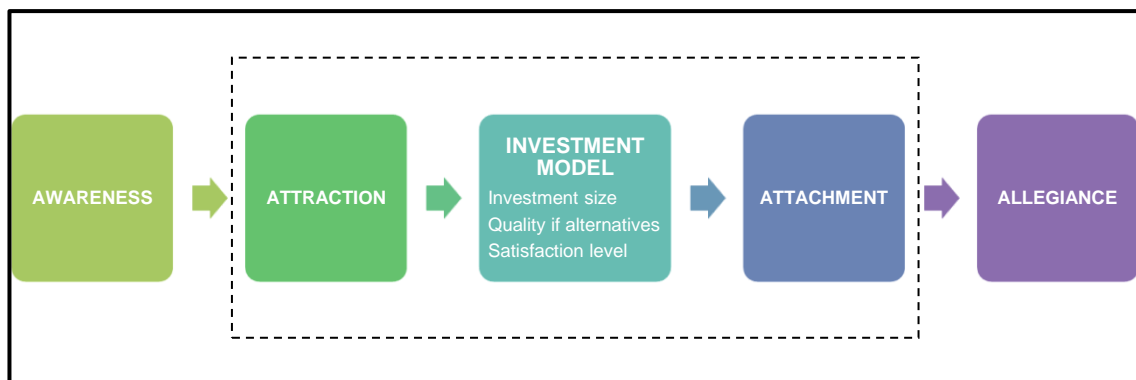
Rusbult (1980a) uses the investment model to theorise that attachment not only takes into account satisfaction of the current relationship and individuals' quality of alternatives, but also takes into consideration investment size (Rusbult, 1980a:174). As a relationship develops, Rusbult *et al.* (1998:359) explain that partners should invest more resources into the relationship in the hope that it will improve the relationship. Therefore, attachment should increase as the relationship becomes more "valuable" (in the sense that it is more rewarding, with fewer costs), as alternatives decrease in quality, and as

the magnitude of the individuals' investment in the relationship becomes larger (Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81). How the investment model is adapted for the purposes of the present study is now explained and illustrated.

## 4.6 EXPLANATION OF THE ADAPTED MODEL

For the purposes of this study, the PCM and the investment model were used (see section 1.7). Each stage in the adapted model is now discussed.

**Figure 4.6 Adapted model used in the study**



Source: Adapted from Casper *et al.* (2007); Crosby and Taylor (1983); Funk and James (2001); Iwasaki and Havitz (1998; 2004); Johnson (1973); Rusbult (1980a; 1983); Scanlan *et al.* (1993a); Scanlan *et al.* (1993b); Trail and James (2001); and Volkov *et al.* (2008)

### 4.6.1 AWARENESS

The first stage, awareness, occurs when individuals know that certain sports teams exist, but do not yet have a specific favourite team (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218; Funk & James, 2001:121) (see section 3.5.1). Awareness may occur from a very early age when a child is dressed in certain clothing with a sports logo on it, or plays with balls, gloves or other sports paraphernalia distinct to a particular sport or sports team. Awareness comes into existence merely by individuals realising that a sports team exists, even if no interest in the sport prevails (Funk & James, 2001:125-127).

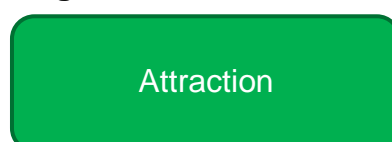
## 4.6.2 ATTRACTION

The next stage, the attraction stage, occurs when supporters acknowledge that they have a favourite sports team. At the attraction stage, supporters may watch sport on TV, attend matches, and wear the team apparel (Funk & James, 2001:121-130). Supporters may also know the match schedule and be able to discuss the results of the games with others. It has been suggested by Holt (1995:2) that supporters participate in such activities to show others they are a part of a group, and not part of a rival group. Their support for a particular sports team may be strong whether or not they actually attend matches (Mahony *et al.*, 2000:16). At this stage, supporters merely support a favourite team and do not absorb the team into their self-concept (Funk & James, 2001:140).

Supporters' motives when selecting their favourite sports team usually stem from their social psychological needs (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218). As stated earlier, motives describe why a goal is pursued, and express an individual's enduring interests and values. Motives are important as they influence a person's drive to act (Funk *et al.*, 2002:34; Gore & Rogers, 2010:561) (see section 3.4.1).

The Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC) was developed by Trail and James (2001) to help understand consumers' motives for sport consumption. MSSC (see section 3.4.2.1) would apply to the attraction stage of the PCM. Of particular relevance for the purposes of this study was the MSSC's concept of eustress (which can be considered as describing the entertainment aspect of sport) and social interaction.

### Figure 4.7 Attraction stage



Source: Funk and James (2001); Scanlan *et al.* (1993a); Scanlan *et al.* (1993b); and Trail and James (2001)

To measure respondents' attraction to fistball in this study items that were used have been adapted from the research study conducted by Woo *et al.* (2009:47), as shown in Appendix C. At the attraction stage of the PCM, the connection that supporters have to a sports team is fairly low, and should situational factors change or alternative entertainment options arise, supporters are likely to change their attraction to the sports team. Thus, at the attraction stage, the connection is not necessarily durable or stable (Funk & James, 2001:130). Sport marketers should note that different types of supporters (see section 3.5.2) may move from the awareness stage of the PCM, or from the attraction stage, to the attachment stage, thanks to promotional efforts when a team wins or if there is a special event such as a World Cup, or perhaps because of the quality of the players in a team.

For the purposes of this study, once supporters were attracted to fistball, it was thus suggested that their investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level (see section 4.5) would influence supporters becoming attached to a fistball team. To help measure supporters attachment to a sports team, the researcher needed to take into account supporters attitude and behaviour in the situation or social environment in which supporters found themselves (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003:352). Thus, social psychology was once again used.

#### **4.6.3 ATTACHMENT**

Attachment is individuals' behavioural intent and a psychological connection (Johnson, 1973:397; Rosenblatt *in* Rusbult, 1983:102). It is the intent to persist in a relationship (Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:359). From a psychological perspective, attachment can be defined as the binding of individuals to behavioural acts (Crosby & Taylor, 1983:414; Kiesler & Sakumura, 1966:349, Pritchard *et al.*, 1999:334). In terms of defining attachment from a social psychological perspective, attachment is conceptualised as the relative strength of individuals' identification with, and the involvement in, a particular relationship or organisation (Pritchard *et al.*, 1999:334).

The attraction stage of the PCM deals with the extrinsic side, in the sense that it deals more with the physical features. Physical features include things such as the benefits of a team winning, players in the team, and identification with the team (as discussed in section 3.4). The attachment stage along the PCM is thought of as taking on an intrinsic (internal) psychological meaning (Funk & James, 2001:132).

Attachment occurs when supporters' psychological connection with a specific sports team strengthens (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218). The strength of the attachment felt by supporters for the sports team is based on psychological and physical features associated with the sports team (Funk & James, 2001:121). How supporters connect with a team will vary. Understanding supporters' psychological connection that they have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was relevant in this study as it results in different types of supporters (see section 3.5.2).

Different researchers have focused on different aspects of attachment. For the purposes of this study, the way in which Johnson (1973) describes attachment was used, as it incorporated most of the findings from different fields such as psychology, sociology and leisure research. Johnson (1973:395) describes attachment as a multi-dimensional construct that consists of three main components (see Figure 4.8): attitudinal, behavioural and cognitive components. The attitudinal component of attachment considers individuals' disposition, the behavioural component of attachment takes into account the individual's attachment by the actions that they make, and the cognitive component of attachment emphasises individuals' awareness and knowledge (Crosby & Taylor, 1983:414; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:330).

**Figure 4.8 Attachment stage**



Source: Crosby and Taylor (1983); and Johnson (1973)



- ***Attitudinal component of attachment***

Several researchers describe attachment as an attitude that a supporter has to a sports team, and have focused particularly on the attitudinal component of attachment (see section 4.3). Attitudes are feelings, thoughts or actions towards social objects (Bassili, 1996:638). Attitudes are learned. They are relatively enduring, and will influence behaviour (Funk & James, 2004:3). In addition, attitudes may be resistant to change (Crosby & Taylor, 1983:414). To assess the impact of an attitude on thought and behaviour, one needs to consider the strength of the attitude (Bassili, 1996:637). Individuals vary in the strength of their attitudes; this has commonly been referred to as attitude strength (Boninger *et al.*, 1995:61).

It has been found that strong attitudes have a larger impact on thought and behaviour than weak attitudes (Bassili, 1996:637, Funk *et al.*, 2000:127; Krosnick *et al.*, 1993:1132). Strong attitudes are persistent over time and tend to be more resistant to change. In addition, strong attitudes are more prone to biasing information processing and influences on perceptions (Krosnick, *et al.*, 1993:1132; Bassili, 1996:638). Funk and James (2001:137) contend that attachment to a sports team reflects an attitude, and suggest that:

[The attitude] persists over time, resists counter attitudinal information, biases cognitive processing and guides behaviour. Moreover, this attitude toward a team is internally consistent with other core attitudes, values, self-concept, information processing and behaviour.

The attitude that supporters feel towards a team will vary among supporters, and determines the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team (Funk & James, 2001:134). This was important for the purposes of this study, which was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Thus, an understanding of supporters' psychological connection that they have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was relevant as it results in different types of supporters.

Attitudes have a strong impact on information processing, which can influence satisfaction. Attitudes can also have an impact on behaviour, which can influence their investment size (Krosnick *et al.*, 1993:1132). It is important to consider supporters' attitude, as their attitude is believed to influence their persistence over time, resistance to changing support of other teams, and their thinking, as well as guiding their behaviour (Boninger *et al.*, 1995:62; Funk *et al.*, 2000:126). Supporters' attitude is important as it can influence whether or not they are attached, which may eventually lead to allegiance to a sports team. For the purposes of this study, supporters' attitude was measured by assessing their feelings and potential actions towards a fistball team (see Appendix A).

- ***Cognitive component of attachment***

In terms of cognition, individuals may change the way they think and feel between 12 and 15 years of age, and again between 15 and 20 years of age (Moschis, Moore & Stanley, 1984:413). Cognitive development and social learning have been described as the reasons for attachment and allegiance to a brand. Flavell (1970:250) describes the development that an individual goes through during this period as being caused by developmental changes and increased exposure to the media. Adolescents have increasing experience with the market place, which is associated with an increasing variety of needs for products and services, which in turn may result in formation and change in the individual's cognition. Individuals' cognition, namely their thoughts and feelings, may influence individuals' attitude toward particular brands.

In addition, during the adolescent stage of their life, individuals are exposed not only to their family's views but also to the opinions of their friends. It is important to note that the exposure which individuals receive (in terms of the amount of media and socialising with friends) has an effect on their purchasing decisions (see section 2.5). For the purposes of this study, cognitive attachment was measured by asking respondents questions (see Appendix A) regarding the number of hours they spent watching television,

reading newspapers, watching the news, and socialising with friends, all of which might have an influence on their purchasing decisions.

- ***Behavioural component of attachment***

Measures of the behavioural component of attachment should be incorporated with measures of the cognitive component of attachment when measuring attachment in leisure activities (Gunter & Gunter, 1980:366). Sociologists are particularly interested in the behavioural component of attachment (Crosby & Taylor, 1983:414). Behaviour reflects a positive attitude towards the team and is relatively stable across purchasing decisions (Jacoby & Kyner 1973:3). The way in which behaviour can be measured is in terms of the time and/or intensity of effort spent in pursuing an activity. Such activities that measure behaviour include the frequency of participation, money spent, distance travelled, ownership of material goods (such as equipment, books, and memorabilia), and number of memberships (Stone, 1984:211). In this study, the behavioural component of attachment was measured by means of supporters' frequency of participation in activities regarding fistball (see Appendix A).

#### **4.6.4 ALLEGIANCE**

Day (1969:31) explains that attachment is what leads supporters to show allegiance to a team. Funk and James (2001:135) contend that the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team will result in consistent and enduring attitudes and behaviour that will lead to allegiance to that specific team (see section 1.7.4). Allegiance is shown when supporters are consistent and continue to support the specific sports team no matter what the circumstances. Thus, irrespective of circumstances such as the team's performance, what other people feel about the team, and the players in the team, supporters who show allegiance will remain loyal (Trail *et al.*, 2003:218; Funk & James, 2001:121).

Allegiance has been described as devotion to someone, a group, a cause or the like (Funk & James, 2001:134). Allegiance exists when supporters regularly support a sports team and purchase sport-related paraphernalia (Day, 1969:35). In addition, supporters who show allegiance have strong and favourable attitudes towards a team and have a fairly extensive knowledge of the sports team they support (Funk *et al.*, 2000:132; Gladden & Funk, 2001:68).

Sport marketers' ultimate goal is for supporters to show allegiance to a sports team (Pritchard *et al.*, 1999:333). Attachment and allegiance behaviours are accompanied by positive attitudes towards the organisation. Most sport marketing activities have focused on targeting supporters that are attached and who show allegiance to specific sports teams (Donavan *et al.*, 2005:32; Pritchard *et al.*, 1999:344).

Inducing supporters to show allegiance to sports teams is important for sport marketers for three reasons. One reason is that allegiance to a team ensures a stable following even when the team's performance is not on par. The second reason is that if supporters feel allegiance they are most likely willing to pay a premium price for the sports team's merchandise. The third reason sport marketers should attempt to encourage supporters to show allegiance is the opportunities which go beyond the core product, in other words, product extensions (Gladden & Funk, 2001:67).

## **4.7 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. To do so, Funk and James' (2001) PCM and Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was adapted and applied for the purposes of this study. By understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team the PCM was used, and to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, the investment model was applied.

The research that was carried out, the way in which the target market was defined, and how the study was conducted, are explained in the next chapter. Thus, Chapter 5 presents the methodology of how this study was conducted.

# CHAPTER 5

## METHODOLOGY

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*“Research methodology occupies a position of unique importance. A methodology does not simply frame a study but it identifies the research tools and strategies (i.e. resources) that will be employed, and relates their use to specified research aims.”*

Oxbridge researchers (2010)

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing research is the systematic and objective identification, collection, analysis, and dissemination of information undertaken to improve decision making related to identifying and solving problems or opportunities in marketing (ESOMAR, 1999; AMA, 2004). The task of marketing research is to assess the information and provide management with relevant, accurate, reliable, valid and current information (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:6). In addition, marketing research is conducted to reduce any uncertainties when it comes to decision making (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:6; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:5).

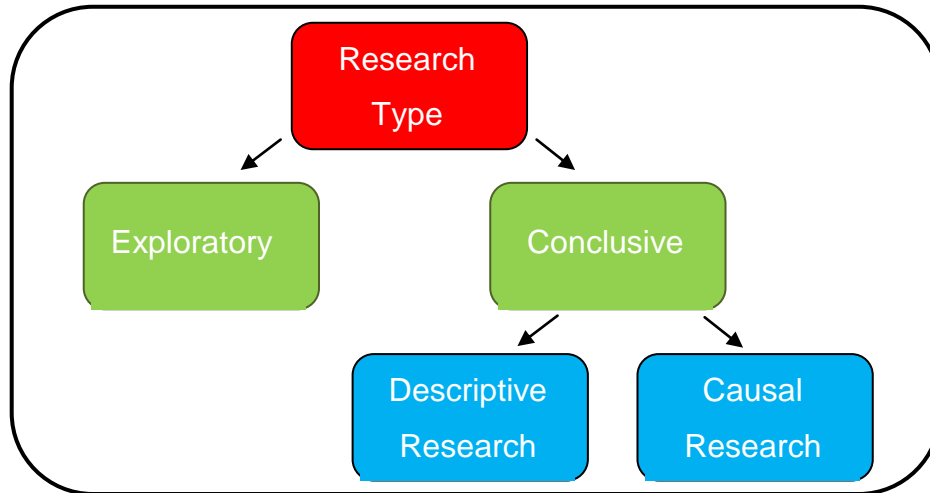
The focus of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The PCM and, specifically, the investment model variables were adapted and used to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. In this chapter, the marketing research process is discussed, and how it pertains to an experimental research design.

### 5.2 TYPES OF RESEARCH

According to Aaker, Kumar and Day (2001:72) there are two types of research – exploratory and conclusive (refer to Figure 5.1). A marketing study

may involve more than one type of research (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:85). In this research study, exploratory and causal research were applied.

**Figure 5.1 Different types of research**



Source: Adapted from Malhotra (2002)

Exploratory research explores the problem situation (Malhotra, 2002:84). It is conducted to gain insight and ideas into the problem or to see potential business opportunities (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:54). Exploratory research is used when management realises that a problem exists but does not yet understand why (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:79; Malhotra, 2002:84). Exploratory research is conducted with the idea that additional research will provide more conclusive evidence (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:54). Once exploratory research aided in defining the reason for a study (as in Chapter 1), conclusive research may be applied.

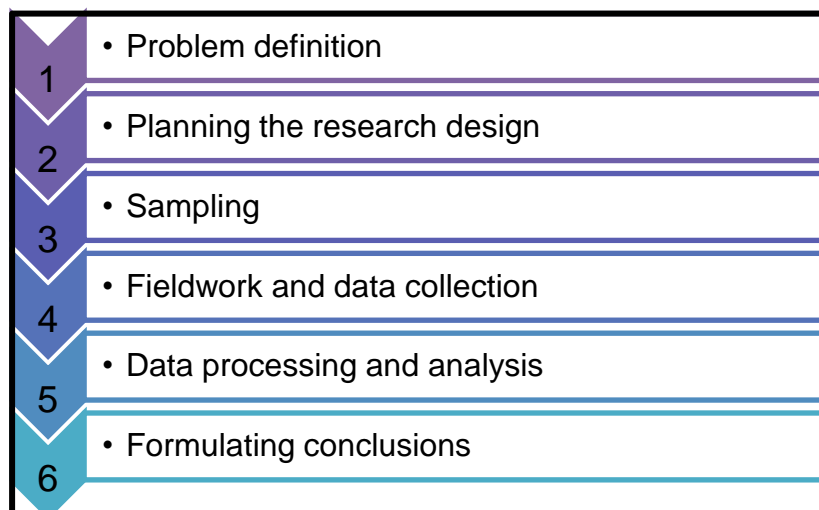
Conclusive research is conducted to assist the decision-maker in determining, evaluating, and selecting the best course of action for a given situation. Conclusive research consists of descriptive and causal research (Malhotra, 2002:84). Descriptive research describes characteristics of objects, people, groups or the environment, and attempts to create an image of a given situation (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:55). Causal research seeks to identify cause-and-effect relationships. Experiments hold the greatest potential for inferring cause-and-effect relationships (Malhotra, 2002:220; Zikmund *et al.*,

2010:257). As the purpose of the study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, causal research was applied.

### 5.3 MARKETING RESEARCH PROCESS

As depicted in Figure 5.2, a marketing research process consists of various steps. The first step in the marketing research process is defining the problem. Planning the research design is the second step, followed by sampling. The fourth step in the research process consists of data being collected, followed by the data processing and analysis. The final step is formulating conclusions (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:5).

**Figure 5.2 Marketing research process**



Source: Adapted from Zikmund *et al.* (2010:60)

For the remainder of the chapter a detailed discussion is given on how the marketing research process was applied in this study to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.



## **5.4 PROBLEM DEFINITION**

Defining the problem is a process that includes evaluating the nature of the marketing problem, identifying opportunities that decision-makers need, identifying information that is already available, as well as mentioning gaps in the information, and stating research objectives (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:15; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:112).

### **5.4.1 DEFINING THE PROBLEM**

The first and most important step in the research process is defining the problem (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:54; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:32; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:61). In Chapter 1, the paucity in research with regards to sport supporters' psychological connection to sport teams was framed and the reason for the study was stated, namely to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

### **5.4.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

After a problem has been defined, it needs to be translated into something actionable by means of research objectives (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:62). Research objectives are the goals that will be achieved by conducting the research (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:68; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:63). Formally defining the problem and translating the problem into actionable research objectives should be done properly in order for the remainder of the research process to be effective (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:104).

The main research objective in this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. As variables such as investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level in the investment model have been applied by researchers to assess sport participant's attachment to a sport (Casper *et al.*, 2007:256), they were applied for the purposes of this

study too, in terms of assessing how sport supporters become attached to a sports team. The secondary objectives were to:

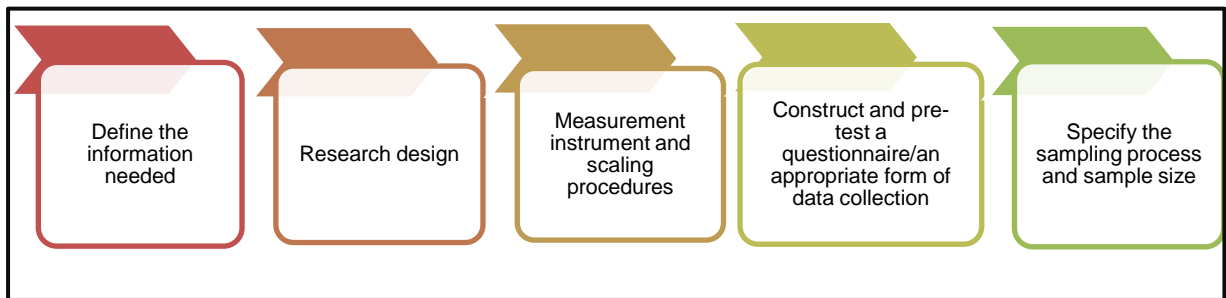
- assess how investment size influences supporters' attachment to a sports team;
- assess how quality of alternatives influences supporters' attachment to a sports team;
- assess how satisfaction level influences supporters' attachment to a sports team.

After the research objectives had been selected, propositions were formed to explain logical links among the secondary objectives. For the purposes of this study, the propositions formulated were as follows:

- P<sub>1</sub>: Investment size has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>2</sub>: Quality of alternatives has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>3</sub>: Satisfaction level has an effect on sport supporters' attachment
- P<sub>4</sub>: Any combination of the above has an effect on sport supporters' attachment

## **5.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Once the research problem is clearly defined, the research design needs to be planned (Malhotra, 2002:82). The research design (refer to Figure 5.3) is the framework or plan of action for how the research will be carried out (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:90; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:72). It specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the necessary information to solve the marketing problems, which is categorised into secondary and primary research (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:64).

**Figure 5.3 Steps in the research design**

Source: Adapted from Malhotra and Birks (2000)

### 5.5.1 DEFINING THE INFORMATION NEEDED

The first step in the research design (as shown in Figure 5.3) is defining the information needed for the purposes of the study. Secondary research and primary research were therefore conducted.

#### 5.5.1.1 Secondary research

Secondary research allows the researcher to evaluate how research has developed over the years. It is essential to take into account what research has already been investigated and suggestions for further research. Thus, secondary research is useful as it illustrates what has already been done and allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the topic at hand and the direction to go in. For the purposes of this study, secondary research was collected to make sure that information that had been collected for previous research fitted with the particular study at hand (Struwig & Stead, 2001:80; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:160). The purpose of conducting secondary research was to gain an overview of what sport marketing entailed. Collecting previous information aided in determining which aspects, other than focusing on the sport marketing field, were significant for this specific study.

Secondary research was conducted by means of investigating journal articles, books, and articles written by professionals in the industry. A summary of the secondary research conducted for purposes of this study was addressed in

Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. As secondary research did not directly answer the research question, primary research needed to be conducted.

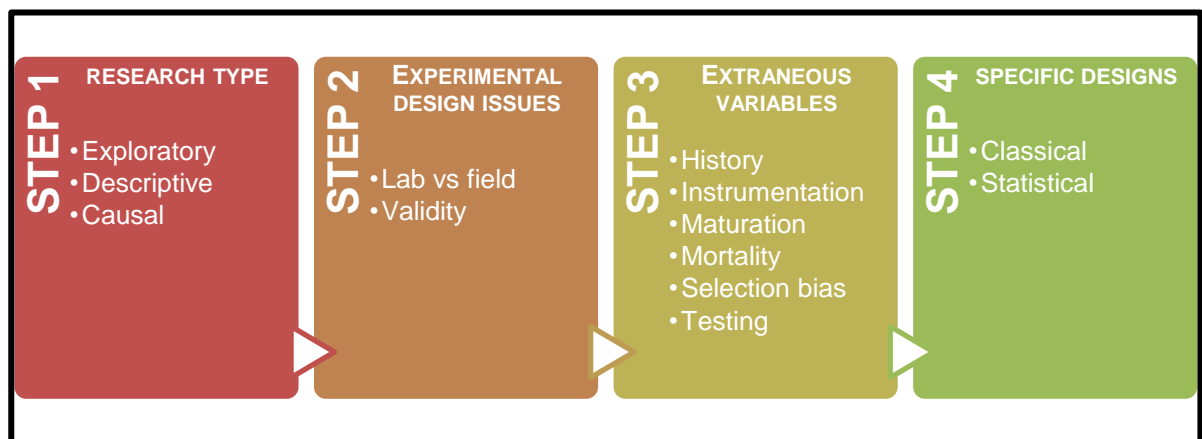
### 5.5.1.2 Primary research

Primary research is new data specifically collected for the research project (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:177; Struwig & Stead, 2001:80). Primary research is made up of quantitative and qualitative data. Primary research needs to be conducted in order to gain the necessary information that is relevant for a specific study that is being undertaken. Qualitative data includes methods such as focus groups, interviews and case study analyses; whereas quantitative data includes observations, questionnaires and experiments (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:60; Struwig & Stead, 2001:86-102; Botha, 2010). As stated in Chapter 1, the primary research method that was used in this study was an experiment. Figure 5.4 illustrates the steps within a research design. How each of the steps were applied in this study will be discussed next.

## 5.5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN FOR EXPERIMENTS

As depicted in Figure 5.4, marketing researchers should take a number of considerations into account when designing an experiment. For the purposes of this study the process of formulating an experiment was applied as follows.

**Figure 5.4 Formulating an experiment**



Source: Adapted from Aaker *et al.* (2001); Iacobucci and Churchill (2010); Malhotra (2002); Shiu *et al.* (2009); and Zikmund *et al.* (2010)

### **5.5.2.1 Type of research used in this study**

As stated, the primary research method used in this study was an experiment. An experiment can provide more convincing evidence of causal relationships than exploratory or descriptive types of research (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:104). To illustrate causality the only method was by means of an experiment (refer to Figure 5.1). The purpose of conducting an experiment is to identify the relationships among different variables. A variable is any observable and measurable element of an item or event that can change from one instance to another, in terms of value, magnitude or strength, or in direction (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:273; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:114).

Causality can be shown in an experiment given that the researcher has the ability to control certain variables (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:104; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:257). The researcher manipulates one or more independent variables while other variables remain constant, and at the same time the researcher can observe the effects on the dependent variable(s) (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:257).

For the purposes of this study, the main objective was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. To achieve this objective, Rusbult's (1980a) investment model was adapted (see section 4.5). The investment model consists of three independent variables, namely investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level (see section 4.5) which were manipulated in this study. The dependent variable in this study was attachment. For each of the three independent variables from the investment model, manipulations were derived in the experiment to infer the causal relationship that the independent variables have on attachment (the dependent variable).

### **5.5.2.2 Experimental design issues**

Step two in formulating an experiment (refer to Figure 5.4) involves experimental design issues. There are two types of environments in which a

research experiment can take place – laboratory and field environments. A laboratory environment is an artificial environment that allows the researcher to create a situation with desired conditions and then manipulate certain variables while controlling others (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:105; Malhotra, 2002:238). A field experiment is a realistic or natural situation (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:105; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:272). Furthermore, subjects are unaware that they are partaking in an experiment when it is conducted in a field environment (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:271). In a laboratory experiment the researcher has more control over the research setting and extraneous variables than in a field experiment (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:105; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:272).

When conducting an experiment, the researcher's goals are to draw valid conclusions about the effects of independent variables on the respective treatment group, and to make valid generalisations about the larger target population (Malhotra, 2002:225). Validity refers to the extent to which the conclusions that are drawn from the experiment are true (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:278). Laboratory and field experiments have different advantages and disadvantages. In terms of validity depending on the type of environment, internal or external validity will be reduced (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:107; Malhotra, 2002:225).

Internal validity is the ability to attribute the effect that was observed to the experimental variable (treatment), and not to other factors (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:107). In other words, internal validity is the extent to which the experiment accurately identifies causal relationships (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:278). Internal validity is important in an experiment as it is used to control extraneous variables. When an experiment is conducted in a laboratory environment as opposed to a field environment, internal validity is high. However, if the experiment is done in a laboratory environment, it will limit the generalisations that can be made about the larger target population (Malhotra, 2002:225; Shiu *et al.*, 2009:279).

External validity is the accuracy with which the causal relationships found in the experiment can be generalised beyond the experimental situation (Malhotra, 2002:225; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:277). External validity can be achieved by randomly selecting test subjects (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:281). Field environments tend to exhibit greater external validity, allowing generalisations about the larger target population to be made (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:107).

For the purposes of this study, a field experiment was conducted. This allowed the researcher to control the extraneous variables as much as the field permitted (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:105-107). Extraneous variables can threaten both internal and external validity (Malhotra, 2002:226; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:275). Extraneous variables will now be discussed in more detail.

### 5.5.2.3 Extraneous variables

The next step to consider when formulating an experiment (refer to Figure 5.4) concerns the extraneous variables (summarised in Table 5.1). For the purposes of this study extraneous variables were:

- *History.* History refers to specific events that are external to the experiment but occur at the same time as the experiment and may affect the dependent variable (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:108; Malhotra, 2002:226). For example, environmental conditions such as a recession may affect subjects' purchasing decisions in general. The longer the time interval between observations, the greater the possibility that history will have an effect on the experiment (Malhotra, 2002:226; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:275). In this study, the experiment took place in as few days as possible (namely eight days) and in the shortest possible time period, to prevent the history effect occurring.
- *Instrumentation.* Instrumentation is the changes in procedures that might account for differences in results (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:109; Malhotra, 2002:227). An example is when there is a change

in the actual measurement instrument, such as change in the wording of questions. A result of variations in administration, such as a change in interviewers, may also account for differences in results (Malhotra, 2002:227; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:276). In this study the same questionnaire was used for every treatment group. In addition, the same supervisor and fieldworkers were used each day in the respective shopping malls to ensure validity of the experiment.

- *Maturation.* Maturation is similar to history, but refers specifically to changes in the test units themselves (Malhotra, 2002:226). It occurs as a function of time and the naturally occurring events that take place with growth and experience (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:276). For example, people may have become older, more experienced, tired, bored, hungry or uninterested (Malhotra, 2002:226). Maturation was limited in this study, as the questionnaire took approximately six to eight minutes to complete. The entire process the test unit had to go through took no longer than 10 minutes. This was done in order to prevent maturation occurring.
- *Mortality.* Mortality refers to some test units withdrawing from the experiment before it is completed (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:111; Malhotra, 2002:227; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:277). This usually occurs if the experiment takes place over a period of a few weeks or more (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:277). In this study, the same respondents were not required to be tested more than once. Therefore, they were selected to partake for a certain time (i.e. 10 minutes) and then they had finished.
- *Selection bias.* Selection bias arises from the way in which test units are selected and assigned in an experiment (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010:110). Researchers should make sure that the characteristics of the test units accurately portray the relevant population. In addition, the key characteristics should be equally distributed among test groups (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:277). In this study, the selection of test units was



based solely on whether respondents were sport supporters. A screening question was used to ensure that respondents were in fact sport supporters.

**Table 5.1 Extraneous variables**

<b>History</b>	Experiment took place in a short time lapse of eight days.
<b>Instrumentation</b>	The experimental process was carefully controlled by ensuring that the same questionnaire, fieldworkers and supervisor were used in the respective shopping malls throughout the study.
<b>Maturation</b>	Interviews were conducted in a short time period. The entire process took no longer than 10 minutes to complete, of which the questionnaire took between six to eight minutes.
<b>Mortality</b>	No pre-tests were used, thus the chances of respondents failing to complete the questionnaire were minimal and they were only needed for one interview.
<b>Selection bias</b>	Respondents were selected by means of a screening question.

Source: Adapted from Morris (2010)

#### 5.5.2.4 Specific designs

Step four (refer to Figure 5.4) in the formulating of an experiment process is about the specific design of the experiment. There are two types of experimental designs, classical and statistical (Aaker *et al.*, 2001:337). Classical designs consist of pre-experimental, true experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Statistical designs include completely randomised designs, randomised block designs, Latin square designs and factorial designs (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:282).

In this study a statistical design was used. Statistical designs allow the researcher to examine the effects of multiple treatments, whereas classical experimental designs only allow for the manipulation of a single variable (Morris, 2010:64; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:282). When the effects of two or more independent variables are investigated in a field experiment, a factorial design is deemed most appropriate (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:293). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, a factorial design was applied.

Factorial designs are used to measure the effects of two or more independent variables at various levels (Malhotra, 2002:237; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:285). Factorial designs can simultaneously investigate the effects of two or more independent variables on a single, or on multiple, dependent variables and allow for interactions between variables to occur (Malhotra, 2002:237; Shiu *et al.*, 2009:293).

As stated, for the purposes of this study, the dependent variable was attachment. The independent variables were investment size, satisfaction level, and quality of alternatives. The independent variables (namely the investment model variables) were selected as they had been used previously in numerous studies, and thus were deemed sufficient to measure the respective dependent variable.

In this study, the main objective was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The sport that was chosen for the purposes of this study was fistball. Fistball is similar to volleyball but applies rules from tennis. The reason fistball was selected was that the sport is unfamiliar in South Africa and most respondents would therefore not have had a predisposed opinion about the sport, or be attached to any fistball team; thus no bias could have been formed.

#### ▪ **Manipulations**

For the purposes of this study, the respondents were shown one of eight posters (see Appendix B). The posters had different manipulations that were derived from the investment model variables. As mentioned in Chapter 1 (section 1.5), Rusbult's (1980a) investment model explains how individuals become attached in dating relationships, friendships and business organisations (Rusbult, 1980a:173; Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:81; Rusbult *et al.*, 1998:358; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a:4; Scanlan *et al.*, 1993b:17). The investment model has also been applied to assess sport participant's attachment to a sport (Casper *et al.*, 2007:256). The investment model has not, however, been applied to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team

(see section 1.6). The way in which the investment model variables were adapted (refer to Table 5.2) for the purposes of this study will now be discussed.

**Table 5.2 How manipulations were derived**

INVESTMENT MODEL VARIABLES	THEORY DERIVED	MANIPULATIONS DECIDED UPON
Investment size	Includes intrinsic and extrinsic resources	Hours spent on a sports team
Quality of alternatives	Attractiveness to partake in other relationships	Number of other teams worth supporting
Satisfaction level	Supporters ultimate desire is to see their team succeed	Number of wins/losses

○ *Investment size*

Academics and practitioners have defined a supporter as someone who has an interest in sport and invests time and money in sport activities (see section 1.4). Investment size may include intrinsic and extrinsic resources (as explained in section 4.5.1). Intrinsic resources include time, effort and money invested in the relationship (Scanlan *et al.*, 1993b:22). Extrinsic resources are resources that become intricately connected to the relationship such as mutual friends, shared memories, material possessions, and activities, objects or events that are uniquely associated with the relationship (Rusbult, 1983:102).

Seeing that investment size includes intrinsic and extrinsic resources (see section 4.5.1), hours were used as the amount of time could depict supporters' investment in activities such as watching matches, reading about the sport and statistics, as well as the amount of time spent looking for and purchasing tickets and merchandise. Thus, all these activities portrayed the amount of material possessions owned, the amount of money, time, emotional effort that the supporter dedicated to the sport, and the memories that might have been made in the process (namely hours depicted a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic resources).

A fistball match can last for up to 90 minutes. If there is a tournament on, there are usually six fistball games played by men per day, and four fistball games that women play. A tournament usually lasts for two to three days (Namibia Sport, 2009). Based on the above information, if supporters watched six 90-minute games for two days, they would be spending 18 hours of their time watching fistball. A high investment size was therefore supporters devoting more than 18 hours per week to fistball. If supporters only watched one 90-minute game on one day, they would be spending 90 minutes or less watching fistball. A low investment size was therefore supporters devoting 90 minutes or less per week of their time to fistball.

- *Quality of alternatives*

The quality of alternatives variable (see section 4.5.2) considered the relative attraction of other relationships instead of the relationship in which individuals were currently involved (Rusbult, 1983:102; Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:82). Supporters may be regarded as having a choice in terms of which team they want to support (Scanlan *et al.*, 1993a:7). For the purposes of this study, quality of alternatives was manipulated in terms of whether there were many choices or few choice alternatives of other teams to support and whether those teams were performing better than the respective fistball team that the respondent was expected to support in the experiment.

Namibia and Brazil are two of the minority of countries in the world that take part in fistball. In Namibia there are only four teams in the whole country (Knobloch, 2011). And in Brazil, there are eight teams (IFA, 2011). Therefore, quality of alternatives referred to a high manipulation to be more than six team choice alternatives for supporters to support, and a low manipulation for quality of alternatives was considered to be two or less teams for supporters to support.

o *Satisfaction level*

Satisfaction is how positive an interpersonal relationship is deemed (Rusbult, 1983:102). In terms of interpersonal relationships, satisfaction may be measured with respect to intelligence, physical attractiveness, attitudinal similarity and physical proximity (Rusbult *et al.*, 1986:82).

For the purposes of this study, although winning percentage is not the only factor that a supporter bases team selection on (see section 3.4.2.2), winning can be considered as the most intuitive factor to influence supporter's team preference (Aiken & Koch, 2009:83). Supporters' ultimate desire is to see their team succeed and to enjoy the positive feelings that come from winning (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976:367). Thus, satisfaction was quantified in terms of the number of matches a sports team had won.

Satisfaction level could refer to whether a team had performed well and won many games; or performed poorly and lost many games. Based on statistics of past performances, the West German fistball team had won seven championships in consecutive years. Thus, the manipulations for satisfaction level referred to a high manipulation for satisfaction as being a team that is performing well and won more than seven executive matches (i.e. eight, nine or ten) and a low manipulation was referred to as a team performing poorly and having lost more than four matches (i.e. five, six or seven) in a season.

Before the experiment was conducted, exploratory research by means of a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the stated independent variables were adequately defined (refer to Appendix D). Slight alterations were made from the results obtained. Table 5.3 depicts the final manipulations used in this study to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

**Table 5.3 Manipulations used in the experiment**

<b>INVESTMENT SIZE</b>	Devotes more than eight hours watching fistball on a weekend
	Devotes less than one hour watching fistball on a weekend
<b>SATISFACTION LEVEL</b>	Team performs well and has won all their matches
	Team performs poorly and has lost all their matches
<b>QUALITY OF ALTERNATIVES</b>	More than 24 teams worth supporting
	Less than two teams worth supporting

Factorial designs can be conceptualised in the form of a table (matrix) that includes all the independent variables in a respective study (Malhotra, 2002:237; Shiu *et al.*, 2009:293). In addition, the specified matrix includes each alternative option for each independent variable (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:293; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:285). Therefore, every possible combination of the independent variables is depicted in the different cells and each cell can be considered as a level (Malhotra, 2002:237; Shiu *et al.*, 2009:293). In a factorial design each level is combined with every other level, called treatment groups (as shown in Appendix B), which results into main and interaction effects (see section 6.5.2.1 and 6.5.2.2) (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:285).

**Table 5.4 Factorial design matrix**

	<b>ATTACHMENT</b>	
	<b>HIGH MANIPULATION</b>	<b>LOW MANIPULATION</b>
<b>INVESTMENT SIZE</b>	More than 8 hours	Less than 1 hour
<b>SATISFACTION LEVEL</b>	Won all matches	Lost all matches
<b>QUALITY OF ALTERNATIVES</b>	24 teams to support	2 teams to support

As there were more than two independent variables, for the purposes of this study a 2x2x2 full factorial design was applied. The factorial design matrix with the final manipulations used in the study is depicted in Table 5.4. The table reveals two levels for each independent variable (see section 5.5.2.4), which created eight different treatment groups.

To measure whether the investment model causes a supporter to become attached to a sports team, a questionnaire was used to measure respondents' attraction and attachment to a fistball team.

### **5.5.3 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT AND SCALING PROCEDURES**

The items in the questionnaire consisted of constructs that were used in previous studies (see Appendix C). Pre-determined scales from previous studies were adapted and used in this study. As mentioned, the purpose of the measuring instrument was used to measure respondents' attraction as well as their attachment to a specific fistball team (namely one of the eight treatments that they were shown by means of a poster). The measuring instrument consisted of nominal, ordinal and interval data.

Items specifically measured respondents' attraction (refer to Appendix A). Respondents' attachment to a fistball team was assessed with items that measured respondents' attitude, behaviour and cognition (see section 4.6.3).

Consumers were asked two screening questions. The first screening question that consumers were asked was whether they were sport supporters. The second screening question that consumers were asked was if they were fistball supporters. If consumers had heard of the game and were fistball supporters then they could not participate in the study, as they might have been biased towards a particular team before the experiment was conducted (see section 5.5.2.4). If consumers qualified, they had to rate their sport support on a scale from 1 to 5. Based on respondents' rating, the respondents were split into respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters in order to assess the strength of their connection to a sports team (see section 6.2.1). An item asking which sport respondents followed was also included for the researcher to ascertain what sport respondents may have been thinking of if it was not fistball.

To gain an understanding of sport consumer behaviour, respondents were also asked demographic items particularly regarding their age group. Although age was not an objective of this study, previous research has found that respondents' attitudes and behaviour can be formed during their late

adolescence and carried over into adulthood, and become a way of life (Hurlock, 1968:28). In addition, by asking respondents' age gave an idea of respondents' cognition, maturation and social class (Moschis & Churchill, 1978:601). Thus, it may have been worth noting their age, given the findings from past research.

In the study conducted by Moschis *et al.* (1984:413), it was explained that as adolescents mature, they attempt to gain their independence from their parents and do so by spending more time interacting with their friends. In addition, adolescents' activities and interests expand beyond the confines of their home, as they may want to develop an interest in the world of ideas and may turn to television viewing and "reality-oriented" media such as newspapers. Previous researchers have suggested that with an increase in age, adolescents interact more with friends, read more newspapers, and watch less television. Television, newspaper and friends have been explained as socialisation agents that may influence individuals' consumer behaviour (see section 4.5.3) (Churchill & Moschis, 1979:23; Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413). Thus, items pertaining to television, newspaper and friends were asked to explain the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

To gain an understanding of sport consumer behaviour, in terms of recreational activities, respondents were asked to provide an approximate estimate of the number of hours per week they spent watching television. This item was asked as previous researchers have suggested that exposure to television is regarded as a "fantasy-orientated" form of media (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961:115). In addition, television has been shown to portray a type of social class, and may influence sport consumers' purchasing decisions.

When adolescents interact with mass media, they are exposed to a variety of advertisements, and may develop favourable orientations toward advertised brands. Previous studies (Gorn and Goldberg 1980; Resnik and Stern 1977; Teel, Teel and Bearden, 1979) have suggested that brand preferences have been shown to be linked to television viewing and newspaper reading (Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413). Taking the above into account, by being aware of



the number of hours that the respondent is exposed to mass media gave an indication of the number of advertisements that they could potentially see, which perhaps may affect their sports-brand preferences. When a big sporting event such as a World Cup, is on, there are advertisements that constantly relate to the sporting event before, during and after the event. As stated, exposure to mass media may influence sport consumers' purchasing decisions, so the exposure to television advertising may be of relevance to note, although supporters' recreational activities were not an objective for the purposes of this study.

Respondents were also asked to provide an approximate estimate of the number of hours they spent per week watching the news. This item was asked as it gave an indication of the number of sport-related advertisements and sponsors that were viewed while watching the news. Amount of television viewing, in line with previous research, was measured by asking respondents how frequently they watched specific programme categories (Churchill & Moschis 1979; Moschis & Churchill 1978; Moschis & Moore 1978). The amount of exposure on news, may also be an external factor that may influence sport consumers' purchasing decisions.

The number of hours per week respondents spent reading the newspaper was also asked. Whether they read the newspaper online or a hard copy was irrelevant, as it just gave an indication of the amount of time invested in sport (other than watching a match). According to previous researchers, individuals exposed to newspapers are suggested to portray individuals who are interested in "reality-orientated" media and are proposed to give an indication of their social class – in other words they have the ability to read and can afford to buy newspapers (Schramm *et al*, 1961:103). Newspaper reading, in line with previous research (Moschis & Churchill, 1978:605), refers to the frequency of reading comics, sports, and news about the government and politics, news about the economy, and advertisements.

The number of hours per week respondents spent socialising with their friends was also asked, to comprehend sport consumer behaviour. As

previously explained in section 2.5, family and friends can influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Previous researchers have suggested that interaction with friends influences brand preferences (Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413). Therefore, this item was asked to see how much exposure and potential the influence, respondents had from their friends. There might have been a chance of supporters selecting the team their friends supported, attending matches and purchasing memorabilia that their friends chose.

Living Standards Measure (LSM) groups were of relevance for this study as previous researchers have found that higher LSM groups have more exposure to mass media and have more money to spend on leisure activities (Moschis *et al.*, 1984:412).

### **5.5.3.1 Pre-test for measuring instrument**

Pre-tests were conducted to test whether the wording of the items was correctly understood, and to see whether there was a difference between the attraction and attachment stages for the worst and best case scenarios that would be used in the experiment (in the form of posters), that is, based on the high and low manipulations derived from the investment model (see Appendix B).

The pre-tests indicated that most of the items were correctly understood. The only changes made were the order of the screening questions (so it made logical sense and to gain a better understanding of what the respondent was being asked). Thus, consumers were first be asked if they were sport supporters and then whether they knew the sport, fistball.

A respondent gave the researcher feedback during the second pre-test that he would not be attracted to the sport, fistball. Therefore, the decision was made to include the sentence "Assume you are a fistball supporter..." before every statement measuring their attachment, to remind respondents that they had to imagine that they were fistball supporters.

Once all the data had been collected, coded and cleaned, a factor analysis was conducted. Respondents' were asked items pertaining to their attraction and items pertaining to their attachment. Attraction and attachment are separate constructs, therefore a separate factor analysis was run for attraction and for attachment.

The approach used to extract the smallest number of factors to represent the correlations among the set of variables was Principal Axis, as it is the most widely used factoring technique (Costello & Osborne, 2005:2). There are two main approaches to rotations which results in either orthogonal (uncorrelated) or oblique (correlated) factor solutions. For the purposes of this study, the oblique approach was used as it allowed the researcher to examine the degree of correlation between the factors. The Direct Oblimin technique was used as it is most commonly used (Pallant, 2005:183).

The factor analysis conducted for attraction revealed that there was one factor that measured the construct adequately. Therefore, all items remained. In terms of attachment, initially, three factors that measured attitude, behaviour and cognition were desired. When the factor analysis was run for attachment, two factors were suggested. Thus, the two new factors used in the study measured the respondents' attitude and behaviour.

In terms of their cognition, the items were separated and formed part of the two new factors. This makes sense, as cognition is described as their thoughts and feelings. Attitude can reflect the respondents' preferences, views and feelings. In addition, their attitude is important in behavioural sciences and marketing, as it is believed to be "the forerunner of behavio[u]r" (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:263). Thus, cognition can form a part of their attitudes as well as the way in which they behave. In addition, items pertaining to respondents' recreational activities were asked, that attributed to gaining an idea of respondents' cognition (see section 5.5.3). The factor analysis also showed a factor loading for the item "I consider myself to be somewhat of an expert about my fistball team". The decision was made to

delete this item as it had a loading higher than 0.25 and therefore correlated too much with another item.

Cronbach alphas were then run for all five factors (see Table 5.5). The attraction variable (0.755) was deemed reliable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994:252, Woo *et al.*, 2009:45). In addition, the variables measuring attachment, in terms of attitude (0.909) and behaviour (0.916) were also reliable.

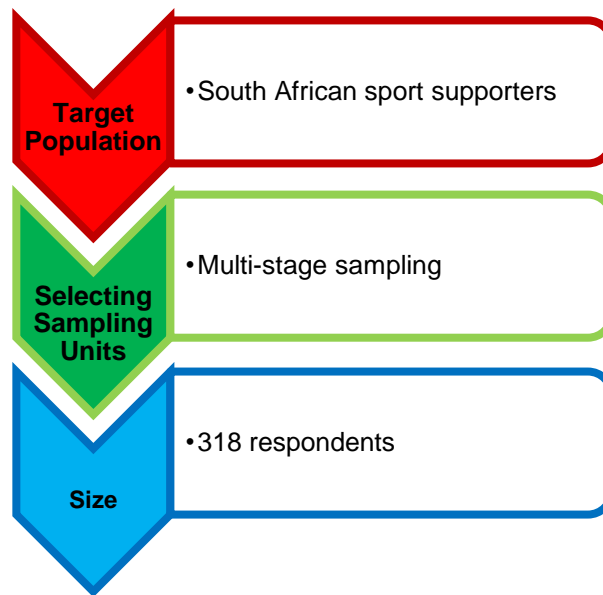
**Table 5.5 Pre-test's Cronbach alpha values**

	<b>CRONBACH ALPHA VALUE</b>
<b>ATTRACTION</b>	0.755
<b>ATTACHMENT</b>	
Attitude	0.909
Behaviour	0.916

Once the pre-test measurement instrument was considered reliable, the next step in the research design (as shown in Figure 5.3), is determining the sampling process and the sample size.

#### **5.5.4 SAMPLING PROCESS AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Sampling involves using a subset of the population to make conclusions about the entire population. The sampling design process consists of six steps. As illustrated in Figure 5.5, the steps include identifying the target population, selecting the sampling frame, determining the sampling method, the procedure for selecting the sampling units and determining the size of the sample (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:348; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:387-391). The steps will now be discussed in detail and how the process was applied in this study.

**Figure 5.5 Sampling process**

The first step is defining the target population. It is important to state precisely who should and who should not be included in the sample (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:450; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:348). Tangible characteristics should be used to identify the target population (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:390).

In this study, sport supporters were the target population, irrespective of gender or age, as sport unites a country (SA info, 2009). Furthermore, sports such as tennis and volleyball are mainly broadcast on DSTV/Supersport (SATA, 2005). Based on SAARF's Living Standards Index (2010) those who have access to M-NET and DSTV broadcast channels include LSM groups 8 to 10. In addition to LSM groups 8 to 10 having exposure to M-NET and DSTV, these groups have a disposable income large enough to spend money on recreational activities. LSM groups 8 to 10 are also the individuals who have the most exposure to mass media (SAARF, 2010). Therefore, one may conclude that members of LSM groups 8 to 10 may follow sports such as volleyball and tennis on a more regular basis - allowing them to have a better understanding of the sport and a possible interest in fistball (as it is similar to volleyball and tennis). Therefore, the proposed target population in this study was South African supporters in LSM groups 8 to 10.

The next step in the sampling design process is determining the sampling frame. A sampling frame is a representation of the target population and may consist of a list from which the sample will be drawn (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:349; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:391). If a list is not available, then some other step must be taken to give direction in identifying the specific target population (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:349). For the purposes of this study, no complete list of supporters existed. Therefore, a list supplying the sampling frame could not be obtained. A multi-stage non-probability sampling technique was used to select the sample.

The next step in the sampling design process is selecting the sampling technique. This step is closely linked to the second step; based on what sampling frame is available, the researcher will determine the choices for the sampling technique method (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:452). As stated, no list of supporters existed, so a multi-stage non-probability sampling technique was used to select the sample. Non-probability sampling is when the probability of any particular member of the population being chosen is unknown (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:395). The type of non-probability sampling used consisted of both judgement and convenience sampling.

Judgement sampling is when an experienced individual selects the sample based on an appropriate characteristic of the sample respondents. Convenience sampling is obtaining individuals who are available most conveniently (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:334; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:396). The multi-stage sampling that was used consisted of three phases.

- ***Step 1: Selecting geographic area***

The first phase consisted of judgement sampling to select the geographical area (in this case, the province) in which the study took place. Gauteng was selected owing to the culturally diverse nature of the province (Statistics South Africa, 2001). In addition, Gauteng is “where the money is, where the work is, and where the people are” (Baker, 2011).

▪ **Step 2: Selecting shopping centres**

The second phase also consisted of judgement sampling based on the selection of shopping malls in the Gauteng region. Anyone can be a supporter, whether rich or poor. However, as fistball was chosen, higher LSM groups seem to follow such sports more than lower LSM groups do. Based on judgement sampling, shopping centres were where the interviews took place as these did not discriminate between income levels, but would fit the criteria for selecting the respondents. The shopping malls selected were Alberton City (South), Balfour Park (North) and Protea Centre (West). The reason these centres were chosen was their location – they were spread across the different areas in Johannesburg and fitted the respective LSM groups (as shown in Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Shopping malls selected**

SHOPPING MALL	LOCATION	PREDOMINANT ETHNIC GROUPS
Alberton City	Alberton area (Johannesburg South)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Edenpark a Coloured area of Alberton</li> <li>▪ Black/White/Asian from surrounding areas such as Brackendowns, Brackenhurst, Randhart, New Redruth, and Southcrest.</li> </ul>
Balfour Park	Johannesburg North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mainly Black and White with a few Coloured/Asian from surrounding areas such as Orange Grove, Lydnhurst, Highlands North and Sandringham.</li> </ul>
Protea Centre	Brixton area (Johannesburg West)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Predominant affluent Asian/Indian area of the Mayfair residence living in close proximity</li> <li>▪ Coloureds from Riverlea/Bosment/Westbury coloured areas, now also living in a white suburb of Hursthill.</li> <li>▪ A few White and black Rau students frequent the centre from nearby communes and residences, as RAU University is situated in Melville area.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Baker (2011)

Shopping malls made data collection convenient in terms of reaching the correct target market, questionnaires were completed immediately, and shopping malls were safe. Safety was an important factor as fieldworkers used their own laptops. In addition, when research is conducted in shopping malls, it allows the fieldworkers to work in a group; which enhances their confidence in approaching respondents. Furthermore, with data being collected in shopping malls, fieldworkers were supervised

throughout the process to ensure that the data collected was legitimate. When interviews are conducted in shopping malls, if fieldworkers are unsure about anything, it can be dealt with easily by the supervisor. Supervisors also had the ability to do some of the back-checks quickly and efficiently in the shopping malls (Baker, 2011; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:213).

▪ **Step 3: Selecting the sampling units**

The third and final phase was convenience sampling. This phase entails the way in which the units, or respondents, were selected. The respondents were asked a screening question about whether they were sport supporters or not and if they were, they were given the option of participating as a respondent in the research study. By having a screening question, the researcher was ensuring and validating that the respondent was meeting the criteria of the specific target population (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:351).

Fieldworkers were also advised to target consumers, who they felt would have the ability to read, thus a more affluent market was approached based on the fieldworker's judgement.

The next step in the sampling process (refer to Figure 5.5) is determining the sample size. The exact number of respondents needed in the study had to be decided (Churchill *et al.*, 357; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:350). When deciding on the size of the sample, the researcher should take into consideration the type of sample, homogeneity of the population, and the time, money and personnel available for the study (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:498, Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:11).

As mentioned earlier, a 2x2x2 full factorial design was used in this study. According to Klemz (2008) the sampling size for a factorial design should consist of at least 24 respondents per treatment group. In this study, 36 respondents were used in each treatment group, to ensure that the results could be split between low and high supporters. There were eight



experiments conducted to assess the combinations among the three investment model variables, therefore a total of 288 respondents was required. In addition, a repeat group of one of the posters was conducted in each of the three shopping malls to test for the validity of the experiment. Thus, an additional 36 questionnaires were completed. The sample size consisted of 324 respondents. However, because some questionnaires were incomplete and had to be disregarded (so that it did not influence the results) a realised sample of 318 respondents was maintained.

After the above steps had been conducted; the sampling process was executed, and the respondents were approached (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:351; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:391).

## **5.6 FIELDWORK AND DATA COLLECTION**

Fieldwork is a vital process within the marketing research process. It is during this phase that contact with potential respondents is made, the questionnaires are administered, data is recorded, and the completed questionnaires are collected for processing (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:375; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:412). The actual data collection process is rarely carried out by the individual who designs the research (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:413; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:444). For the purposes of this study, the data was collected by fieldworkers assigned by an independent marketing research company, Interserv Market Research.

The data was collected in shopping malls in the Gauteng area. Fieldworkers conducted personal interviews with sport supporters. As stated, the purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. To achieve this objective, a number of steps had to be taken by the fieldworker.

The fieldworkers approached consumers in the shopping centre. The initial step that the fieldworkers took was to ask consumers whether they were sport

supporters. If the consumer was a sport supporter, the fieldworker could continue with the personal interview. The fieldworker also asked the consumers whether they were aware of the sport, fistball. If they were unaware of fistball, the fieldworker then proceeded with the interview.

If consumers agreed to take part in the research study, consumers were brought into an empty shop (where the interview would take place) (refer to Figure 5.6). Each fieldworker was assigned to one respondent at a time. The fieldworker asked the respondent's age (in order to use the questionnaire which had been pre-coded based on age, ensuring that there was an even spread of respondents from different age groups).

**Figure 5.6 How the research was carried out**



The interview then proceeded, with the fieldworker reading out a paragraph explaining fistball. A 30-second video clip with information about fistball was then shown to the respondent (on the fieldworker's laptop) (refer to Figure 5.6). Questions were then asked that measured the respondent's attraction to fistball. One of the eight newspaper clips on a poster (which had the different manipulations on it) was then shown to the respondent. After being shown the poster, the respondent was asked questions regarding his or her attachment to the fistball team by means of the questionnaire. Thus, the questionnaire was used to examine the respondents' attraction and attachment to a fistball team.

Fieldwork had to be carried out in a consistent manner, regardless of who administered the questionnaire, in order for comparisons to be made (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:412). When respondents were asked questions on the questionnaire, they were shown a flashcard with the options for their answers. This allowed fieldworkers to control any errors such as non-response, misunderstandings and sample bias (Morris, 2010:79). The data was collected every day, over a week (Saturday to Saturday). The interview took on average 10 minutes to complete. After the collection of the data, 40% of the 324 questionnaires were back-checked as a means of quality control. Thus, fieldworkers ensured that respondents met the necessary criteria (see section 5.5.4) and answered the questionnaire thoroughly.

## **5.7 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS**

The purpose of data analysis is to obtain meaning from information that has been collected (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:572). After data had been collected it needed to be converted into a form that was suitable for analysis. Data analysis begins by checking for acceptable questionnaires, in other words whether questionnaires are complete (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:426). This is because fieldwork often produces data containing mistakes (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:463). Then editing the data took place. Editing is the process of checking and adjusting data that is illegible, incomplete, inconsistent or ambiguous, and contains unsatisfactory responses (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:412; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:426; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:463). Questionnaires which did not meet these standards were discarded to maintain the quality of responses at a maximum level.

Coding the data then took place. This is when numerical values or codes are used to represent specific questions. There were certain questions that were open-ended and had to be coded into a numerical form in order to be analysed. Furthermore, some of the data was grouped together to make the analysis more comprehensive and concise. Each response was allocated a code which was used for recording and interpreting the data (Zikmund *et al.*,

2010:468). The coding was completed by the researcher and values were entered into SPSS version 19. Once this was completed, descriptive statistics were conducted.

### **5.7.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

Descriptive statistics are the first step when quantitative research is conducted. Descriptive statistics involve the transforming of the data into a form that describes the basic characteristics (Churchill *et al.*, 2007:429; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:486). Central tendencies (mean, median and modes), distribution and variability are produced at this stage to indicate the average responses. In this study, descriptive statistics as well as frequency analyses were completed to gain an understanding of the sample and the perceptions of the respondents (Morris, 2010:80) (see Chapter 6). After descriptive statistics had been analysed, inferential statistics were conducted to test for significant differences.

### **5.7.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS**

Inferential statistics is making observations from the descriptive statistics that apply to the entire population (Struwig & Stead, 2001:159). Inferential statistics are used to test hypotheses, which in turn identify where statistical differences lie (Morris, 2010:81). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a statistical test that is conducted to examine if there are differences between the groups.

ANOVA has the advantage of being used when more than two means are being compared (Churchill, 1999:746; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:489). In order for an ANOVA statistical test to be conducted, there must be an interval or ratio scaled dependent variable and categorical independent variables. Categorical variables are also referred to as factors. For each factor, there may be different levels. For each level, there is a cell. Each cell represents a different treatment (see section 5.5.2.4 and Table 5.3) (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:491). ANOVA takes into consideration the effect one treatment has on

an interval-scaled dependent variable (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:541). ANOVA was therefore used for the purposes of this study to compare the means of attraction and attachment with the relevant categorical variables.

#### **5.7.2.1 One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

A one-way ANOVA compares one categorical variable with the dependent continuous variable (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:491; Pallant, 2005:214). Thus, different groups are compared to one another. In other words, attraction was compared in terms of extent of support (i.e. low and high supporters). As mentioned, in this study, a one-way ANOVA was conducted that compared respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters and their attraction level; this was assessed across the exposure they had to the specific experiment shown. For instance, the mean for attraction from the exposure to treatment group six (see Appendix B) for respondents who consider themselves to be low supporters' was compared to the mean for respondents who consider themselves to be high supporters.

An F-test demonstrates the extent to which there is more variance between the groups than there is within each group. A larger F-ratio illustrates that there is a greater difference between groups. If this is the case, a post-hoc test needs to be conducted. The post-hoc test reveals where the differences between the groups occurred (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:545; Pallant, 2005:214). In order to assess supporters' attachment to a sports team, repeated measures ANOVA was used.

#### **5.7.2.2 Repeated measures ANOVA**

The purpose was to investigate whether there were significant differences between the variables. Due to the fact that the investment model variables consisted of more than two variables, the most appropriate test to use was ANOVA, as ANOVA is used to compare scores with each other. ANOVA is extended beyond one-way ANOVA when a dependent variable has multiple

categorical independent variables (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:605). Thus, repeated measures ANOVA was used as it involves testing significant differences in means when the same observation appears in multiple levels of a factor (Pallant, 2005:10-1).

Repeated measures, also known as within-subject, suggest that the same respondent is exposed to more than one treatment condition, and repeated measurements are obtained (Maholtra & Birks, 2002:507). A factorial design allows the interaction of factors to be studied (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:710) (as discussed in section 5.5.2.4).

Independent variables (X) are used to explain the dependent variable (Y). For the purposes of this study the independent variables consisted of the constructs from the investment model, namely investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level. The dependent variable (Y) was attachment. It was proposed that the investment model would cause attachment (the dependent variable). In other words, the investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level was proposed to influence supporters' attachment.

As explained in section 5.6, the first part of the questionnaire measured respondents' attraction to fistball. After the newspaper clip (with the respective manipulations) was shown, the respondents continued completing the questionnaire and answered items that measured their level of attachment to the fistball team (after being exposed to the information from the newspaper clip on a poster – see Appendix B).

By using repeated measures ANOVA, main effects and interaction effects may be measured. In other words, both the effects of each treatment considered alone (main effect) and the effects due to the combinations of variables (interaction effect) were analysed (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:258). Therefore, the main effect takes into consideration one manipulation in isolation. In this study, one of the main effects, was the overall mean for high satisfaction level compared to the overall mean for low satisfaction level. In

terms of interactions, for example, an individual's favourite drink may be coffee and favourite temperature is cold. However, the individual may not prefer cold coffee. This is a result of an interaction (see section 5.7.2.3). The interaction effect took place by comparing groups of the manipulations. In this study one of the interaction effects included, for example, the comparison of the overall mean for high satisfaction level\*high investment size and high satisfaction level\*low quality of alternatives.

When sampling is conducted in a study rather than a census, even the most accurate of sampling is subject to error. In other words, the sample selected will not always be a precise replica of the population. The concept of confidence intervals was therefore introduced (Struwig & Stead, 2001:113). The confidence level is a percentage that tells researchers how confident they can be in their findings (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:447). A significance level is used to indicate the critical probability that an inference supporting differences between the sample and the population (or some statistical expectation) is true (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:658).

Traditionally, researchers have specified an acceptable significance level of 0.1, 0.05 or 0.01 (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:510). In other words at a significance level of 0.1, the researcher can be 90% confident in the findings being true for the population (or some statistical expectation). The observed sample's mean is compared to the significance level that is used in the study. The observed significance level, is referred to as the probability value, p-value, or alpha value and is compared to the significance level that is used in a study (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:526).

For the purposes of this study, the significance level was 0.1. If the p-value is less than 0.1 it would show that there is a difference between the means. When ANOVA tests are conducted and the results indicate that there is a difference between the group means, to understand where the differences in the means occur, a post-hoc test would need to be conducted. For the purposes of this study, a Fishers Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc test was conducted when ANOVA tests revealed that there were differences



in the group means, to assess where the differences in the means occurred (Stevens, 1999:86).

### **5.7.2.3 Effect size**

Statistical power is the probability that the researcher will avoid making a type I or type II error (Cengage Learning, 2005). Type I error occurs when the researcher concludes that a difference between the sample means exists, when one does not exist. And a type II error occurs when the researcher concludes that no difference exists, when a difference between the sample means does in fact exist (Vaughan, 2001:63). Statistical power is determined by taking into account the confidence level and the size of a sample (Smithson, 2000:203). As stated, how confident researchers can be in their findings, depends on the significance level. In other words, the larger the sample size the greater the accuracy of the estimate (Struwig & Stead, 2001:113).

By placing the emphasis on the size of the effect of an outcome rather than the statistical significance, effect size is analysed. Effect size is a way of quantifying the size of the difference between groups. In addition, effect size may promote a more scientific approach to the accumulation of knowledge. Thus, the effect size is an important tool in reporting and interpreting the effectiveness of an outcome (Coe, 2002). For the purposes of this study, due to time and cost constraints, the sample size was small and it was possible that the size of the sample could have had an effect on statistical power.

Due to the fact that a relatively small sample was used, and a significance level of 0.1 was applied; the chance of making a Type I and Type II error was probable. Therefore, effect size is also reported so that differences between the groups could be interpreted. Although the discussion of effect size in reports is not yet widespread, there is an increase in researchers computing, presenting and discussing effect size as a routine part of any empirical report (Bakerman, 2005:379). When using effect size, partial eta squared values are considered. Partial eta-squared is a measure of variance. It tells the



researcher what proportion of the variance in the dependent variable is attributable to the factor in question (Walker, 2007).

To ensure that the findings from the study were trustworthy, the responses obtained from the questionnaire needed to be reliable and valid.

#### **5.7.2.4 Reliability and validity assessment**

Good measures should be both reliable and valid. Reliability measures how consistent a measure is, whereas validity measures the accuracy of a measuring instrument – in terms of the extent to which a score truthfully represents a concept (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:307)

Reliability is shown when different items attempts to measure the same object, trait or construct (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:981; Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:305). Reliability refers to the extent to which a scale produces consistent results (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:305).

Reliability is assessed by determining the association between scores obtained from different administrations of the scale. High associations indicate consistent results and therefore the scale is deemed reliable (Malhotra & Birks, 2000:305).

Churchill (1999:408) explains that items that relate to a single construct should be highly inter-correlated, which is assessed by examining the Cronbach alpha values. This indicates that the items correlate with one another and measure the construct adequately. Then the questionnaire could be viewed as being reliable. A coefficient alpha of 0.7 or greater is considered to report a reliable measurement scale (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994:252, Woo *et al.*, 2009:45).

Validity is the accuracy of a measure that truthfully represents the concept it is supposed to reflect (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:684). Validity is the extent to which differences in scores represent true differences in what the scale items

aim to measure (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:983; Malhotra & Birks, 2000:307).

- ***Validity results from this study***

Three types of validity can be assessed: content, criterion and construct validity. For the purposes of this study, content and construct validity were assessed. Content validity (also known as face validity) was assessed by evaluating how well the item represents what it was supposed to measure. The researcher should examine whether the scale items adequately covered the entire domain of the construct that was being measured. Construct validity addresses whether the item was in fact measuring what it aimed to measure. Content and construct validity were assessed by asking experts to examine the items.

In addition, the items selected for each concept were re-used and adapted from previous studies' questionnaires. It was ensured that all the constructs selected from previous studies demonstrated valid results (see Appendix C).

- ***Reliability results from the study***

Once all the data had been collected, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to assess the construct validity of the questionnaire. Principal Axis factoring and the Direct Oblimin rotation method were used as it is one of the most common factoring techniques. Items were selected if they had a loading equal to or higher than 0.35.

When conducting an EFA as a form of validity assessment, the first step is to take note of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. The closer the score is to one, the more appropriate is the data (Ward, 2008:150). According to Dziuban and Shirkey (1974:359), a KMO score higher than 0.6 is considered appropriate. The KMO score in this factor analysis was 0.718, thus the data used was deemed appropriate. In terms of Bartlett's test of sphericity, the data should have had a significance value less

than 0.05 to be subjected to an EFA (Ferguson & Cox, 1993:88; Ward, 2008:151). Bartlett's test of sphericity had a significant value of 0.000, thus it was possible for the data to be subjected to the EFA.

By analysing the pattern matrix and not compressing the data, the researcher needs to take into account all the items that are 0.7 and higher (Doll, Raghunathan, Lim & Gupta, 1995:182; Carmines & Zeller, 1979:63). The factor analysis revealed that there were two predominant factors. Items DO1, DO2, DO3 and DO4 measured behaviour, and items F1 and F2 measured the respondents' attitude (refer to Table 5.10). All other items were deleted and only two factors remained.

**Table 5.7 Final Pattern Matrix**

	FACTOR	
	1	2
<b>F2</b>	-0.011	0.820
<b>F1</b>	0.011	0.770
<b>DO4</b>	0.703	-0.015
<b>DO2</b>	0.728	-0.032
<b>DO1</b>	0.799	0.047
<b>DO3</b>	0.810	0.010

After the factor analysis was conducted, to assess the reliability of the data, Cronbach alpha tests were conducted. Cronbach alpha values show the strength of the relationship between the factors (Chutimar & Sanghatawatana, 2007:18). A Cronbach alpha value of 0.7 or higher indicates that the internal factors have a strong relationship with each other (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994:34). If the Cronbach alpha value is between 0.4 and 0.7 the internal factor can still be accepted (Amelia & Larry, 1999:21; Chutimar & Sanghatawatana, 2007:18).

The item "As a fistball supporter you enjoy the drama of close games" was deleted in order to improve the Cronbach alpha value that measured the attraction construct. When the item was deleted, the Cronbach alpha value for attraction was 0.677, which is marginally below the accepted norm of 0.7 (Petry, 2007:276).

The factor analysis results revealed that attachment was made up of two factors, namely attitude and behaviour. The Cronbach alpha for each of these constructs were deemed reliable, namely attitude ( $\alpha=0.773$ ) and behaviour ( $\alpha=0.846$ ).

## **5.8 FORMING CONCLUSIONS AND WRITING A REPORT**

Once the data has been analysed, it needs to be reported. The report should consist of information that decision-makers need and wish to know. The results should be reported, in an understandable manner, and include an explanation of the usefulness of the findings (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002:930).

In the next chapter the results from the study will be presented by means of descriptive and inferential statistics.

# CHAPTER 6

## RESULTS

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*“Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.”*

Sagan (1995)

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Studying sport consumer behaviour involves studying sport consumers' needs and desires. As stated in Chapter 3 (see section 3.4), there are internal and external factors that may influence sport consumers' purchasing decisions. As the study focuses on understanding supporters' psychological connection that they have to a sports team, sport consumer behaviour was necessary for an in-depth understanding of the respondents. Sport consumer behaviour was required in order to effectively consider the main objective of this study which was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team.

As stipulated in Chapter 5 (see section 5.5.2.4), a 2x2x2 full factorial design was applied to assess the main objective of this study. A questionnaire was used to measure respondents' attraction and their attachment to a fistball team when shown one of the eight treatment groups. After the data was collected, by way of personal interviews in shopping malls, the data was cleaned and coded. In this chapter, the results are provided. The data is presented by means of descriptive and inferential statistics.

### 6.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics provide an overall, coherent and straightforward statistical summary of the data (Struwig & Stead, 2007:158). This form of statistics is used to make inferences about the characteristics of the sample (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:486). Descriptive statistics are used merely to

understand the characteristics of the sample and not to make inferences, thus the significance of the results was not of interest in this section. The characteristics of the realised sample in this study are addressed. Cross-tabulations and figures were used for further interpretation of the findings. Taking into account that a 2x2x2 full factorial design (see section 5.2.4) was conducted, 36 respondents per treatment were interviewed. *After incomplete questionnaires were disregarded the sample consisted of 318 respondents; of which 49% comprised of male respondents and 51% were female respondents.*

### **6.2.1 REALISED SAMPLE**

Sport marketers should note that supporters are not homogeneous (Robinson *et al.*, 2004:168). The extent of internalisation that supporters have to a sports team varies (see section 3.5). Thus, data was analysed on respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (n=98), who were, for the purposes of the study, respondents who rated themselves a one, two or three for “extent of support”. The data for low supporters was compared to that for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (n=202), who were, for the purposes of the study, respondents who rated themselves a four or five for “extent of support”.

### **6.2.2 PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE**

As stated, the focus of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, irrespective of gender or age. Figure 6.1 illustrates the respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (n=98), 27% of whom are male and 73% are female. For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (n=202) the sample is made up of 60% male respondents and 40% female respondents.

In Chapter 3 (see section 3.5.2), the different types of supporters were presented. For the purposes of this study respondents who considered

themselves to be low supporters, were referred to as contextual and experiential supporters. Contextual and experiential supporters look for the thrill, excitement and social aspects in sport. According to Krishna (2008:74-75), women generally are attracted to sport because of the emotional and social aspects. Therefore, the fact that more female respondents in this study indicated that they considered themselves to be low supporters is supported by Krishna (2008). *Thus, the respondents were representative in terms of portraying women as low supporters.*

In this study, respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters were referred as social and super supporters. Social and super supporters have strong psychological connections with a sports team, and may identify the sports team as a part of their own identity. In other words, the sports team may be a part of who they are. According to Krishna (2008:74), men may prefer the aggressive and competitive aspect of sport as it is a reflection of their own personality (see section 3.4.1). Therefore, the fact that more male respondents in this study indicated that they considered themselves to be high supporters is supported by Krishna (2008). *The results reveal that respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters were representative in terms of portraying men as high supporters.*

**Figure 6.1 Gender**

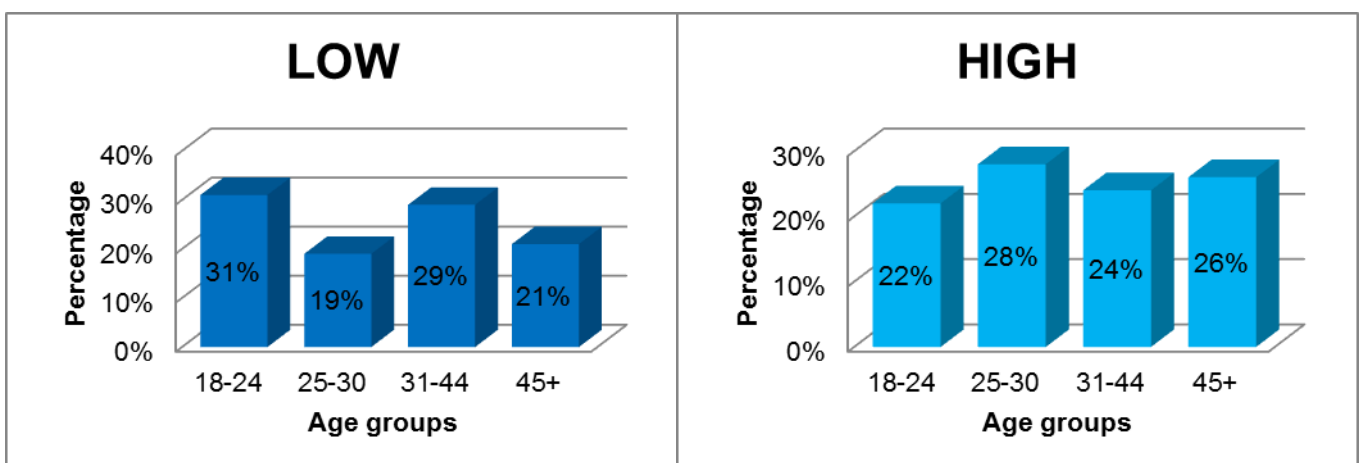


Fieldworkers were instructed to interview sport supporters and were told that the age of respondents was irrelevant for the purposes of selecting

respondents (see section 5.5.4). The average age of respondents who took part in this study was 34 years old ( $\bar{x} = 33.81$ ). The graph (refer to Figure 6.2) for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $n=98$ ) shows that 31% of the respondents were in the age groups 18 and 24, 19% are in the age groups 25 and 30, 29% are in the age groups 31 to 44 and 21% are in the age groups of 45 and over. *The percentages of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters were fairly close in terms of the age groups.*

Likewise, for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters the number of respondents in the age groups was similar to the percentages of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters. For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the number of respondents in the age group, 18 and 24 was 22%, 28% were in the age groups 25 and 30, 24% were in the age groups 31 and 44 and 26% were over the age of 45. *Thus, the age of respondents, for both, respondents who considered themselves to be low and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, was spread fairly evenly across age categories.*

**Figure 6.2 Distribution of sample according to age**

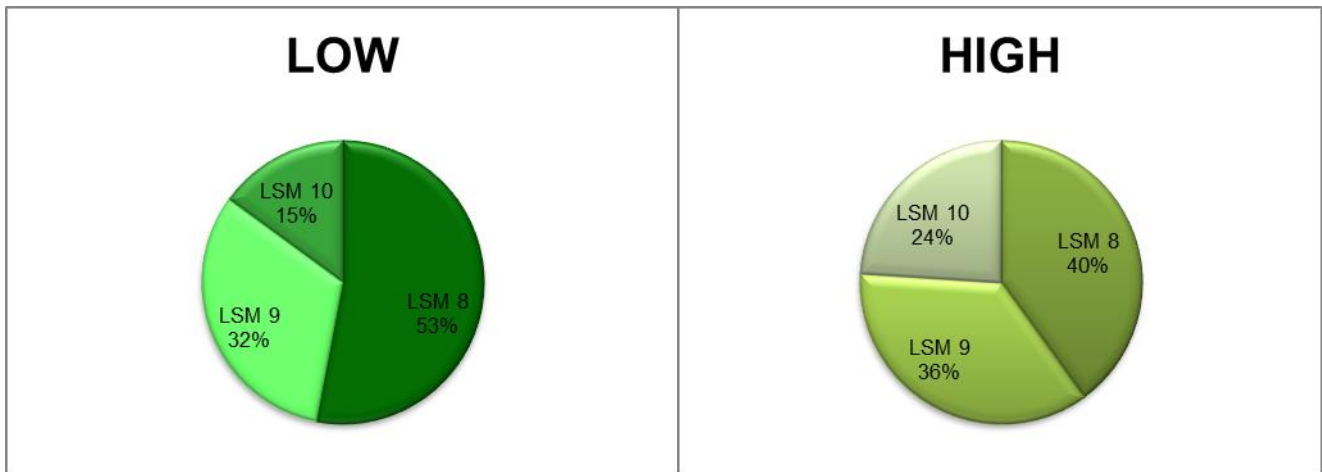


The sport of interest in this study was fistball (see section 5.5.2.4). Sport of a similar nature includes volleyball and tennis. In Chapter 5 (section 5.5.4), it was explained that volleyball and tennis are mainly broadcast on



DSTV/Supersport (SATA, 2005). Therefore, the sample consisted of respondents who may have access to DSTV/Supersport as well as having a disposable income large enough to spend on recreational activities, such as sports. According to SAARF (2010), LSM groups 8 to 10 would meet the above criteria.

**Figure 6.3** Distribution of sample according to LSM groups

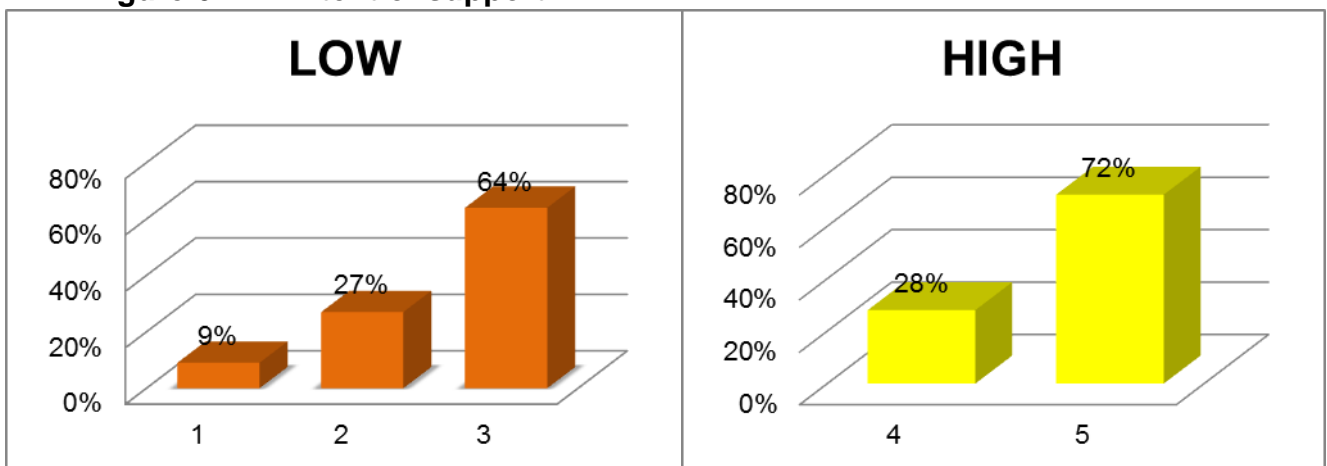


As Figure 6.3 shows, for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (n=98), LSM 8 is made up of 53% of the respondents, LSM 9 consists of 32% of the respondents, and LSM 10 consists of 15% of the respondents. Likewise the majority of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters come from LSM 8 (40%), followed by LSM 9 (36%) and LSM 10, thus respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters make up 24%. The respondents were therefore affluent (according to LSM criteria). *Thus, the respondents fitted the proposed target market and the LSM groups corresponded with the malls that were selected.*

Respondents were initially asked if they were sport supporters, and if so, to what extent (see section 5.5.3). Figure 6.4 illustrates that out of the respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (n=98), 9% of the respondents rated themselves a one on a scale of five, thus indicating that they were not big supporters. Respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters who rated themselves a two made up 27% and respondents who rated themselves a three made up 64%. For respondents who

considered themselves to be high supporters (n=202), 28% of the respondents rated themselves a four out of five and 72% of the respondents considered themselves to be big supporters. *As the purpose of the study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, the results revealed that out of the respondents that were selected to take part in the study, not only did the majority of the respondents considered themselves to be fairly high supporters (64% rating themselves a 3 out of 5) but a large proportion indicated that they were very big supporters (72% rated themselves a 5 out of 5).*

**Figure 6.4 Extent of support**



Consumers were initially asked a screening question, namely whether they had heard of the sport, fistball. If they had not heard of fistball, they could partake in the research study (see section 5.5.3). To gain knowledge as to what sport the respondents did follow (and what they may have been thinking of when completing the experiment), during the interview, respondents were asked which sport they followed. Table 6.1 shows that 64.3% of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters followed soccer, and 62.7% of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters followed soccer.

Respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters who followed rugby made up 49%, whilst 65% of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters indicated that they followed rugby. The category “other” included sports such as netball, golf, gymnastics, cycling, boxing, wrestling,

swimming, volleyball and surfing; 39% of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters indicated they followed such sports compared to 30% of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. The proportion of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters who followed cricket (34%), tennis (15%), athletics (10%) and hockey (4%) was higher than the proportion of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters.

**Table 6.1 Sport that respondents followed**

LOW			HIGH		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Soccer	63	64	Soccer	138	63
Rugby	48	49	Rugby	143	65
Cricket	22	22	Cricket	75	34
Tennis	12	12	Tennis	32	15
Athletics	6	6	Athletics	23	10
Hockey	3	3	Hockey	9	4
Other	38	39	Other	66	30

The majority of the respondents, respondents who considered themselves to be low and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, followed soccer and rugby, which are both ball sports. Fistball is also a ball sport. *Thus, the respondents who were selected to take part in this study, were appropriate, as the majority of the respondents followed a ball sport, and fistball is also a ball sport.*

However, fistball is a sport similar to tennis (see section 5.5.2.4). And respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, indicated that tennis was a sport that was followed by the minority of the respondents. *Thus, the majority of the respondents (both low and high supporters) followed soccer and rugby, and the number of respondents (low or high supporters) who indicated that they followed tennis (a sport similar to fistball) were in the minority.*

### 6.2.3 RESPONDENTS' RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In Chapter 4 (see section 4.6.3), it was explained that as individuals mature, they may partake in activities and interests that expand beyond the confines of their home as they may want to develop an interest in the world of ideas. In doing so, individuals may turn to television viewing and reality-orientated media (such as newspapers). The following sub-sections focus on the amount of time respondents spent occupied with television (TV), the news, newspapers and socialising with friends as these activities include exposure to sport. The amount of media and socialising with friends that supporters were exposed to, may give insight for sport marketers into the influences on supporters' purchasing decisions (see section 2.5).

#### 6.2.3.1 Approximate hours spent watching TV

Respondents were asked to give an estimate of the number of hours they spent watching TV. By taking into account television as a media-use habit, sport marketers may find an indication of the exposure respondents have to television, particularly before and during sporting events, which may influence their purchasing decisions.

**Figure 6.5 A comparison of approximate hours spent watching TV between low supporters vs. high supporters**

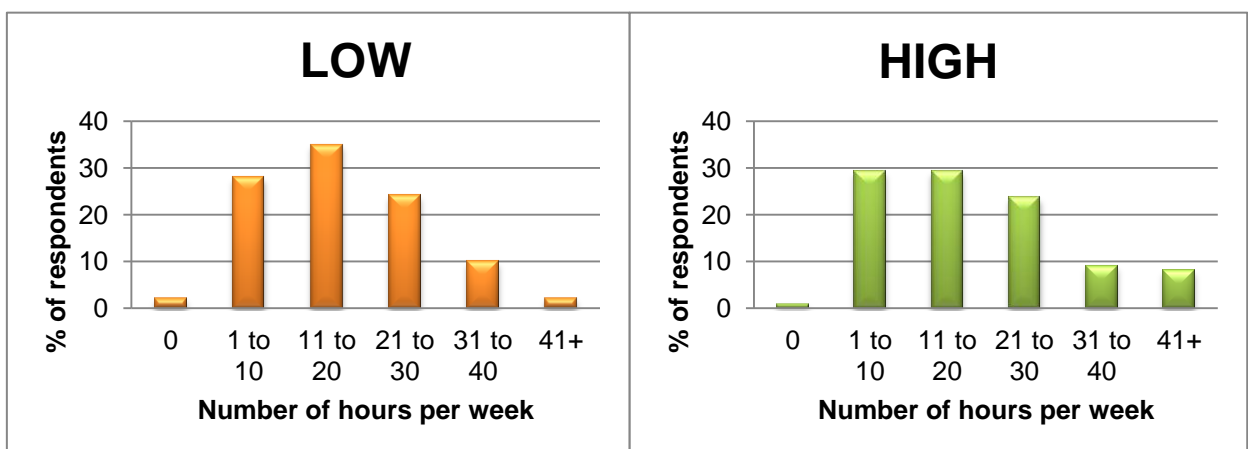


Figure 6.5 shows the number of hours spent watching TV by comparing respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. Respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (35%) and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (29%), watch on average between 11 to 20 hours of TV in a week. The results illustrate that the average peak hours are the same for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. *Thus, a high percentage of the sample watches television.*

### 6.2.3.2 Approximate hours spent watching the news

The question “Approximately how many hours do you watch the news per week?” was asked as this gave an indication of the amount of sport-related information that respondents might gather while watching the news. Again, the way in which supporters get information about sport is of relevance in order to determine what supporters’ external factors are, which may impact on their purchasing-decisions (see section 3.4).

**Figure 6.6 A comparison of approximate hours spent watching the news between low supporters vs. high supporters**

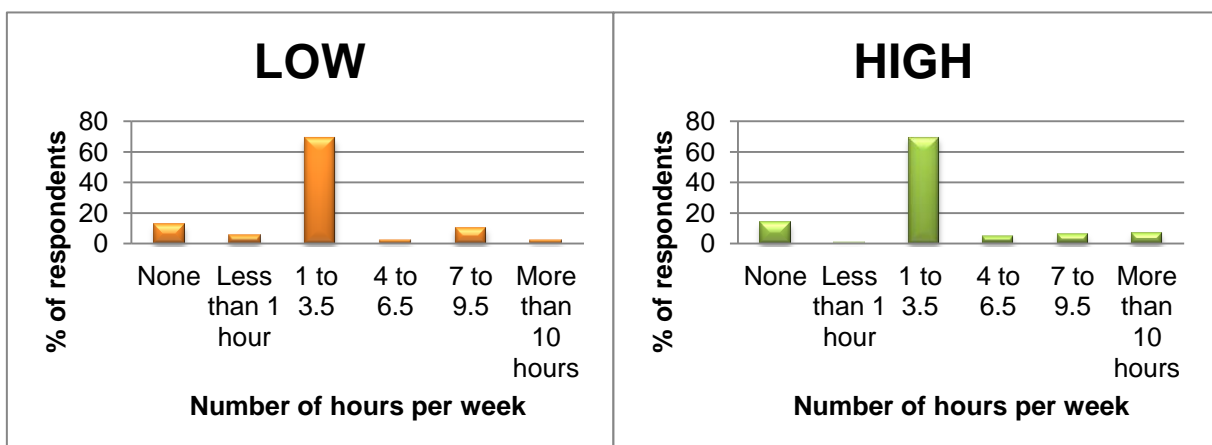


Figure 6.6 depicts that between respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, although a slightly higher percentage of respondents who

considered themselves to be low supporters indicated that they watched more news, the results are similar. *Thus, both high and low supporters tended to watch the news on average between 2 to 5 times in a week (1 to 3.5 hours) and therefore both may be exposed to the information that is shown during the news on sport.*

### 6.2.3.3 Approximate hours spent socialising with friends

Respondents were asked to give an approximate number of hours they spent socialising with their friends. As explained in consumer behaviour (see section 2.5), family and friends might influence consumers' decisions about purchasing. Previous research has also suggested that the interaction with friends influences brand preferences (Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413). Therefore, this item was asked to see how much exposure respondents had to their friends who might impact on their purchasing decisions.

**Figure 6.7 A comparison of approximate hours spent socialising with friends between low supporters vs. high supporters**

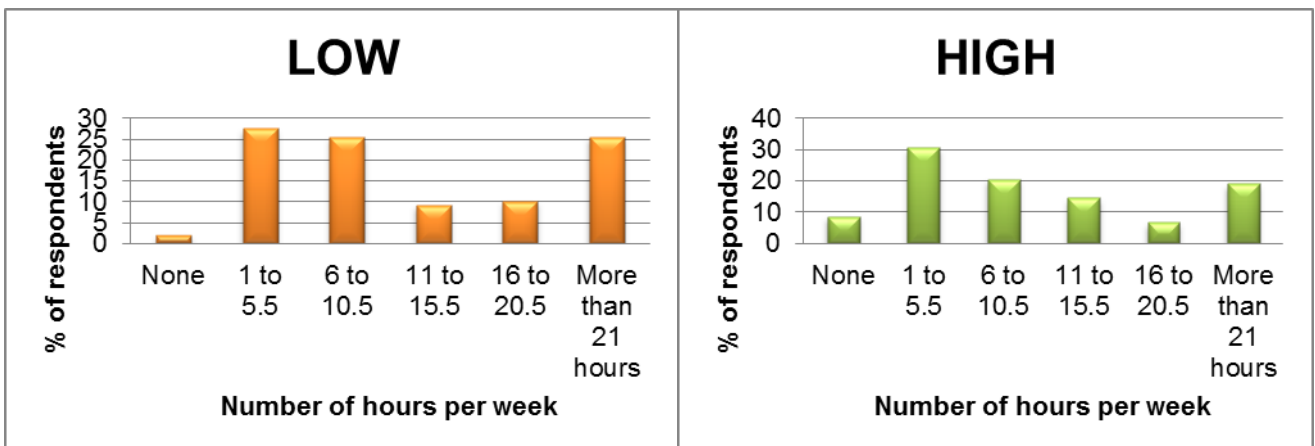


Figure 6.7 shows that respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters socialised for slightly longer periods than respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. In addition, respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters had a larger percentage than respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters who indicated that they did not socialise at all (8.6%) in comparison to respondents who

considered themselves to be low supporters (2%). *Thus, of those who did not socialise at all, respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters socialised less than respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters.*

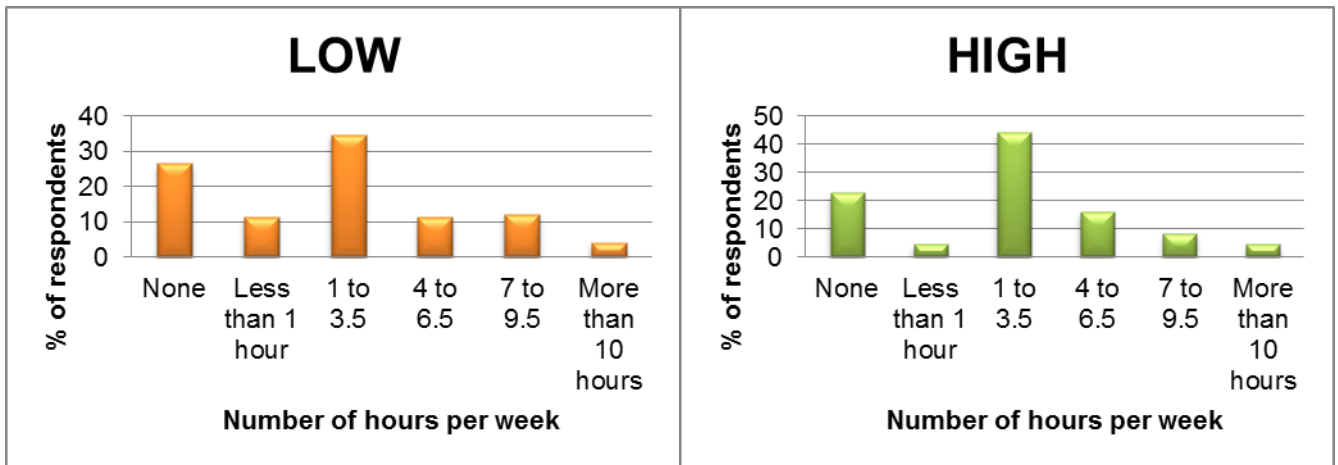
Taking into account Figure 6.5, which demonstrates the hours spent watching TV, a large portion of the hours spent watching TV for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters ( $\bar{x} = 20.23$  hours) in comparison to respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $\bar{x} = 17.84$  hours) might be attributed to high supporters watching sport alone. *This may be due to high supporters preferring to watch sport on their own and in the comfort of their own home.*

#### **6.2.3.4 Approximate hours spent reading the newspaper**

The number of hours respondents spent reading the newspaper per week was also investigated. Whether they read the newspaper online or a hard copy was irrelevant, as an indication of the amount of time invested in sport (other than watching a match) was all that was required (see section 5.5.3). According to previous research, individuals exposed to newspapers are suggested as being individuals who are interested in “reality-orientated” media, which may give an indication of their social class. Newspapers may also be considered as an external influence to supporters when making purchasing decisions.

The approximate number of hours spent reading the newspaper per week (Figure 6.8) shows that of the respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, 26.5% did not read the newspaper, 11.2% read the newspaper for less than one hour a week, 34.7% read the newspaper for anything between an hour to three and a half hours per week, 11.2% read the newspaper for anything between four to six-and-a-half hours a week, 12.2% of the respondents indicated that they read the newspaper for anything between seven to nine-and-a-half hours per week and 4.1% of the respondents read newspapers for more than 10 hours in a week.

**Figure 6.8 Comparison of approximate hours spent reading the newspaper between low supporters vs. high supporters**



When the number of hours respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters spent reading the newspaper is compared to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the results are fairly similar. There are peaks for no hours spent reading the newspaper and reading between 1 and 3.5 hours in a week. *Therefore, respondents who considered themselves to be both low and high supporters, in LSM groups 8 to 10 read the newspaper.*

#### 6.2.4 RESPONDENTS' ATTRACTION AND ATTACHMENT

After respondents were read a paragraph on fistball and shown a 30-second video-clip as to what fistball entails, a questionnaire was used to measure respondents attraction to fistball (see section 5.6). Table 6.2 illustrates the frequencies (minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation) for respondents in terms of their attraction to fistball. For the purposes of the study, if respondents answered the attraction items on the semantic-differential scale in the questionnaire (refer to Appendix A) with a rating of 2.5 or more out of a scale of 5, the assumption was that respondents showed an attraction to fistball. The results reveal that that across all the treatment groups, the means were higher than 2.5 on a scale of 5. For example, in treatment group one the mean for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.40$ ) and for respondents who considered themselves



to be high supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.61$ ), was higher than 2.5. *Therefore, one can assume that respondents showed an attraction to fistball.*

**Table 6.2 Attraction frequencies**

TREATMENT GROUP	CONSTRUCT	LOW SUPPORTERS				HIGH SUPPORTERS			
		MIN	MAX	$\bar{x}$	S	MIN	MAX	$\bar{x}$	S
Treatment group 1	Attraction	3.67	5	4.40	0.442	3.33	5	4.61	0.447
Treatment group 2	Attraction	3.67	5	4.35	0.507	3.83	5	4.63	0.382
Treatment group 3	Attraction	3	5	4.52	0.619	3.67	5	4.59	0.433
Treatment group 4	Attraction	2.5	5	4.17	0.830	3	5	4.53	0.529
Treatment group 5	Attraction	3.83	5	4.29	0.439	3.33	5	4.56	0.464
Treatment group 6	Attraction	2.83	4.83	4.24	0.673	3.67	5	4.37	0.469
Treatment group 7	Attraction	3.33	5	4.61	0.462	3.83	5	4.69	0.395
Treatment group 8	Attraction	3.83	5	4.5	0.333	2.5	5	4.51	0.599

In addition, although the means are not significantly different to one another, the results revealed a general trend that the means of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters were less than the means of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. For example, in treatment group two, the mean for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.35$ ) is lower than the mean for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.63$ ). *Thus, the results reveal that, although not significantly different, the general trend is that the attraction for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters is higher than the attraction for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters.*

The next step when the personal interview had been conducted, was to show each respondent one of the eight posters, which had the experimental manipulations included (see section 5.6). The purpose of the poster in the experiment was to assess whether the manipulations that had been derived

from the investment model, would influence supporters attachment to a fistball team (see section 5.5.2.4). Table 6.3 shows the frequencies (minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation), for respondents who considered themselves to be both low and high supporters. The frequencies in the table represent the attachment that respondents had to one of the eight fistball teams that they were exposed to by means of the poster.

As stated above, a mean of 2.5 or higher would indicate that respondents showed attachment to a fistball team. As depicted in Table 6.3, all the means are higher than 2.5. *Therefore, across all treatment groups, respondents showed that they were attached to a fistball team.*

**Table 6.3 Attachment frequencies**

TREATMENT GROUP	CONSTRUCT	LOW SUPPORTERS				HIGH SUPPORTERS			
		MIN	MAX	$\bar{x}$	S	MIN	MAX	$\bar{x}$	S
Treatment group 1 (8 hours/won all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	2	5	4.25	0.872	2	5	4.43	0.750
	Behaviour	1	4.5	3.02	1.058	1	5	2.97	1.035
Treatment group 2 (8 hours/lost all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	3	5	4.00	0.926	3	5	4.57	0.631
	Behaviour	1	4.25	2.72	1.168	1.25	4.75	3.19	0.992
Treatment group 3 (8 hours/won all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	1	5	4.10	1.121	2.5	5	4.57	0.638
	Behaviour	1	5	2.63	1.172	1	5	3.38	1.131
Treatment group 4 (8 hours/lost all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	1	5	4.06	1.069	2	5	4.42	0.708
	Behaviour	1	5	2.90	1.433	1	5	3.01	1.175
Treatment group 5 (1 hour/won all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	3	5	3.83	0.829	2.5	5	4.19	0.838
	Behaviour	1	5	2.83	1.452	1	4.75	2.89	1.167
Treatment group 6 (1 hour/lost all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	2.5	5	4.14	0.945	3	5	4.34	0.669
	Behaviour	1.25	4.75	2.71	1.254	1	5	3.28	1.062
Treatment group 7 (1 hour/won all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	1	5	4.24	0.977	3	5	4.62	0.526
	Behaviour	1	5	2.78	1.320	1	5	2.97	1.322
Treatment group 8 (1 hour/lost all matches/24 teams worth supporting)	Attitude	4	5	4.56	0.496	3	5	4.32	0.656
	Behaviour	1.25	4.75	2.63	1.035	1	5	3.31	0.922

The attachment construct comprised of attitude and behaviour (see section 5.5.3). The results reveal that the means for attitude were higher than the means for behaviour in every treatment group in this study, for both respondents who considered themselves to be low and high supporters. For example, in treatment group two, the attitude of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.00$ ) was higher than their behaviour ( $\bar{x}$

= 2.72); likewise, the attitude of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters ( $\bar{x} = 4.57$ ) was also higher than their behaviour ( $\bar{x} = 3.19$ ). *Thus, in all treatment groups, in terms of attachment, the means for attitude were higher than the means for behaviour.*

For respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, their highest attachment, in terms of attitude, was in treatment group eight ( $\bar{x} = 4.56$ ). In treatment group eight, there was a low manipulation for investment size, a low manipulation for satisfaction level and a low manipulation for quality of alternatives. In terms of behaviour, for low supporters the mean of behaviour was highest in treatment group one ( $\bar{x} = 3.02$ ). In treatment group one, there were high manipulations for investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level.

In the results, there is evidence that the highest attachment for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (in terms of respondents' attitude) was in treatment groups two ( $\bar{x} = 4.57$ ) and three ( $\bar{x} = 4.57$ ). In treatment groups two and three, the experimental manipulations were identical in terms of the manipulation for investment size being high and the manipulation for quality of alternatives being low. The difference in the manipulations, in treatment groups two and three, was the manipulation for satisfaction level. In treatment group two, there was a low manipulation for satisfaction level, and in treatment group three, the manipulation for satisfaction level was high.

When considering behaviour in terms of the attachment, the mean for behaviour for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters was the highest ( $\bar{x} = 3.38$ ) in treatment group three. As mentioned above, in treatment group three, there was a high manipulation for investment size, a high manipulation for satisfaction level and a low manipulation for quality of alternatives.

## 6.3 SUPPORTERS' RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATIVE TO ATTRACTION AND ATTACHMENT

In the questionnaire, items measuring attachment were based on respondents' attitude and behavioural components. To measure supporters' cognitive component of attachment, recreational activities were assessed (see section 4.6.3). In addition, respondents' recreational activities were measured, because as fistball was a fictitious sport for the respondents and thus they would have had no real experience with fistball. Their real-life recreational habits were measured to assess whether they would realistically be attracted and become attached to fistball. Also, the recreational activity measures were used to gain an idea of the most common forms of media to which supporters were exposed, which might become an external factor and an influence in their purchasing decisions.

Table 6.4 shows the strength of the relationship between the age of respondents and the number of hours they spent reading the newspaper. The results were significant ( $p < 0.1$ ) for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters. Thus, there was a relationship between age and hours spent reading the newspaper. A positive correlation indicates that as the one variable increases, so does the other (Pallant, 2005:101).

**Table 6.4 Correlation between age of respondents and hours spent reading the newspaper**

	Sig.	Pearson
Low supporters	0.019	0.237
High Supporters	0.046	0.135

The relationship between the age of respondents and the hours spent reading the newspaper is significant for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $r = 0.237$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ). As the respondents' age increases, so do the number of hours spent reading the newspaper for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters.

For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, there is no significant relationship between the age of respondents and the hours spent reading the newspaper. What this may suggest is that high supporters may get information regarding the sports by other means. *The results thus revealed that as respondents' age increases, the amount of time spent reading the newspaper increases for low supporters. This may be attributed to the younger generation perhaps being more inclined to read the news online as opposed to reading a newspaper. Respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters may also use the Internet as a source of information about sport. The relevance of knowing that supporters may read the news online is that the Internet may thus be considered as an external influence for supporters.*

**Table 6.5 Correlation between age of respondents and hours spent socialising with friends**

	Sig.	Pearson
Low supporters	0.007	-0.271
High Supporters	0.001	-0.221

Table 6.5 shows that there is a significant negative correlation between the age of high supporters and socialising with friends ( $r=-0.242$ ,  $p<0.1$ ). *In terms of high supporters, the younger the supporter, the more hours spent socialising with friends.*

## 6.4 SPORT CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR: ATTRACTION

Inferential statistics were assessed to test the propositions of the study. Based on the theory discussed in sport consumer behaviour (see section 3.4), results that measured respondents' attraction were analysed.

### 6.4.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXTENT OF SUPPORT AND ATTRACTION

A correlation was conducted between the extent of support (respondents who considered themselves to be low and high supporters') and their attraction to

fistball (refer to Table 6.6) to assess if there is a relationship between respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and attraction or respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters and attraction.

**Table 6.6 Correlation between extent of support and attraction**

	Sig.	Pearson
<b>Low supporters</b>	0.244	0.119
<b>High Supporters</b>	0.558	0.040

The overall result between extent of support and attraction is that there is no significant relationship if the respondent is a low or high supporter and their attraction to fistball ( $p > 0.1$ ).

#### 6.4.2 DIFFERENCES IN RESPONDENTS' ATTRACTION

To assess whether attraction was the same for all respondents a one-way ANOVA was conducted. This was used to assess if there was a difference in attraction to a sports team, if the respondents were exposed to a particular treatment group.

**Table 6.7 One-way ANOVA in terms of experiments**

	LOW SUPPORTERS					HIGH SUPPORTERS				
	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
<b>ANOVA</b>	61.277	14	4.377	0.826	0.640	72.823	12	6.069	1.107	0.442

As Table 6.7 shows, there is no significant difference between attraction for respondents in the eight different treatment groups for both respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $F(10, 98) = 0.826, p > 0.1$ ) and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters ( $F(12, 202) = 1.107, p > 0.01$ ). Irrespective of which experiment the respondent was exposed to, the respondent's attraction to the sports team did not change in certain

treatment groups (refer to Table 6.2). *Thus, attraction was relatively the same across all treatment groups.*

## 6.5 SPORT CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR: ATTACHMENT

To gain an understanding of the respondents in this study and their attachment, relationships and differences were assessed in terms of supporters' attachment and are discussed next.

### 6.5.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXTENT OF SUPPORT AND ATTACHMENT

A correlation was conducted to assess if there was a relationship between the extent of support and attachment. The results are illustrated in Table 6.8.

**Table 6.8 Correlation between extent of support and attachment**

	Sig.	Pearson
Low supporters	0.005	0.282
High Supporters	0.890	0.009

When the data was analysed in terms of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, the results revealed that as the extent of support increased, the respondent's attachment increased ( $r=0.282$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). When the data was analysed by taking into account only respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the relationship was not significant ( $p>0.05$ ). *The results suggest that it would be harder to get respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters attached without prior knowledge of the sport, fistball, whereas respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters showed attraction and attachment to a fistball team. This may be due to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters already being attached to another sports team.*

As stated, the way in which respondents were assessed to determine whether they would become attached to a fistball team was by means of a poster. The

poster included three different manipulations (comprising of investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level). To measure the effect that the treatment groups had on respondents' attachment, repeated measures ANOVA were conducted (see section 5.7.2.2).

## **6.5.2 REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA**

As the investment model consists of three factors and two levels per factor were included in this study, 2x2x2 full factorial design was conducted. Factorial designs allow the researcher to determine the magnitude of the main effects and the interaction effect that may exist between independent variables (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:294) (see section 5.7.2.2). Main effects are differences in the dependent variable between treatment levels. Interactions produce differences (in the dependent variable) in the treatments based on the different combinations of variables (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:285).

For the purposes of this study, investment size, satisfaction level and quality of alternatives had two levels each (a high and low manipulation). By using a full factorial design, different combinations based on the three investment model variables were grouped together; for example a high manipulation for investment size, a low manipulation for satisfaction level, and a high manipulation for quality of alternatives (see poster D in Appendix B).

### **6.5.2.1 Main effects**

As stated, main effects take into account the experimental differences in dependent variable means between the different levels of any single treatment (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:258) (see section 5.7.2.4). The main effects would take into consideration one manipulation in isolation. Table 6.9 takes into account the main effects in this study.

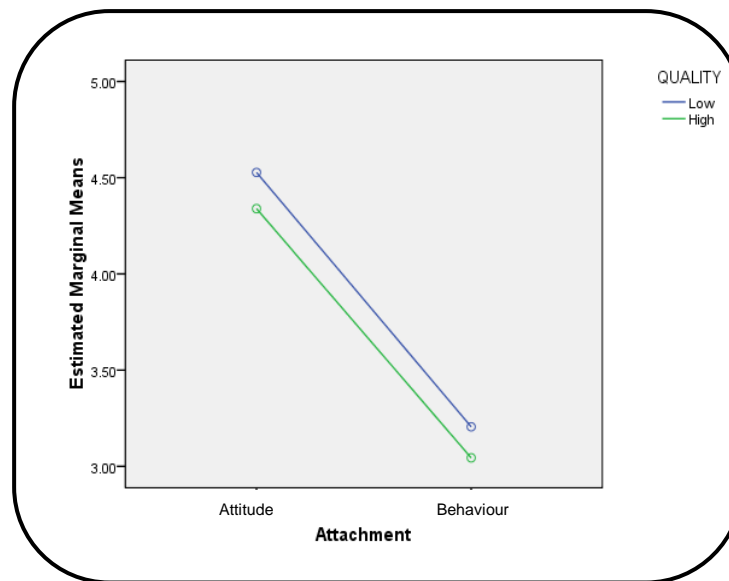


**Table 6.9 Main effects for low and high supporters**

	LOW SUPPORTERS			HIGH SUPPORTERS		
	DF	F	SIG.	DF	F	SIG.
<b>MAIN EFFECTS</b>						
INVESTMENT	1	0.001	0.977	1	0.645	0.423
SATISFACTION	1	0.001	0.980	1	0.329	0.567
QUALITY	1	0.221	0.639	1	3.46	0.064

Table 6.9 illustrates that, for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters there were no significant main effect differences for investment size ( $F(1, 98) = 0.001, p > 0.1$ ), satisfaction level ( $F(1, 98) = 0.001, p > 0.1$ ) nor quality of alternatives ( $F(1, 98) = 0.221, p > 0.1$ ). For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters there were no significant main effect differences found for investment size or satisfaction level. Therefore,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  were not corroborated. *The possible reason that there was no significant difference between investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level may be attributed to the respondents that were used in this study.*

There was however, a significant main effect difference found in terms of quality of alternatives ( $F(1, 202) = 3.46, p < 0.1$ ) for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters.  $P_3$  was therefore corroborated. Quality of alternatives was found to be of relevance for the purposes of this study. A Fisher Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc test was used when the researcher wanted to further compare the mean of one group to that of another group (Stevens, 1999:86). Thus, a Fisher Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc test was conducted (see section 5.7.2.2.).

**Figure 6.9** Estimated marginal means for quality of alternatives

Further analysis of the data was conducted by performing the Fisher LSD post-hoc test on quality of alternatives for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. The results reveal that the estimated marginal mean for low quality of alternatives ( $\bar{x} = 3.860$ ) was higher than the estimated marginal mean for high quality of alternatives ( $\bar{x} = 3.695$ ), as illustrated in Figure 6.9.

Figure 6.9 also shows that for attachment, the estimated marginal mean for attitude ( $\bar{x} = 4.434$ ) is higher than behaviour ( $\bar{x} = 3.122$ ). As explained in Chapter 4 (see section 4.2), the courtship process that individuals go through begins when they start to form an emotional attachment (attitude) to another individual. At this beginning stage, there is a minimal amount of behavioural attachment. Over time, increasing levels of behavioural attachment occurs (Johnson, 1973:399). *The results reveal that, in a similar way to the stages of courtship, supporters' attitude is higher than their behaviour.*

Therefore, from the results it is evident that quality of alternatives had an effect on respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters' attachment in that when there was a high quality of alternatives (i.e. a number of teams worth supporting), there was a low attachment and when there was a low quality of alternatives (i.e. few teams worth supporting), there was a

high attachment (refer to Figure 6.9). Thus, the results show evidence that, for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the lower the quality of alternatives, the higher the attachment that they had to a sports team.

### 6.5.2.2 Interaction effects

Interaction effects assess if the differences between the levels of one variable are dependent on the level of another variable (Morris, 2010:101). The interaction effects take into account if the impact of one variable is influenced by the second or third variable (Pallant, 2005:273). As stated (see section 5.7.2.2), in the same way that an individual's favourite drink may be coffee and favourite temperature is cold. However, the individual may not prefer cold coffee. This is a result of an interaction. The interaction effects are shown in Table 6.10.

**Table 6.10 Interaction effects for low and high supporters**

	LOW SUPPORTERS				HIGH SUPPORTERS			
	DF	F	SIG.	PARTIAL ETA SQUARED	DF	F	SIG.	PARTIAL ETA SQUARED
<b>INTERACTION EFFECTS</b>								
<b>TWO-WAY</b>								
INVESTMENT * SATISFACTION	1	0.183	0.67	0.002	1	1.026	0.312	0.005
INVESTMENT * QUALITY	1	0.24	0.625	0.003	1	0.257	0.613	0.001
SATISFACTION * QUALITY	1	0.056	0.813	0.001	1	0.966	0.327	0.005
<b>THREE-WAY</b>								
INVESTMENT * SATISFACTION * QUALITY	1	0.364	0.548	<b>0.004</b>	1	0.156	0.693	<b>0.001</b>

- **Two-way interactions**

The significant values of the two-way interaction effects (refer to Table 6.10) between investment and satisfaction ( $p > 0.1$ ), investment and quality ( $p > 0.1$ ),

and satisfaction and quality ( $p > 0.1$ ) were all higher than 0.1, and therefore not significant.  $P_4$  is not corroborated. *Thus, no significant two-way interactions in any of the two-way interactions between investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level had an effect on attachment for sport supporters.*

As mentioned, the size of the sample in this study was small, which resulted in a low statistical power (see section 5.7.2.3). Thus, the effect size, by means of partial eta squared was considered.

When analysing the partial eta squared values, the interaction effect between satisfaction\*quality for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (partial eta squared = 0.005) was higher than the interaction between satisfaction\*quality for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (partial eta squared = 0.001). For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters the interaction effect between investment size\*satisfaction level (partial eta squared = 0.005) was greater than the interaction effect between investment size\*satisfaction level for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (partial eta squared = 0.002). *Therefore, satisfaction level was considered important to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, when considering the quality of alternative teams worth supporting and the investment size that high supporters would spend on a sports team.*

- ***Three-way interactions***

The significant value of the three-way interaction effect between investment size, satisfaction level, and quality of alternatives ( $p > 0.1$ ), was higher than 0.1 and therefore not significant.  $P_4$  is therefore not corroborated. *Consequently, no three-way combinations of investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level had a significant effect on supporters' attachment.*

Again, as discussed, the effect size was considered (see section 5.7.2.3). Specifically partial eta squared values for the three-way interaction were

noted (refer to Table 6.10). The difference in the three-way interaction between investment size\*satisfaction level\*quality of alternatives for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (partial eta squared =0.01) is smaller than for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters (partial eta squared =0.04). *Therefore, respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters would consider the combination of investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level to be important.*

## 6.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, descriptive statistics were conducted in order to apply the knowledge derived from sport consumer behaviour and to present a profile of the sample. The sample reflected the intended target audience of sport supporters from LSM groups 8 to 10, irrespective of gender or age. In addition, the amount of time respondents spent watching the news, reading the newspaper, or socialising with friends, was analysed and compared to the results of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters to assist sport marketers in comprehending different supporters' cognitive attachment.

The inferential statistics were assessed by means of Pearson correlations and ANOVA, n-way and repeated measures. From the findings, the main effect for quality of alternatives was significant in terms of influencing how respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters become attached to a sports team. A two-way interaction revealed that quality of alternatives\*satisfaction level and satisfaction level\*investment size was important for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. A three-way interaction between investment size\*quality of alternatives\*satisfaction level suggested that the investment model variables were considered important to respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters. The next chapter will delve into the conclusions and recommendations from the results presented in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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*“A major stimulant to creative thinking is focused questions. There is something about a well-worded question that often penetrates to the heart of the matter and triggers new ideas and insights.”*

Tracy (2008)

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Sport marketing is a relatively new sub-discipline of marketing, particularly in South Africa. Although academics and practitioners have conducted research on sport consumer behaviour, sport consumers' behaviour remains an emerging field of study. The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, therefore an understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was addressed as it results in different types of supporters. Thus, acquiring knowledge with regards to the psychological connection that different supporters have to a sports team and how attachment to a sports team occurs, can enhance the understanding of sport consumer behaviour.

The previous chapter dealt with the research findings of the study. In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations are drawn. Limitations, as well as future research are discussed. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the reconciliation of objectives.

## **7.2 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY**

Casual research was undertaken in this study. A 2x2x2 full factorial experiment was conducted to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The results obtained were discussed in Chapter 6. Conclusions drawn from the results are discussed accordingly.

### **7.2.1 REALISED SAMPLE**

The realised sample in this study consisted of 318 respondents; of which 49% comprised of male respondents and 51% female respondents. Respondents indicated their extent of support, and as a result, more female respondents indicated that they considered themselves to be low supporters and more male respondents considered themselves to be high supporters. As discussed in Chapter 3 (see section 3.5.2), supporters can be contextual, experiential, social or super supporters. For the purposes of this study respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, were referred to as contextual and experiential supporters. Contextual and experiential supporters look for the thrill, excitement and social aspects in sport. According to Krishna (2008:74-75), women generally are attracted to sport because of the emotional and social aspects. Therefore, the fact that more female respondents in this study indicated that they considered themselves to be low supporters is supported by Krishna (2008). Thus, for the purposes of this study it was concluded that the respondents were representative in terms of portraying women as low supporters.

For the purposes of this study, respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters were referred to as social and super supporters. Social and super supporters have strong psychological connections to a sports team, and may identify the sports team as a part of their own identity. In other words, the sports team may be a part of who they are. According to Krishna (2008:74), men may prefer the aggressive and competitive aspect of sport as it is a reflection of their own personality. Therefore, the fact that more male

respondents in this study indicated that they considered themselves to be high supporters is supported by Krishna (2008). Thus, for the purposes of this study, it was concluded that the respondents were representative in terms of portraying men as high supporters.

There was an even spread of respondents between the age groups 18 to 45. The respondents were from an affluent market (according to the LSM criteria) and would most likely have exposure to DSTV/Supersport, and incomes large enough to spend on recreational activities (see section 5.5.4). The majority of the respondents considered themselves to be fairly high supporters (64% rating themselves a 3 out of 5) and a large proportion indicated that they were very big supporters (72% rated themselves a 5 out of 5). The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, therefore an understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was relevant as it results in different types of supporters. Thus, the sample was deemed appropriate as it consisted of sport supporters (who had different strengths of support), irrespective of their gender or age, who formed part of the higher LSM groups.

In terms of the sport that respondents usually follow, the majority of the respondents in this study indicated that they followed a ball sport. As fistball is also a ball sport, the conclusion was made that respondents who were selected were suitable to participate in this study. However, the majority of the respondents (both low and high supporters) followed soccer and rugby, and the number of respondents (for both low and high supporters) who indicated that they followed tennis (a sport similar to fistball) were in the minority.

In addition to asking respondents what sport they followed in reality (as fistball is not one of them), items in the questionnaire were asked that related to the respondents' everyday recreational activities. The purpose of asking items that pertain to their everyday recreational activities was explained in the study conducted by Moschis *et al.* (1984:413) (see section 5.5.3), where adolescents' activities and interests expand beyond the confines of their



home, as they may want to develop an interest in the world of ideas and may turn to television viewing and “reality-oriented” media such as newspapers. Television, newspaper and friends have been explained as socialisation agents that may influence individuals’ consumer behaviour (see section 4.6.3) (Churchill & Moschis, 1979:23; Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413). Thus, items pertaining to television, newspaper and friends were asked to explain the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Knowledge of respondents’ demographic characteristics may provide sport marketers with guidance as to how different types of supporters may have different external factors that may influence their sport-related purchasing decisions and deciding which team to support. In addition, recreational activities may influence supporters’ thoughts and feelings (their cognition) which may have been brought on by their exposure to internal and external factors.

## **7.2.2 RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES THAT MAY AFFECT SUPPORTERS’ ATTRACTION AND ATTACHMENT**

As explained, attachment comprised of attitude, behaviour and cognition of sport supporters (see section 4.6.3). Individuals’ cognition is their thoughts and feelings. Sport supporters’ cognition is most likely to change from their adolescent stage (when they may have first have shown levels of attraction to a sports team) to when they are adults. Although not an objective of this study, the following results pertaining to respondents’ recreational activities may be worth noting.

- ***Exposure to television and news***

In terms of exposure to television, respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, watched a similar number of hours during a week. Likewise, the number of hours that respondents who considered themselves to be low or high supporters spent watching the news was also similar. Therefore, any exposure to sports on television, and particularly during the news, may be

viewed by both low or high supporters. Respondents are exposed to a variety of advertisements and may develop favourable orientations toward advertised brands. Previous studies (Gorn and Goldberg 1980; Resnik and Stern 1977; Teel, Teel and Bearden, 1979) have suggested that brand preferences have been shown to be linked to television viewing (Moschis *et al.*, 1984:413).

▪ ***Socialising with friends***

When taking into account the number of hours spent socialising with friends, respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters indicated a smaller percentage of time that they do not spend socialising with friends at all (2%) compared to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters of whom a higher percentage (8.6%) did not socialise at all. The results indicated that respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters spent a slightly higher percentage of the hours spent watching TV ( $\bar{x} = 20.23$  hours) in comparison to respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters ( $\bar{x} = 17.84$  hours). The higher amount of hours spent watching TV by respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, and the fact that they spent less time socialising with friends, might be attributed to high supporters preferring to watch sport alone and in the comfort of their own home.

Previous researchers' findings have suggested that there may be a chance of supporters selecting the team they support, attending matches, and purchasing memorabilia based on their internal and external factors (see section 3.4). Thus, by taking into account the number of hours supporters spent with their friends, for the purposes of the study, the researcher might be able to gauge the amount of influence friends may have on supporters, which may affect their attraction to a sports team and perhaps their purchasing decisions.

The recreational activities that respondents do may be determined by the age of the respondents. Thus, understanding which recreational activities different age groups do may be of use as it may indicate internal and external factors

for various age groups (see section 3.4). Therefore, by focusing on recreational activities that involve sport, the researcher might be able to assess the potential recreational activities that could influence supporters' purchasing decisions. A correlation that was conducted indicated that in terms of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the younger the supporter, the more hours spent socialising with friends. Thus, younger supporters' purchasing decisions are more likely to be influenced by their friends.

- ***Exposure to newspapers***

When the age of respondents and the number of hours spent reading the newspaper were correlated, the results showed that as the respondents' age increased, so did the number of hours spent reading the newspaper (refer to Table 6.3). The increase in technology over the last decade has led to cellphones and the Internet becoming a predominant part of most individuals' lives, so news is easily and frequently accessed. News online is most commonly accessed by individuals under the age of 30 (Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2010). Thus, the younger supporters are more likely to gain information online or via alternate technology (such as cellphones), whereas as the results suggest, older respondents (over the age of 30) may be more inclined to gain information by reading newspapers.

### **7.2.3 ATTRACTION**

Although the means were not significantly different to one another when a correlation was conducted, when the means of attraction were perused, the results observed may still be worth noting. The results show that the means of attraction were all above 2.5 out of a scale of 5. Therefore, respondents who considered themselves to be low and high supporters, both showed an attraction to fistball. Although the differences in the means between respondents who considered themselves to be low and high supporters are

not significant, the means indicated that respondents showed an attraction even to a sport that was unfamiliar to them prior to the experiment.

A one-way ANOVA statistical test revealed that for both respondents who considered themselves to be low and high supporters, there was no difference in the attraction to the sports team, regardless which treatment group the respondents were shown. In other words, the attraction was relatively the same across all treatment groups.

It is part of human behaviour to take part in social life and interact with others (see section 2.3). In-groups are made up of individuals who share common interests with one another, as explained by SIT. The individuals in an in-group are most likely to interact with one another (see section 2.5). Sport is one such group where people may feel a sense of belonging by sharing common interests with others and therefore interact with one another. Sport is important in people's lives as it is a way of bringing people together in today's society where fewer kinship ties seem to exist (Blau, 1964:13; Branscombe & Wann, 1991:116) (see section 3.2).

In addition, when the means of attraction were observed, although as stated the means were not significantly different between groups, the results revealed a general trend that the means of respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters were less than the means of respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. This may suggest that the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team determines the attraction attained.

The connection that supporters have to a sports team, works in a similar way that other interpersonal relationships do, in the sense that supporters would go through similar stages of courtship with a sports team (see section 4.2). Supporters go through stages of courtship, where the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports teams may be strong enough for attachment to form, which works in a similar way to how a relationship progresses that may end up in marriage (Mahony *et al.*, 2000:15).

The psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team has been explained by the PCM (see section 3.5.1). According to the PCM, after supporters have an attraction to a sports team, attachment may then be attained.

#### **7.2.4 ATTACHMENT**

The main objective of this research study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. To assess how this may happen, the investment model variables were used. A frequency table which included the means of attachment, a Pearson correlation and repeated measures ANOVA were conducted to answer the stated propositions.

Although the means of attachment were not significantly different, it may still be worthy to note the differences between the means. Across all treatment groups, and for both, respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the means were higher than 2.5 indicating that all the respondents were attached to a fistball team. When the means were compared between respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters (in Table 6.9), across all treatment groups, the results revealed that the means for attitude were higher than the means for behaviour.

When assessing how supporters become attached to a sports team, the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team was found to determine differences in the means of attachment for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. The relationship between extent of support and attachment suggests that respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters had a higher attachment (when comparing means between low and high supporters) to the fistball team.

In a similar to the way a single individual is more inclined to meet and date a number of individuals, compared to an individual who is already in a long-term relationship. Likewise, this may be explained by respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters already being attached to another sports team. The results suggest that it would be harder to get respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters attached without prior knowledge to the fistball team, whereas respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters would be more willing, as the results show a higher mean for their attachment. The strength of supporters' psychological connection that they have to a sports team may therefore be suggested to influence the level of attachment attained (refer to Table 6.3). The results in this study, portray what was suggested by Rusbult (1980a:183) whereby the investment model can be used to predict the degree of attachment in a relationship. Therefore, the results revealed that the investment model variables influenced different types of supporters to have different levels of attachment.

Rusbult's (1980a) investment model has been applied in this study to assess how attachment is formed in interpersonal relationships, such as dating, business and friendships (see section 1.5). As stated, the investment model variables have been suggested by researchers to have the potential to be applied to other types of interpersonal relationships. Thus, the investment model variables were used to assess how supporters became attached to a sports team for the purposes of this study.

#### **7.2.4.1 Effect of investment model variables on attachment**

Propositions in this study were to determine if investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level would cause supporters to become attached to a fistball team. From the results, for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, there were no significant main effects for investment size or satisfaction level. Thus,  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  were not corroborated.

The reason that there were no significant main effect differences may be attributed again to the respondents that were used in this study (see section 5.5.4). Fistball is similar to tennis and volleyball, and the sample used in this study consisted of a low percentage of respondents who followed sports such as tennis (see Table 6.1). The majority of the respondents in this study may not have had any desire to invest their time, money or emotional effort into a sport or be interested in the number of matches won or lost by the fistball team, as that they may not have realistically followed a sport of such nature. The attachment to a fistball team may have been more prominent had tennis supporters only been selected for the purposes of this study. Thus, the issue may have been in terms of the kind of sport supporter that was selected for purposes of this study, and not the investment model variables. In the same way that individuals select a partner according to certain likes and dislikes they have, and even with a particular type of partner in mind, the type of sport that a supporter is attracted to, which may eventually lead to attachment, is also a personal preference.

There was a significant difference between a high quality of alternatives and a low quality of alternatives with respect of teams worth supporting. Therefore,  $P_3$  was corroborated. The results revealed that the lower the quality of alternatives, the higher the attachment for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. This can be explained by Rusbult (1983:102) who suggests that perceptions of alternatives decline over time and supporters become attached to a current relationship. When a person is in a long-term relationship, he or she may not be inclined to meet and date other people. High supporters can be thought of as being “married” to a sports team, in the sense that they are devoted to that particular sports team. Thus, quality of alternative teams worth supporting would be low and supporters would retain their support for one team no matter the performance.

The results also revealed that an attitude is formed before behaviour. In consumer behaviour, consumers’ purchasing decisions are influenced by internal and external factors (see section 2.5). Thus, internal and external factors, such as their personality, their family and friends may influence their

attitudes and their behavioural decisions to make certain purchases. Sport consumer behaviour works in a similar manner (see section 3.4). The results are therefore in line with sport consumer behaviour literature which states that attitudes guide behaviour (Boninger *et al.*, 1995:62; Fazio, 1990:75; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975:480; Funk *et al.*, 2000:126; Krosnick *et al.*, 1993:1132).

As mentioned earlier, in social psychology, social scientists have become increasingly interested in explaining social behaviour, how and why individuals become attached to social objects and why they pursue on-going close relationships. Of particular relevance was the investment model, which suggests that attachment to relationships is based on three criteria: satisfaction level, quality of alternatives and investment size (Rusbult, 1980; Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998). The investment model was applied to sport supporters to assess whether the investment model variables influenced how supporters become attached to a sports team.

#### **7.2.4.2 Result of combining investment model variables**

There were no significant two-way interaction effects between any of the investment model variables for respondents who considered themselves to be low or high supporters. This may have been attributed to the low statistical power in this study, owing to the size of the sample (see section 5.7.2.3).

When taking into account the partial eta squared values however, there were relative differences between respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters and respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters. In terms of two-way interactions, the results revealed that for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the interaction of quality of alternatives and satisfaction level was important. Satisfaction level may be considered important to high supporters, as supporters identify the sports team into their self-concept so are attracted to qualities such as teamwork, strength and success which can make supporters BIRG, and boost their self-esteem (see section 3.4.1.2).



In terms of quality of alternatives, earlier it was explained that the results revealed that low quality of alternatives would cause respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters' attachment to be higher. In addition, if a high satisfaction level is attained perhaps this impacts on respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters' attitude. In terms of their behaviour, it could be suggested that when there are a low alternative of teams worth supporting and if supporters feel there is a level of satisfaction from the sports team, high supporters may be encouraged to act and purchase sport-related products and/or services (investment size).

In terms of the three-way interaction, the results revealed that for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, the interaction of investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level were important variables for them becoming attached to a fistball team. For respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, the investment model variables may therefore have been significant, as low supporters are interested in high-scoring games or watch games for the thrill and excitement (see section 3.5.2). Satisfaction level may determine the amount invested in the sports team and whether there are a number of other teams that they could possibly support.

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. Understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team and the strength of the psychological connection was relevant, as it results in different types of supporters. The results show evidence that all the respondents were attracted and attached to a fistball team. The results revealed that different types of supporters showed different levels of attachment (when comparing the means for respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters to respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters). Thus, the strength of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team result in different interactions of the investment model variables influencing supporters' attachment to a sports team.

## **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were suggested for the study.

### **7.3.1 ATTRACTION**

The results revealed that even with a sport that is unknown, respondents still had an attraction to a sport. This may have been owing to sports teams generally being an in-group where a sense of belonging is felt by supporters. By using the theory from sport consumer behaviour that was able to attract supporters to an unknown sport, the possibility of attracting supporters to a well-known sport may then be even greater. Thus, a recommendation would be for sport marketers to use the internal and external factors to influence supporters' attraction to a sports team, namely encouraging supporters to identify with the team, to BIRG, and to indulge in nostalgia, as well as taking the MSSC and team-characteristic preferences into account in order to attract supporters to a sport (see section 3.4).

Sport marketers should take into consideration supporters' internal and external factors in attracting supporters to a sports team, as well as considering the recreational activities that supporters do. For example, TV is watched by supporters on a regular basis, and therefore could be used as a medium to appeal to supporters, such as using attributes from the MSSC (see section 3.4.2.1) or the concept of nostalgia (see section 3.4.1.3). Thus, the use of family, friends and home in marketing to supporters to encourage attraction to a sports team would be recommended.

The average age of respondents that took part in the study was 34 years old (see section 6.2.2). Young supporters (under the age of 34 years old) spent more of hours in a week socialising with their friends than respondents over 34 years old, therefore having activities that appeal to people below 34 years old may influence their sport-related purchasing decisions. In addition, men

and women follow sport and differ in their response to marketing strategies and marketers need to change the age-old practice of uni-gender focus, and adopt a bi-gender focus in their marketing strategies (Krishna, 2008:75).

Sport marketers should also take into consideration, attracting supporters online, as this may be where the younger generation gets information on sport. No technology has captured the interest of marketers and consumers the way the Internet has (Fullerton, 2007:413). With new technology, companies are merging across communication lines and using the Internet to bring all kinds of entertainment to consumers, and to market items that are related to entertainment (Kaser & Oelkers, 2005:7). Thus, sport marketers should take the Internet into account as it may be used to access information about sport, sport players, and schedules of events.

### **7.3.2 ATTACHMENT**

As the main objective of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team, an understanding of the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection was relevant as it results in different types of supporters. The investment model was applied to sport supporters to assess whether the investment model variables influenced how supporters become attached to a sports team. The results suggested that the investment model variables influence on how supporters become attached to sports team differed for different types of supporters.

For respondents who considered themselves to be low supporters, the interaction of investment size, quality of alternatives, and satisfaction level were important in what caused them to become attached to a fistball team. High manipulations for investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level are suggested to cause low supporters to become attached to a sports team (see Table 6.3).

An example of where all the investment model variables have been utilised is in the Indian Premier League (IPL). The IPL tournament currently consists of 10 teams (high quality of alternative teams worth supporting). The teams consist of sport players from different countries, the teams buy quality players from around the world (Board of Control for Cricket in India, 2011). By having quality players in a team, may be expected for high satisfaction levels to be attained. If there are many teams in a tournament (high quality of alternatives) and the calibre of the matches is high (high satisfaction level), there would be more matches played and the frequent opportunity to sell sport-related merchandise that related to many different teams that take part in the tournament, thus supporters may be more likely to invest more time and money into a sports team (high investment size).

For respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, the interaction of quality of alternatives and satisfaction level and the interaction of satisfaction level and investment size were important in what caused supporters to become attached to a sports team. The results suggested by taking into account the quality of alternative manipulation for respondents who considered themselves to be high supporters, that the fewer teams high supporters consider worth supporting in a tournament the higher their attachment to a sports team (see section 6.5.2.1). In addition, the higher the levels of satisfaction, would influence their attachment to a sports team (see section 6.2.4 and Table 6.3).

An example of where the quality of alternatives and satisfaction level is considered is in the Rugby Sevens tournaments. National teams take part in the tournament (MultiChoice, 2011). This means that there is only one team represented from various countries that take part in the tournament. Supporters may therefore only consider there to be one team worth supporting (low quality of alternatives), supporters may also already have a psychological connection to the respective sports team and may already be attached to the sports team. All the above points illustrate that the quality of alternative teams worth supporting would be considered as being low. In addition, only seven players make up a team, the players that are therefore

selected would be players of a high calibre, which may lead to the expectation that the number of matches that could be won is high due to there being high quality players. Thus, there may be the expectation that high satisfaction levels could be attained. If more matches are won, the results suggest that there would be a high satisfaction level, this may influence supporters' decision to devote more time to the team, such as attending matches (high investment size) (see section 6.5.2.1).

The results also suggested that attitude guides behaviour. This was revealed for both low and high supporters (see Table 6.3). Another recommendation would therefore be to appeal to supporters' attitudes and develop their passion for the sport. Sport marketers could encourage supporters to partake in activities that do not cost a lot of money, for example having days such as Football Fridays, where the nation is encouraged to support their country and wear football related attire. (SA info, 2010). Many people, even those who do not follow sport, may feel inclined to show their support for their country and buy sport-related merchandise.

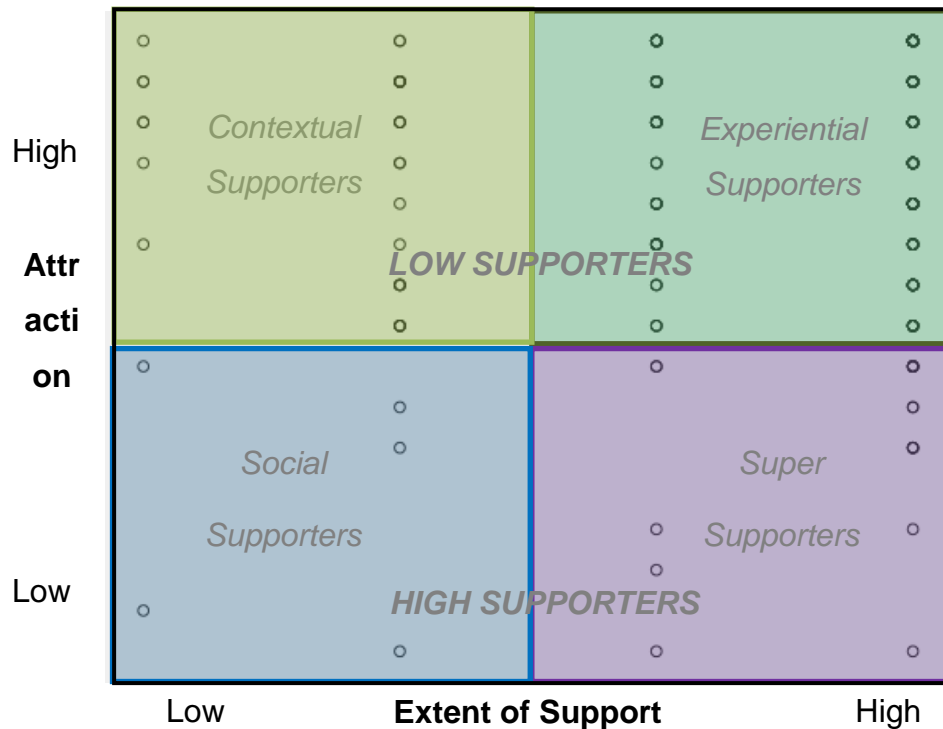
Other ways of appealing to supporters' attitude may be to have meet-and-greet sessions with sport players or to allow supporters' to attend sports team's training sessions, where supporters who have similar interests would then be able to meet on a regular basis at such an event. Having such an event, may influence supporters to show their psychological connection or identification that they have to a sports team by means of purchasing sport-related merchandise, or for example a sports jersey with their favourite sport players' number on it. If sport marketers provide activities which would enhance supporters' self-esteem (section 3.4.1), and appeal to their attitudes, this would guide behaviour, and supporters would be likely to show attachment.

### 7.3.3 SPORT MARKETING

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. An understanding of the psychological connection supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was addressed, which results in different types of supporters (see section 3.5.2). As stated, this study may be relevant to sport marketers as they would be able to distinguish marketing segments based on the different types of supporters, and may allow sport marketers to tailor sport offerings accordingly. Understanding the symbolic (social psychological) aspect is important in a marketing exchange as this may influence consumers' REEs (the utilitarian aspect of a marketing exchange), as explained in section 2.4. In this case, understanding the social psychological aspect for supporters may therefore influence their decision in sport-related purchases.

As depicted in Figure 7.1, by segmenting supporters in terms of the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team (see section 3.5.2), appropriate marketing initiatives can be utilised to appeal to the respective target market, and supporters' demands within the specific segment are also more likely to be met. The results suggested that low supporters have a higher attraction than high supporters (when comparing means). Therefore, it would be recommended to attract contextual and experiential supporters to a sports team. Attracting social and super supporters may be more difficult, as the theory suggests, and is backed up by the results that social and super supporters (high supporters) are already attached to a sports team, and will not necessarily be interested in being attracted to another sports team. Thus, it would be recommended to attract high supporters by having initiatives that involve teams, where supporters' attachment to the team already exists.

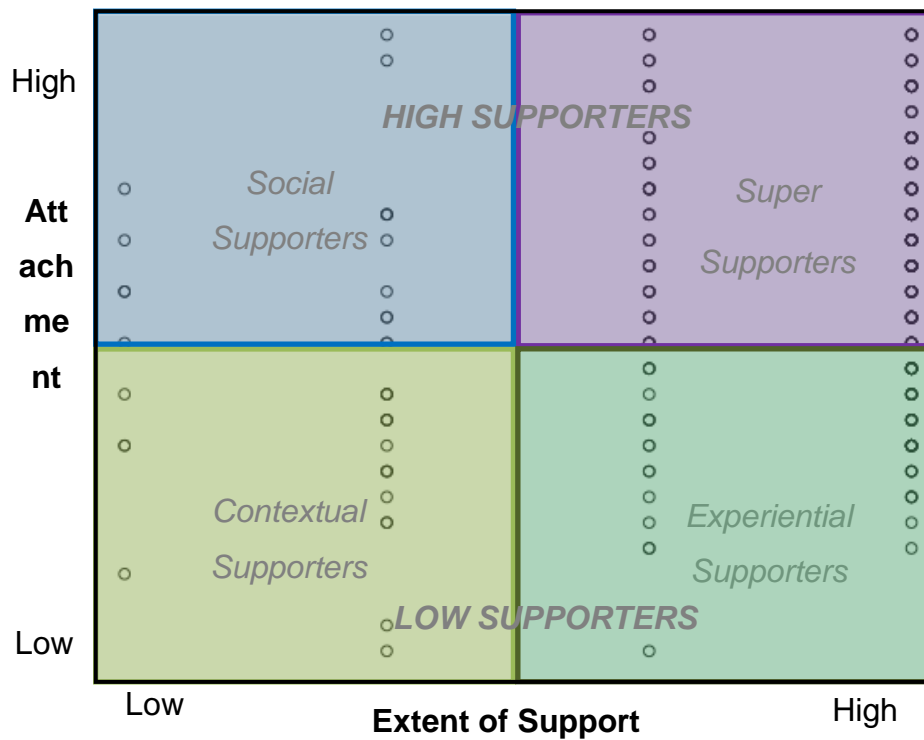
**Figure 7.1 Extent of support and attraction**



In terms of the attachment stage (refer to Figure 7.2), the results suggested that as the extent of support increased, the levels of attachment increased (see section 6.5.1). Therefore, high supporters were considered to be those who were attached to a sports team. Sport marketers should appeal to social and super supporters as their attachment is high. Sport marketers should appeal to social and super supporters' attitudes, as supporters' attitudes guide their behaviour (see section 7.2.4.1). Sport marketers should understand sport consumers attitude and behaviour in order to package and deliver sport products and/or services most effectively (see section 4.6.3).

There is an opportunity for sport marketers to encourage contextual and experiential supporters to become attached to a sports team (see Figure 7.2). In the results, the investment model variables, namely investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level, were significant for low supporters. The results suggested that using the investment model variables might cause low supporters' to become attached to a sports team. Thus, the investment model variables should be used to influence contextual and experiential supporters to become attached to a sports team.

**Figure 7.2 Extent of support and attachment**



Sport marketing is a relatively new sub-discipline of marketing. In South Africa, in line with what the results revealed, some of the most popular sports include soccer, rugby and cricket. The new sporting format for example the Rugby Sevens tournament or the Pro20/20 format in cricket has only been introduced in the past few years. This may be due to the lack of sport marketers understanding sport consumers, but as sport marketing is growing, perhaps similar types of sport formats will be introduced with sport marketers having a broader knowledge of sport consumer behaviour.

## 7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Certain limitations concerning the study should be noted. One of the limitations in this study was that a convenience sample was used, owing to cost constraints. Although a convenience sample allowed questionnaires to be conducted quickly and at a low cost; respondents may not have been representative. In addition, projecting results beyond the specific sample is inappropriate (Zikmund *et al.*, 2010:396).



Owing to cost constraints, the size of the sample may also be considered as a limitation. Because the sample was divided so that different respondents were exposed to one of eight of the experimental groups, and because the sample was split again in terms of their extent of support (low and high supporters), the size of the groups that were compared to one another was relatively small.

Another limitation was that the design of the study limited the scope of the study. The attributes from the investment model variables for the manipulations were not exhaustive, because of the extensive range (see section 4.5) and owing to time and cost constraints. For example, investment size includes both intrinsic and extrinsic investments. Therefore, the influence of investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level may have been different had more of the attributes been included. For example, investment size could include time as well as amount of money a supporter was willing to spend on a team and material possessions owned; or satisfaction level could include aspects other than the number of matches won.

## **7.5 AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH**

A suggestion for future research would be to repeat this study but instead use a specific type of sport supporter, for example, only tennis supporters. What seems to have come out of this research is that respondents may have found it hard to become attracted to fistball, therefore the thought of becoming attached to a certain fistball team may have been hard to imagine, if they did not follow a sport of a similar nature.

In terms of the investment model variables, future research could include more levels per factor to measure each manipulation, for example investment size could include levels that measure both intrinsic and extrinsic resources. Another area of research could be to change the way the experiment was conducted. Seeing that low and high supporters watch many hours of TV and

may get information about sport from the Internet, instead of using a newspaper clip on a poster, one could rather have an advertisement in an electronic format that includes the investment model variables.

This study used fistball, an unknown sport to respondents yet an attraction to the sport was attained. There is the opportunity to apply the model that was adapted in this study to other types of sports. For example, the model could also be applied to a well-known sport in order to assess the investment model variables and how they pertain to supporters becoming attached to a particular sport.

## **7.6 RECONCILIATION OF OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. An understanding of the psychological connection supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have was addressed, which results in different types of supporters. In the endeavour to assess how supporters' become attached to a sports team, the PCM and the investment model was combined and used for the purposes of the study. The investment model variables were adapted to assess whether the investment model variables could cause supporters to become attached to a sports team. Therefore, the secondary objectives were to assess Rusbult's (1980a) investment model variables namely how investment size, quality of alternatives and satisfaction level influenced supporters' attachment to a sports team.

The study was carried out by means of a 2x2x2 full factorial design. As stated, the purpose of this study was to assess how supporters become attached to a sports team. The results show that all the respondents were attracted and attached to a fistball team. The study showed that how the strength of the psychological connection supporters have to a sports team results in different combinations of the investment model variables influencing how supporters become attached to a sports team. Sport marketers should decide on one of

the different types of supporters that they want to target (for example low supporters, such as experiential supporters) as the investment model variables that influence supporters becoming attached to a sports team varies for different types of supporters.

## **7.7 CONCLUSION**

Sport marketing is a sub-discipline with great potential, particularly in the South African context. There is a knowledge gap in understanding sport consumer behaviour. Understanding the psychological connection that supporters have to a sports team, and the strength of the psychological connection that they have to a sports team was relevant, as it results in different types of supporters. The different types of supporters resulted in different combinations of the investment model variables influencing how supporters become attached to a sports team. Sport marketers should therefore consider the different types of supporters, as the way in which they become attached to a sports team differs.

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# Appendix A

## Questionnaire

**FISTBALL QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Q#**

NAME:..... Stellenbosch University <a href="http://scholar.sun.ac.za">http://scholar.sun.ac.za</a> ADDRESS:..... ..... ..... CODE.....	TEL: (H) (AREA CODE): ( )..... TEL: (W) (AREA CODE): ( )..... DATE:.....INTERVIEWER:..... BACKCHECK: Telephone (1)          Personal (2)
---	---

**SAY:** Good day. My name is..... Today we are talking to people about fistball. May I ask you a few questions? **IF YES, CONTINUE.**

**SAY:** Are you a sport supporter? **IF YES, CONTINUE**

**SAY:** Are you a fistball supporter? If YES, CLOSE INTERVIEW; if NO, CONTINUE

<b>SAY:</b> To what extent are you a sport supporter; where 1 = not a supporter and 7 = a big supporter. <b>Please circle the respondent's answer.</b>	<b>Not a supporter</b> ----- 1    2    3    4    5    6    7	<b>A big supporter</b>
---	--	------------------------

**CONTINUE BY SHOWING THEM THE VIDEO WHILE READING THE INFORMATION ABOUT FISTBALL**

**SAY:** Let's assume you are a fistball supporter. Please indicate to what extent you agree OR disagree with each of the statements; where 5 means you strongly agree and 1 means you strongly disagree. **Please circle the respondent's answer.**

<b>SAY: ASSUME YOU ARE A FISTBALL SUPPORTER...</b>	Strongly Agree	-----				Strongly Disagree
As a fistball supporter you enjoy the drama of close games.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you prefer watching a close game rather than a one-sided game.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you enjoy it when the outcome of the game is not decided until the very end.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you enjoy the uncertainty of close games.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you enjoy interacting with other people.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you enjoy talking with other people.	5	4	3	2	1	
As a fistball supporter you enjoy socialising with other people.	5	4	3	2	1	

**SHOW THE NEWSPAPER CLIP**

**SAY:** Please answer a few questions about yourself. Please indicate to what extent you agree OR disagree with each of the statements; where 5 means you strongly agree and 1 means you strongly disagree. **Please circle the respondent's answer.**

<b>SAY: ASSUME YOU ARE A SUPPORTER OF A FISTBALL TEAM...</b>	Strongly Agree	-----				Strongly Disagree
... you are dedicated to your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	
... you would be willing to do a lot to be able to keep watching your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	
... it would be hard to quit watching your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	
... you are determined to continue watching your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	
... you want to keep watching your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	
... you are proud to tell other people that you watch your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1	

**SAY: ASSUME YOU ARE A SUPPORTER OF A FISTBALL TEAM...**

... if you stopped watching your fistball team, you would probably lose touch with a lot of your friends	5	4	3	2	1
... if you couldn't watch your fistball team, you're not sure what you would do.	5	4	3	2	1
... because of your fistball team you don't have time to participate in other leisure activities.	5	4	3	2	1
... most of your friends are in some way connected with your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1
... you find that a lot of your life is organised around your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1
... others would probably say that you spend too much time watching your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1
... you would rather watch your fistball team than do most anything else.	5	4	3	2	1
... other leisure activities don't interest you as much as your fistball team.	5	4	3	2	1

**Please write the respondent's answer.**

D1 How many hours do you <i>approximately</i> watch TV per week?	..... hours
D2 How many hours do you <i>approximately</i> watch the news per week? <b>PROMPT: If they say every day and news is 30 min, then say: So would you say you watch 3 1/2 hours a week</b>	..... hours
D3 How many hours do you <i>approximately</i> read the newspaper per week?	..... hours
D4 How many hours do you <i>approximately</i> spend socialising with your friends per week?	..... hours
F1 What sport do you like to support?	

<b><u>GENDER</u></b>	<b><u>AGE</u></b>	<b><u>POP. GROUP</u></b>	<b><u>HOME LANGUAGE</u></b>
Male 1	18-24 1	Black 1	English 1
Female 2	25-30 2	White 2	Afrikaans 2
	31-44 3	Coloured 3	Nguni (Zulu) 3
	45+ 4	Asian 4	Sotho 4
		Other 5	Other (.....) 5

<b>SAY: MAY I PLEASE ASK YOU SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?</b>						
A. What type of work do you do? (If child, scholar or student ask: what work does the main breadwinner from your household do?)	.....					
B. What type of work does your spouse/partner do?	.....					
C. Which of these do you have in the household where you live? <b>READ OUT EACH.</b>  <b>ADD UP THE YES COLUMN (ALL THE 1'S)</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>			
	Microwave	1	0			
	Fridge/freezer	1	0			
	Tumble dryer	1	0			
	Computer/PC at home	1	0			
	DSTV or MNET	1	0			
	Hot running water	1	0			
	Home telephone	1	0			
	Car	1	0			
	Credit facility/accounts (credit card/ clothing accounts)	1	0			
	Automatic dishwasher	1	0			
	<b>LSM NUMBER</b>					
D. Which of these best describes your highest level of education? <b>Once code only.</b>	Illiterate		1			
	Literate but no formal/school education		2			
	Primary/Junior incomplete		3			
	Primary/Junior complete		4			
	Secondary/Senior/High school incomplete		5			
	Secondary/Senior/High school complete		6			
	College/university incomplete		7			
	College/university complete		8			
	Post graduate studies incomplete		9			
	Post graduate studies complete		10			
E. Are you...	A child, scholar or student living at home	<b>CLOSE INTERVIEW</b>	1			
	Renting your flat/house/cottage	<b>CONTINUE</b>	2			
	Owner of your home	<b>CONTINUE</b>	3			
F. Is the <b>total monthly household income</b> more or less than R10 000 <b>per month?</b> (i.e. everyone who is working or has money coming in)	R10 000 or more <b>ONLY</b>	<b>ASK QUESTION G</b>	1			
	Less than R10 000 <b>ONLY</b>	<b>ASK QUESTION H</b>	2			
	Don't know		3			
G. Is it more or less than R20 000 per month?	R20 000 or more		1			
	Less than R20 000		2			
	Don't know		3			
H. Is it more or less than R5000 per month?	R5000 or more		1			
	Less than R5000		2			
	Don't know		3			
<b>THANK THE RESPONDENT FOR THEIR TIME AND CLOSE INTERVIEW</b>						
I hereby declare that this is a true interview and I was briefed fully on this interview by Margaret.						
			<table border="1" style="width: 100px; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> </table>			
SIGNED:.....		INTERVIEWER CODE:				

# Appendix B

Treatment groups  
(Eight A4-sized posters)



POSTER A

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **won all their matches**. They will be playing against **24 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Twenty-four of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **8 hours** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER B

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **lost all their matches**. They will be playing against **2 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Two of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **8 hours** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER C

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **lost all their matches**. They will be playing against **24 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Twenty-four of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **8 hours** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER D

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **won all their matches**. They will be playing against **2 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Two of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **8 hours** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER E

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **won all their matches**. They will be playing against **24 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Twenty-four of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **1 hour** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER F

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **lost all their matches**. They will be playing against **2 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Two of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **1 hour** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER G

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **won all their matches**. They will be playing against **2 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Two of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **1 hour** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.



POSTER H

**SPORT SPOT**

More on fistball and what the rules are of this intense sport on page 16

**Fistball**

This weekend is sure going to be filled with fantastic, exciting and tense fistball.



Rolling with the punches: Huge crowd getting behind their favourite Fistball team

The fistball team you support have **lost all their matches**. They will be playing against **24 of their strongest opponents**.

**Exciting Fistball Tournament**

Twenty-four of the world's top teams will be taking part in this 2-day tournament.

Merchandise and drinks will be available at the event. Come enjoy and experience **1 hour** of fistball at this fantastic, fun-filled, sporting event.





# Appendix C

## Scale development

**ORIGINAL ITEMS FROM VARIOUS QUESTIONNAIRES**

Author	Item	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
	<b><u>ATTRACTION</u></b>	
Woo, Trail, Kwon & Anderson, 2009:47	I enjoy the drama of close games	<b>0.89</b>
	I prefer watching a close game rather than a one-sided game	
	I enjoy it when the outcome of the game is not decided until the very end.	
	I enjoy the uncertainty of close fistball games	
	I enjoy interacting with other people when I watch a game	<b>0.94</b>
	I enjoy talking with other people when I watch a game	
	I enjoy socialising with other people when I watch a game	
	<b><u>ATTACHMENT</u></b>	
<b>ATTITUDE</b> (Casper, Gray & Stellino, 2007:262)	How dedicated are you to sport	<b>0.85</b>
	What would you be willing to do to be able to keep watching sport	
	How hard would it be to quit watching sport	
	How determined are you to continue watching sport	
	Do you want to keep watching sport	
	How proud are you to tell other people that you watch sport	
<b>BEHAVIOUR</b> (Kim, Scott & Crompton, 1997:330)	If I stopped watching sport, I would probably lose touch with a lot of my friends	<b>0.91</b>
	If I couldn't watch sport, I'm not sure what I would do	
	Because of sport I don't have time to participate in other leisure activities	
	Most of my friends are in some way connected with sport	
	I consider myself to be somewhat of an expert in sport	
	I find that a lot of my life is organised around sport	
	Others would probably say that I spend too much time watching sport	
	I would rather watch sport than do most anything else	
	Other leisure activities don't interest me as much as sport	
	<b><u>DESCRIPTIVES</u></b>	
(Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Moschis, Moore and Stanley 1984)	D1 How old are you?	<b>0.70</b>
	D2 How many hours do you approximately watch TV per week?	
	D3 How many hours do you approximately watch the news per week?	
	D4 How many hours do you approximately read the newspaper per week?	
	D5 How many hours do you approximately spend socialising with your friends per week?	

# Appendix D

Pre-test questionnaire to assess manipulations

QUESTIONNAIRE							
1. Are you interested in sports?	Yes					No	
2. To what extent are you a sport supporter? 1 = not a supporter and 7 = a big supporter	<i>Not a big supporter</i> ..... <i>A big supporter</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1 How many hours of watching sport on a weekend would you consider to be <i>a lot</i> ?	..... hours						
3.2 How many hours of watching sport on a weekend would you consider to be <i>a little</i> ?	..... hours						
3.3 How many hours of watching sport on a weekend do you watch?	..... hours						
4.1 How many teams in a sports league would you consider to be <i>a little</i> ?	..... teams						
4.2 How many teams in a sports league would you consider to be <i>too many</i> ?	..... teams						
4.3 How many teams in a sports league would you consider to be <i>adequate</i> ?	..... teams						
5 Would you be dissatisfied if the team you support lost <u>4</u> games in a row?							
6 Suggest how many losses would make you dissatisfied.	..... losses						
7 Would you be satisfied if the team you support won <u>7</u> games in a row?							
8 Suggest how many wins would make you satisfied.	..... wins						
9 What is your age?							
10 What is your gender?							

*Thank you for your participation*