

INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMER-BASED
BRAND ASSOCIATIONS OF TURKISH SOCCER TEAMS

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ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMER-BASED BRAND ASSOCIATIONS OF TURKISH SOCCER TEAMS

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Today, sport managers view their teams, leagues and properties as brands to be managed. Researchers revealed that positive brand image generates additional revenue, increased merchandise sales, national media exposure, corporate supports, and increased ticket sales (Gladden et al., 1998). Consequently, understanding consumers perspective and how to enhance stronger brand equity are important for Turkish soccer clubs. From this point; the purpose of this study was to examine consumers' perception on brand associations and affects of some factors on brand equity of soccer teams.

In order to measure the consumer-based brand associations of Turkish soccer teams, the Turkish version of Team Association Scale was distributed to 156 undergraduate university students at Middle East Technical University and Gazi University.

Results of this study indicated that tradition, product, affect and coach and nostalgia were perceived as the most important factors associated to the brand image of soccer teams. The findings of this study also revealed that, while males, heavy users and merchandise buyers associate tradition, product features, affect and coach and nostalgia with their team's brand, females, light users and fans who have not bought merchandise give more importance to star players in regards their contribution to brand image of soccer teams.

Therefore, Turkish soccer teams should use marketing strategies to emphasize brand associations to create and enhance stronger brand equity and to gain additional revenues.

Key Words: Brand associations, brand equity, sport marketing, soccer.

ÖZ

TÜRK FUTBOL TAKIMLARININ MÜŞTERİ MERKEZLİ MARKA DEĞERİ İLE İLİNTİLİ FAKTÖRLERİN ARAŞTIRILMASI

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Günümüzde spor yöneticileri takımlarını ve oynadıkları ligleri yönetilecek markalar olarak görmektedirler. Buna ek olarak, araştırmacılar olumlu marka imajinin ek gelir yarattığını, lisanslı ürün satışlarını, sponsorlukları, bilet satışlarını arttırdığını ve medyada daha çok yer almaya katkıda bulunduğunu ortaya koymuşlardır (Gladden et al., 1998). Sonuç olarak, müşterilerin bakış açısını ve nasıl daha güçlü bir marka değeri oluşturulacağını araştırmak Türk futbol takımları için önemlidir. Bu doğrultuda bu çalışmanın amacı müşterilerin marka değerini etkileyen faktörleri nasıl algıladığını ve diğer bazı bağımsız değişkenlerin futbol takımlarının marka değerlerini nasıl etkilediğini araştırmaktır.

Müşteri merkezli marka değeri ile ilişkili faktörleri araştırmak için Gladden and Funk (2002) tarafından geliştirilen "Team Association Scale" (TAS)'in Türkçe versiyonu olan Spor Takımlarında Marka İlişkileri Envanteri (STMIE) Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi ve Gazi Üniversitesi'ndeki 156 lisan öğrencisine dağıtılmıştır.

Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular göstermiştir ki spor takımlarının başarılı geçmişi, takımın esas ürünü ile ilgili faktörler, taraftarların takımlarına olan duyguları ve teknik direktör ve nostalji futbol takımlarının marka değerleri ile ilişkilendirilen en önemli faktörler olarak algılanmıştır. Ayrıca erkek katılımcılar, yoğun sıklıkta kullanıcı grup ve ürün satın alan katılımcılar başarılı takım geçmişini, ürün özelliklerini, takımlarına karşı olan duygularını, teknik direktör ve nostalji faktörlerini takımlarının marka değeri ile ilişkilendirmektedir. Buna karşıt olarak, bayanlar, az sıklıkta kullanıcı grup ve ürün satın almayan taraftarlar ünlü futbolculara ve bu futbolcuların takımlarının marka imajına yaptığı katkıya daha çok önem vermektedir.

Sonuç olarak, Türk futbol takımları markayı çağrıştıran faktörleri vurgulayan pazarlama stratejileri kullanarak takımları için daha güçlü marka değeri ve ek gelirler yaratabilirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka değerini etkileyen faktörler, marka değeri ve futbol.

To my mother and father and the dearest person to me in life, Burcu Tuzen.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGE	Age
GCON	Game Consumption
MEDIA	Following Media
COM	Commitment
PRD	Product
MAN	Management of soccer team
C&N	Coach and nostalgia
PIP	Pride in place
AFF	Affect
SPL	Star player
PGA	Peer group acceptance
TRA	Tradition of team
TAS	Team Association Scale
NBA	National Basketball Association
NFL	National Football League
TFF	Turkish Soccer Federation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Different researches have been conducted in marketing to evaluate and measure brand equity. While some of the researches have focused on components of brand equity (Aaker, 1996; Aaker 1991; Keller, 1993), others focused on calculation of the value of brand equity based on financials (Simon and Sullivan, 1992). Also brand extensions have been examined thru research to find out feasibility and impact of brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1993; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Bridges, 1992; Dacin & Smith, 1994; Herr, Farquhar & Fazio, 1993).

Lots of marketing strategies were developed to build and manage brand equity (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993). These strategies and efforts resulted in brand preferences among all brands, acceptance of higher prices and positive word-of-mouth (Aaker, 1991; Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998). In addition, the relationship between brand equity and advertising has been investigated (Edell & Moore, 1993; Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1993). Kirmani and Zeithaml (1993) examined the impact of advertising on perceived quality and brand image.

While the marketing literature made efforts to investigate and determine brand equity, brand equity and brand management in sports have had very little

attention. Sport is becoming increasingly commercialized and sport entities have become more professional over the years (Bauer, Sauer, and Schmitt, 2005). In sport settings, Ferrand and Pages (1999) and Gladden and Milne (1999) indicated that a sports team or event could be considered as brand. Research in brand equity and brand management in sports has started a decade ago with a financial approach by Boone, Kochunny and Wilkins (1995). In this study a measurement containing financial variables to explore the franchise values for professional sports was used as an indicator of brand equity.

This first study followed by Gladden et al.'s (1998) work which was focused on a conceptual framework of brand equity to college athletics. Apparently, sport managers view their teams, leagues and properties as brands to be managed today. For instance, The Manchester United soccer brand is so strong that it is able to open memorabilia stores in Asia. Gladden and Milne (1999) examined the importance of brand equity in professional sports and academically displayed relationships among brand equity, antecedences and consequences of the brand. Another study contributed in the area by investigating how brand management affects and contributes to professional sport teams (Gladden, Irwin & Sutton, 2001). After the framework, theory and positive effects of branding in sports had been proved, researchers started to concentrate on consumers' perspective. To manage sport team brands, it is important to understand consumers because consumers control the creation of brand equity. Thus,

Gladden and Funk (2002) followed marketing researchers Aaker and Keller; and studied brand associations of sport teams to find out which aspects of a team have been perceived as parts of the team brand by consumers. By this study they provided a clear and easy path to sport team managers to make their brand stronger and generate income by brand management.

After exposing the value of brand management and the theory for sport teams, research has moved to another area - brand extensions. Brand extensions are increasingly implemented by sport organizations to create additional revenue streams and enhance brand strength; and extensions are examined in academic researches by case studies in NBA, NFL and other professional sport teams (Apostolopoulou, 2002; Campbell & Kent, 2002; Apostolopoulou, 2005).

Although marketing and brand aspects become increasingly important in sport industry, Turkish Sport Clubs are behind this development in Turkey. In Turkey, watching sports is a part of culture since early ages and today, soccer is the most popular sport in Turkey. Sports news especially soccer news generates significant coverage in newspapers, magazines and TV (Karaküçük, & Yenel, 1997). According to a research, done by AGB Nielsen Media, Turkish people have mostly watched soccer games and sport programs on TV in 2005. For example, the soccer game between Turkey and Switzerland (Nov 16, 2005) was the highest watched TV program in 2005, and the Galatasaray - Fenerbahçe

(Nov 27, 2005) soccer game was the second (2005 te En Cok Izlenen Programlar, 2005).

In the Turkish Super League, there are 18 teams and Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray, Beşiktaş and Trabzonspor, are well known by all population. These teams are the richest soccer teams (Annual Reports on Companies, 2007; "Besiktas Tribun Yoksulu," 2005) and most successful teams in Turkey (84 Yillik Sampiyonluk Listesi, 2008). In Europe the strongest team sport brands are those that are the most successful on the field such as Manchester United, Real Madrid, and Bayern Munich (Future Brand, 2001). Similarly, the most successful four soccer teams in Turkey have brand equity and they offer additional products and services known as brand extensions; such as their own TV channels, magazines, merchandise stores, web sites, credit cards and banking accounts, water, chocolate etc.

Managing sport teams and their brands are getting more important. To manage sport team brands, it is important to understand consumers because consumers control the creation of brand equity; so it is important to study brand equity from the consumers' perspective (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

There has been a growing interest in the study of brand equity in recent years to better understand the consumers perspective and how to enhance stronger brand equity especially in the U.S. (Boone et al., 1995; Gladden et al., 1998; Ferrand & Pages, 1999; Gladden & Milne, 1999; Gladden et al., 2001; Gladden and Funk, 2002; Apostolopoulou, 2002; Campbell & Kent, 2002; Bauer et al., 2005; Apostolopoulou, 2005). Researchers revealed that positive brand image generates additional revenue, increased merchandise sales, national media exposure, corporate supports through sponsorships, and increased ticket sales (Gladden et al., 1998). In Turkey, creating and enhancing stronger brand image and understanding factors associated with brand image are important for soccer teams. However; despite the popularity of sports and soccer in Turkey and positive outcomes of branding, social scientists have paid no attention to brand equity in sports in Turkey. Thus, consumers' perception in brand associations and affects of some factors on brand equity of soccer teams are unknown in Turkey.

1.2. Significance of the Study

Since managing sport teams and their brands are important; and consumers control the creation of brand equity; it is important to study brand equity from the

consumers' perspective (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Consumer based brand equity in sports is studied in the U.S. and Europe; but not in Turkey.

This study had both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically and practically, this study contributed to the advancement of the study of brand management of soccer teams in Turkey by providing fans' perception in brand associations of soccer teams. Identifying factors associated with brands of soccer teams may advance sport marketers' understanding of brand management.

Understanding of brand equity and associated factors are important because it would enable sport managers to be more effective in their marketing activities. Brand equity can help create new revenue sources as well as enhance current revenue sources. Therefore, if the sport manager is able to understand how brand equity is created and then the creation and enhancement of consequences could be maximized. Similarly if the factors that create brand equity can be understood, sport managers can focus their marketing activities on those factors that are controllable (Gladden et al., 1998).

This study will be a base for comprehending the Turkish spectators' perception of brand equity of soccer teams and associated factors that may lead to better management and economic stability at soccer teams. This study also attempts

to explore the possibility of group-level differences in perceived brand associated factors. As members of different age, gender, different teams and user type groups experienced different socialization processes they may also perceive brand related factors differently; therefore, an understanding of consumer based brand associated factors across several groups is needed.

1.3. Purpose of the Study:

The primary purpose of this study was to examine effects of some factors on consumer-based brand associations which affect the brand equity of soccer teams in Turkey. The independent variables of the study include age, gender, soccer teams, merchandise buying habits, game consumption habits and user type. Specifically, this research sought to address the following questions:

1. What is the effect of demographics (age, gender and soccer teams) on brand associations perceived by consumers as a factor affecting teams' brand equity?
2. What is the relationship between game consuming frequency and brand association factors affecting spectator decisions to perceive soccer teams as brands?
3. What is the relationship between following news on media frequency and brand association factors affecting spectator decisions to perceive soccer teams as brands?

4. What is the effect of user types on brand association factors affecting spectator decisions to perceive soccer teams as brands?
5. What is the effect of licensed merchandise consumption habit on brand association factors affecting spectator decisions to perceive soccer teams as brands?
6. Which factors have more effect on brand equity?

1.4. Hypothesis

It was postulated that the following hypothesis would be supported by the results of current study:

1. There are differences among the importance of brand associations of different socio demographic groups (age, gender, grade level).
2. There are differences among the importance of brand associations perceived by different user type groups.
3. There are differences among the importance of brand associations perceived by fans of different soccer teams.
4. There are differences between fans who have purchased licensed merchandise of their teams and who have not based on the importance of brand associations.
5. Game consumption is significantly correlated with brand value of a team.

6. Following news about team in media is significantly correlated with brand value of a team.

1.5. Assumptions of the Study

- i. It is assumed that the participants of the study understand the purpose of the study and answer the questions accordingly, and unbiased.
- ii. It is assumed that participants of the study followed the instructions of the survey carefully.
- iii. The surveys used in this study were clear and understandable for the participants.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

- i. This study was limited with the university students studying at METU and Gazi University.
- ii. As the participants of this study were the university students, the examinations of the sport fans other than university students are not applicable.
- iii. Results of the study were limited with the students' answers to the Turkish version of TAS; no open ended questions were included in the study.

- iv. The study involved the correlation of variables and did not establish a cause and effect relationship.

1.7. Definition of Terms:

Brand: "... defined as a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors." (Kotler 1991, p442)

Brand equity: "... defined as a set of assets such as name awareness, loyal customers, perceived quality and associations that are linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or subtract from the value provided by the product or service" (Aaker, 1991, p.15)

Brand image: "... defined as perceptions about a brand as reflected by brand associations held in consumer memory." (Keller, 1993, p.3)

Brand associations: "... anything in the fans' mind linked to a special sport team brand" (Gladden & Funk, 2002)

Sport Fan: "... individuals with an abiding interest in and follow a sport or a team" (Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001, p.2).

Success: "... defined by the ratio of wins to losses and the degree of post-season success." (Gladden, 1997)

Star player: Refers to players with remarkable statistics who have national

media exposure.

Head coach: A head coach is a professional who is responsible for the overall actions of the players of the team he is associated with; and highest ranking coach of a coaching staff (Head Coach).

Management: Refers to the staff who makes decisions about management, finance, marketing, transfers of the team and who is responsible for the whole team as an organization.

Logo design: Refers to the symbol of the teams, including colors, emblem and flag.

Stadium: Refers to the facility in which a sport team plays home games (Gladden, 1997).

Product: Refers to excitement and entertainment provided by sport team.

Tradition: is defined as a team's well established record for success, fan support, and/or style of play (Gladden, 1997).

Escape: *motive:* sport spectating can provide diversion from the rest of one's life (Wann et al., 2001).

Fan identification: *motive:* feeling the privilege of being a fan of a specific team.

Peer group acceptance: individual is motivated to participate in sport as a fan as it provides acceptance among friends and an opportunity to spend time with friends.

Nostalgia: Refers to memories bond with the team.

Pride in place: Refers to effects of team to the community and neighborhood/town.

Importance: Refers to self-rated importance of team to a fan.

Knowledge: Refers to self-rated knowledge about the team by a fan.

Affect: motive: self evaluation of feelings toward team.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on brand management and brand associations in sports. This chapter includes two main parts: a) brand equity research and components of Aaker's model (1991) and Keller's (1993) model are discussed; b) the conceptual framework of brand equity and two models in team sports setting are provided.

2.1. Brand Equity Research:

Marketing literature has paid significant attention to the assessment and measurement of brand equity. Aaker (1991, 1996) and Keller (1993) have focused on the identification and development of the components of brand equity. Simon and Sullivan (1992) have approached to the area thru financial terms in order to calculate brand equity. Brand equity has also been incorporated into research activities examining brand extensions. Feasibility of brand extensions and the use of existing brand names to enter new product categories have been investigated (Aaker & Keller, 1993; Bridges, 1992; Aaker & Keller, 1993). Lastly, Kirmani and Zeithaml (1993) examined the impact of advertising on brand quality and image.

2.1.1. Aaker's Model

Aaker's model of brand equity has been the fundamental framework to the following research in brand equity. It has been used both in marketing research and sport marketing and management research to explore brand equity.

According to Aaker (1991) brand equity is comprised of four components:

1. Perceived quality
2. Brand awareness
3. Brand associations
4. Brand loyalty

2.1.1.1. Perceived Quality

Aaker (1996) has defined perceived quality as consumer judgments of a product's excellence relative to its intended purpose. Various factors in consumer's mind affects perceived quality. In sports, success is the most important factor which determines the quality of a team and a game. Perceived quality is important because it is difficult to return a negative perception into positive one (Aaker, 1991). For example, a team with a successful history would be perceived high quality comparing to an inconsistent and unsuccessful team. Gladden (1997) has suggested that professional sports teams and university athletic departments with the best entertainment package (success, promotions,

etc.) would possess higher levels of brand equity.

2.1.1.2. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness has been defined by Keller (1993) as the likelihood and ease to call a brand name. Aaker places awareness as the starting point in his model. Awareness is core that other associations can be attached to (Aaker, 1991).

Keller (1993) emphasizes the importance of brand awareness in developing brand equity as:

- i. Awareness increases the likelihood that a brand will be considered by consumers,
- ii. Awareness can affect decisions about brands in the product category and consideration set,
- iii. Awareness influences the development and depth of brand associations.

2.1.1.3. Brand Associations

Brand associations are intangible components of brand equity. These associations have been categorized into experiential which means what it feels like to use a product; and symbolic which refers to satisfaction of needs in social settings or personal expressions (Gladden, 1997). Since sports mostly provide

intangible benefits and experiences, brand associations have taken great attention by researchers.

2.1.1.4. Brand Loyalty

Aaker (1991) defines brand loyalty as the ability to attract and retain customers. Customer loyalty is very critical to maintain brand equity because it provides protection against competitors and it provides average guaranteed sales. In brand loyalty, customer satisfaction is the main tool because it influences customer's decision for repeated purchasing. Boone et al. (1995) revealed that loyalty is critical to maintain profitability because a loyal customer base provides a profit stream.

2.1.2. Keller's Model

Keller's model provides a total understanding to brand equity. Keller defines brand equity in terms of marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand. According to him, purpose of brand equity research is to improve marketing productivity using strategy-based motivation. In other words, marketers need a more thorough understanding of consumer behavior as a basis for making better strategic decisions about target market definition and product positioning and marketing mix.

Keller approaches to brand equity from consumer perspective to provide what consumers know about brands and how this knowledge implies to marketing strategies. Consumer-based brand equity is defined as the differential effects of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand (Keller, 1993). According to Keller, customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory.

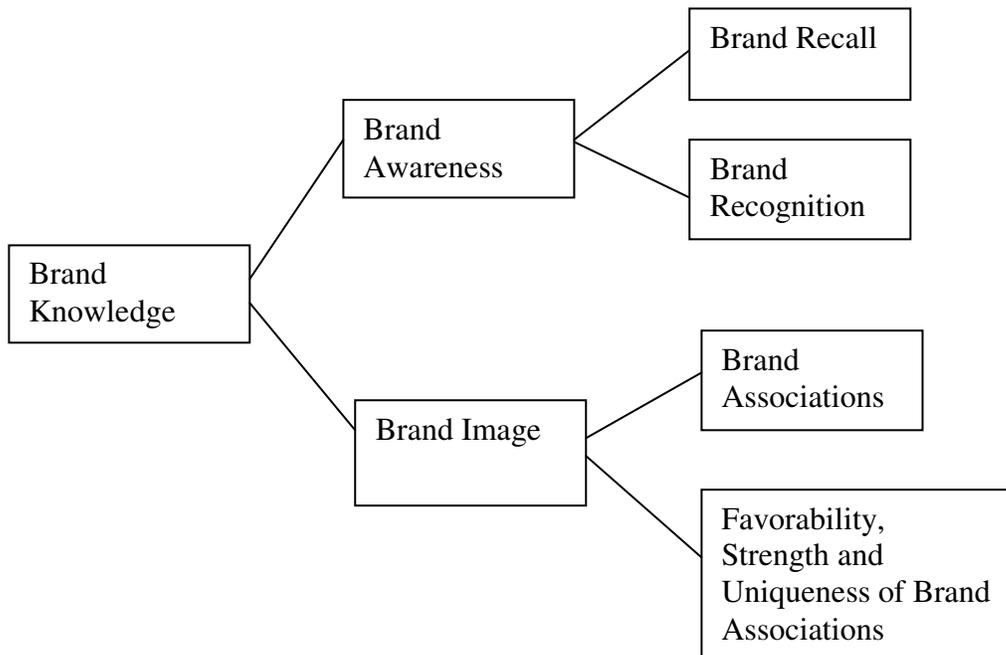


Figure 1: Keller's Brand Equity Model, Proposed by Keller (1993).

Brand knowledge is composed of brand awareness and brand image. Brand awareness relates to brand recall. Brand awareness shows the strength of brand in consumers' memory and it reflects the ability to identify brand. Also it plays an important role in consumer decision making. Brand awareness helps consumers to think about specific brand when they think about product category; and brand awareness increases the chance of being bought or consumed by customers.

On the other hand, brand image refers to brand associations in consumers mind. Brand associations are information in customers' memory and develop the meaning of the brand for consumers (Keller, 1993). So, understanding brand knowledge and all components are important because it influences customers' perception on brand and increases the likelihood of being chosen by consumer.

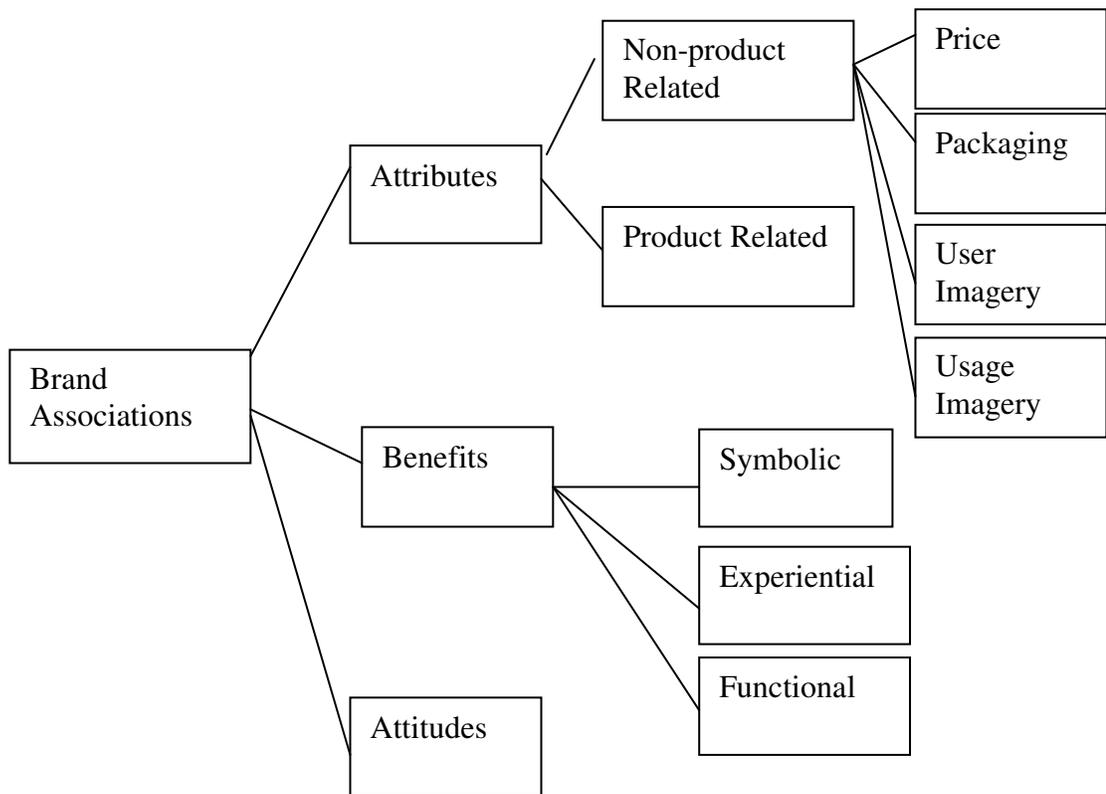


Figure 2: Brand Associations, Proposed by Keller (1993).

Brand associations are categorized as attributes, benefits and attitudes by Keller (1993). Attributes are descriptive features of product or service. It tells us about what consumers think about the product and what is involved in their purchase decision. Two categories of attributes; product related and non-product related attributes are related to a product's physical composition or a service requirements; and external aspects of the product or service respectively. On the other hand, benefits are the personal values attached to

the product by customers. It shows customers' perception about products and what the product can offer to them. As attributes, benefits are classified into sub categories called functional, experiential and symbolic. Functional benefits are basically linked to motivations such as physiological and safety needs. On the other hand, experiential benefits and symbolic benefits are about extrinsic advantages of product or service. While experiential benefits are related to how it feels like to use a product or service, symbolic benefits are related to underlying needs for social approval and personal expression. The last brand association category is brand attitudes and defined as consumer's overall evaluations of a brand.

Thus, attributes, benefits and attitudes make up the brand image together as different types of associations perceived by consumers related to the brand.

Aaker and Keller have similar perspectives in brand equity and provide components of consumer-based brand equity. They are two major models in building, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity.

2.2. Brand Equity in Sports:

Aaker's and Keller's Models are very important for sport management and marketing research. They provide conceptual background and theory to

research on brand equity in sports. Aaker's Model is used as the fundamental model to measure consumer-based brand equity in sports settings (Gladden et al., 1998; Gladden, 1997; Ross 2006; Ross, Russel, & Bang, 2008).

2.2.1. Brand Equity Model

The first brand equity model in sports, which is based on Aaker's Model, is developed by Gladden, Milne and Sutton in 1998. The purpose of this model is to identify antecedents of brand equity that managers can manipulate to improve brand equity and to demonstrate how brand equity influences marketplace.

Antecedents of Equity Brand Equity Consequences of Equity Perception

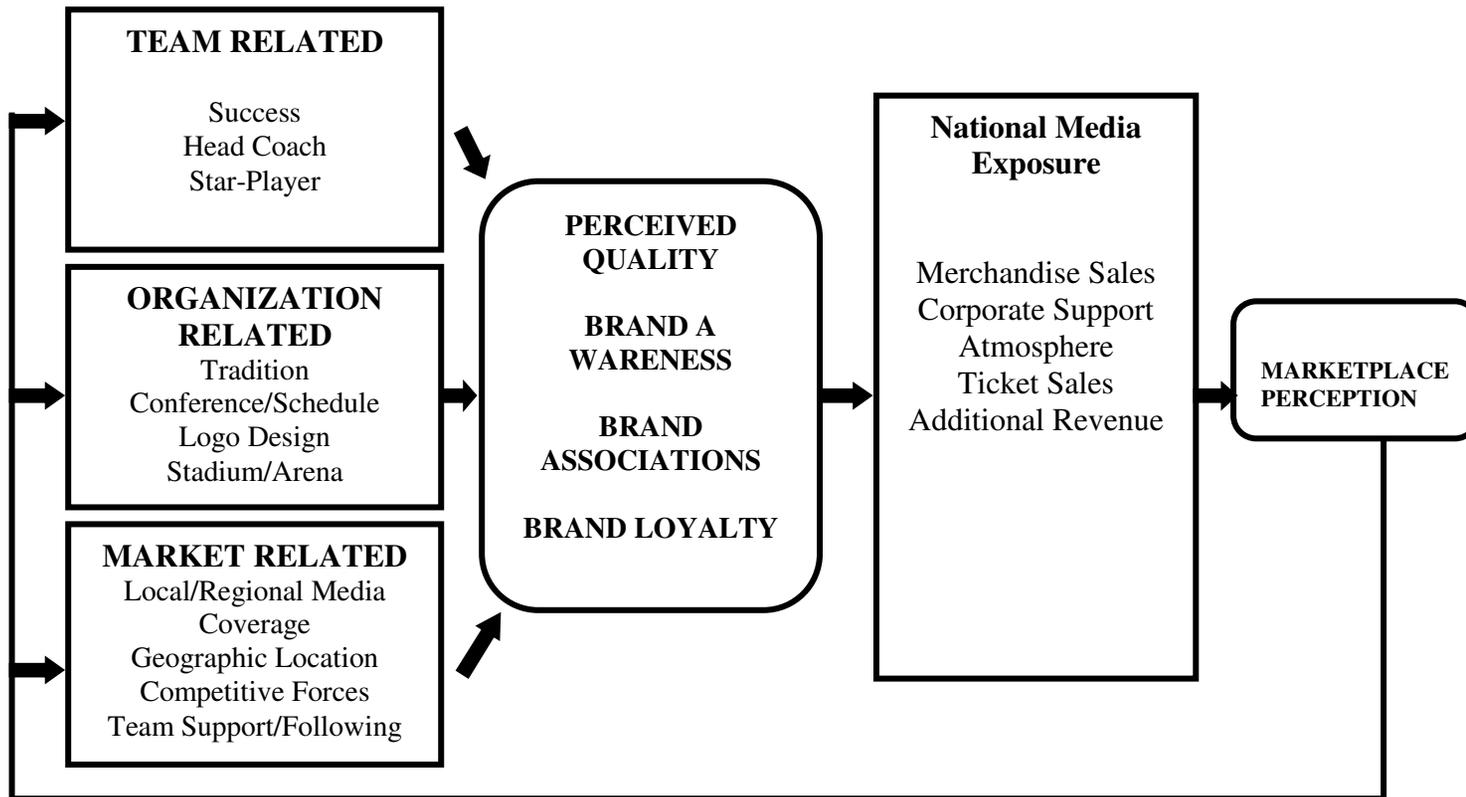


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework for assessing brand equity in team sports (Gladden et al., 1998)

The antecedents create the initial level of brand equity, and are organized into three categories.

1) Team related: all attributes of the sport product directly related to performance. This includes success, head coach, and star players.

Success is probably the most important creator of brand equity and it contributes by increasing ticket sales, merchandise sales, and total revenues, enhancing the atmosphere at games, attracting TV exposure and becoming more attractive to corporate in sponsorship and advertisement means. However, success is one of the hardest antecedents to control. Performance is not under the control of managers, and it is affected by injuries, personality clashes, etc. Moreover, it is not the only contributor to brand equity. Thus, a whole understanding of brand equity would help to develop brand equity. Head coach is another antecedent which affects brand equity. Personality, win-lose record, salary, charisma of a coach contributes to image of the team. Television shows, radio shows and endorsement contracts make coach visible and also increase the visibility of the team. The presence of a star player on a team can contribute to overall attractiveness of a given team (Jones, 1984; Schofield, 1983). Star players generate media exposure. Generally, head coach and star player contribute to the success of the team, their performance and decision making

affect success. Thus, success, head coach and star player(s) form team related antecedents.

2) Organization related: all attributes of the sport product directly related to the organization. This includes tradition, conference/schedule, product delivery, lobo design, and stadium/arena.

These antecedents are organization related because consent and approval are needed from the organization before undertaking actions aimed at improve the brand equity. Tradition refers to a team's well established record for success, fan support, and/or style of play. Conference and schedule play important role as well. Marketing directors of professional teams consider the rivalry between a team and an opponent an important determinant of the game attendance (Hansen &Gauthier, 1989). For example, Galatasaray, Fenerbahce and Besiktas rivalries are visible annual events and facilitate the creation of equity through media coverage and increased ticket sales. Sport events are accepted as a way of entertainment. While performance is difficult to control, the environmental experiences of spectators can be impacted (Brooks, 1994). For example, stadium music, promotional activities/giveaways, tailgating may all serve to enhance the experience of attending. Sport managers realize that brand associations can be enhanced through such product extensions of a sporting event (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). These extensions are one of the

ways in which sport managers attempt to compensate the inconsistent and unpredictable nature of the sport product. Logo design is another organization related antecedent of brand equity. In recent years, professional sports teams have proven that brand equity can be created based on the logo of the team (Gladden, 1997). For instance, NHL and Big Ten have changed their logo to enhance brand equity. The building in which a sport team plays affects the development of brand equity. This may occur for two reasons. First, the relationship between the stadium and the team varies from one team to another. While some teams own their stadium, some of them lease the stadium. So, they don't have as much control on the stadium as the ones who own the stadium. Those teams who own the stadium are likely to generate more revenues from the stadium related extensions such as concessions, parking; luxury suits (Atré, Auns, Badenhausen, McAuliffe, Nikolov, & Ozanian, 1996). Second, the stadium tradition and design may play an important part in development of brand equity. Certain stadiums possess significant histories. Some of them in neighborhoods while the others in under developed areas. In sum, history of the stadium, neighborhood and surrounding areas of the stadium are the other aspects associated with stadium and they may also result in increased ticket sales, total revenues and enhanced game atmosphere.

3) Market related: all attributes of the sport product directly related to the market in which the particular team exists. This includes local/regional media coverage, competitive forces, geographic location, and team support/following.

Any kind of media coverage helps developing brand equity. Media coverage generates brand equity by increasing affiliation and interest. Fans experience pleasure from sport by following performance and non-performance related news. In addition, media allows sport managers and marketers to communicate and create awareness among potential consumers. Kapferer (1992) suggests brand identities are often formed based on geographical location. In Turkey, we have competition between Anatolia teams and Istanbul teams in all sports regardless of being amateur or professional. Competition is one of the most influential in the creation of brand equity for teams. If there is no rivalry, it is difficult to hold a brand value. In addition, support to the team influence the brand equity of a given team. Consumers are the people who give support to the team and they are classified as heavy, moderate and light users by Mullin et al. (1993).

There are six consequences of brand equity; media exposure, merchandise sales, corporate support, game atmosphere, ticket sales and additional revenues such as brand extensions. They all mean increased income for a team. Thus, holding brand equity adds new ways of making money and

increased revenue sources for teams. In sum, understanding antecedents is very important because each has an influence on the four components of brand equity, and the model is based on a continual feedback loop. Antecedents create the initial level of equity, the consequences derived from such equity also increases (decreases) the brand equity of a sport team.

In order to provide a framework from which to begin managing brand equity, the antecedents and consequences to the brand equity should be related. This knowledge will let managers to manipulate the antecedents based on the consequences and component of equity that they wish to enhance. As shown in Table the antecedents and consequences of equity are related to at least one of the four dimensions of brand equity.

Table 1: Brand Equity Model

Antecedents of Equity	Perceived Quality	Brand Awareness	Brand Associations	Brand Loyalty
Success	Wins=quality	Wins draw Attention	Experiential/ Symbolic benefits	Impacts Satisfaction
Head Coach	Best=credibility			
Star player		Creates awareness		
Reputation and tradition			Enhances performance	
Conference/ Schedule	'Tough schedule'		Quality of competition	
Product delivery			Enhances experience	Enhances experience
Local/regional media coverage		Creates new awareness		Extends loyalty
Geographic location		Impacts recognition		
Competitive forces	Can reduce			
Support			May be based on associations	Best fans fill stadiums
Consequences of Equity	Perceived Quality	Brand Awareness	Brand Associations	Brand Loyalty
National media exposure	Enhances quality	Drives awareness	Additional associations	
Merchandise sales		Can increase awareness	Identification with a group	Want to show support
Additional revenues			Enhance affiliation	High level of support
Corporate support	Sponsor a winner	Drives awareness	Corporate merchandise	
Atmosphere			Positive attribute of attending	Repeat purchases
Ticket sales			Crowds enhance experience	Indicator of presence

Note: Gladden (1997)

2.2.2. Team Association Model

The second brand equity model (Team Association Model) in sports, which was developed by Gladden and Funk in 2002, is based on Keller's consumer-based brand equity model (1993). Their aim was to better understand the associations connected to team sport brands. According to Keller (1993) "customer-based brand equity occurs when the customer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in memory (p.2)." This is the product of brand associations. It is important to adapt Keller's model to the sport settings because sport product is unique. First, sport product is unpredictable (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2000). The performance of the brand varies from one day to next and difficult to control. In addition, consumption of sport product is experiential and emotional (Mullin et al., 2000). Lastly, benefits associated with sport are intangible. Thus, the nature of sport product requires understanding consumers' perception on brand equity in order to manage brand equity in sports settings.

In this model, Gladden and Funk (2002) reviewed previous studies to identify dimensions of brand associations. They identified 16 types of brand associations and classified them into three categories; attributes, benefits and attitudes as Keller did. Attributes are the features of a particular brand. Benefits represent the meaning and value consumers attach to the product. Lastly, attitudes are defined as consumer's overall evaluation of the brand and often

depend on the strength and favorability of the attributes and benefits provided by the brand (Keller, 1998).

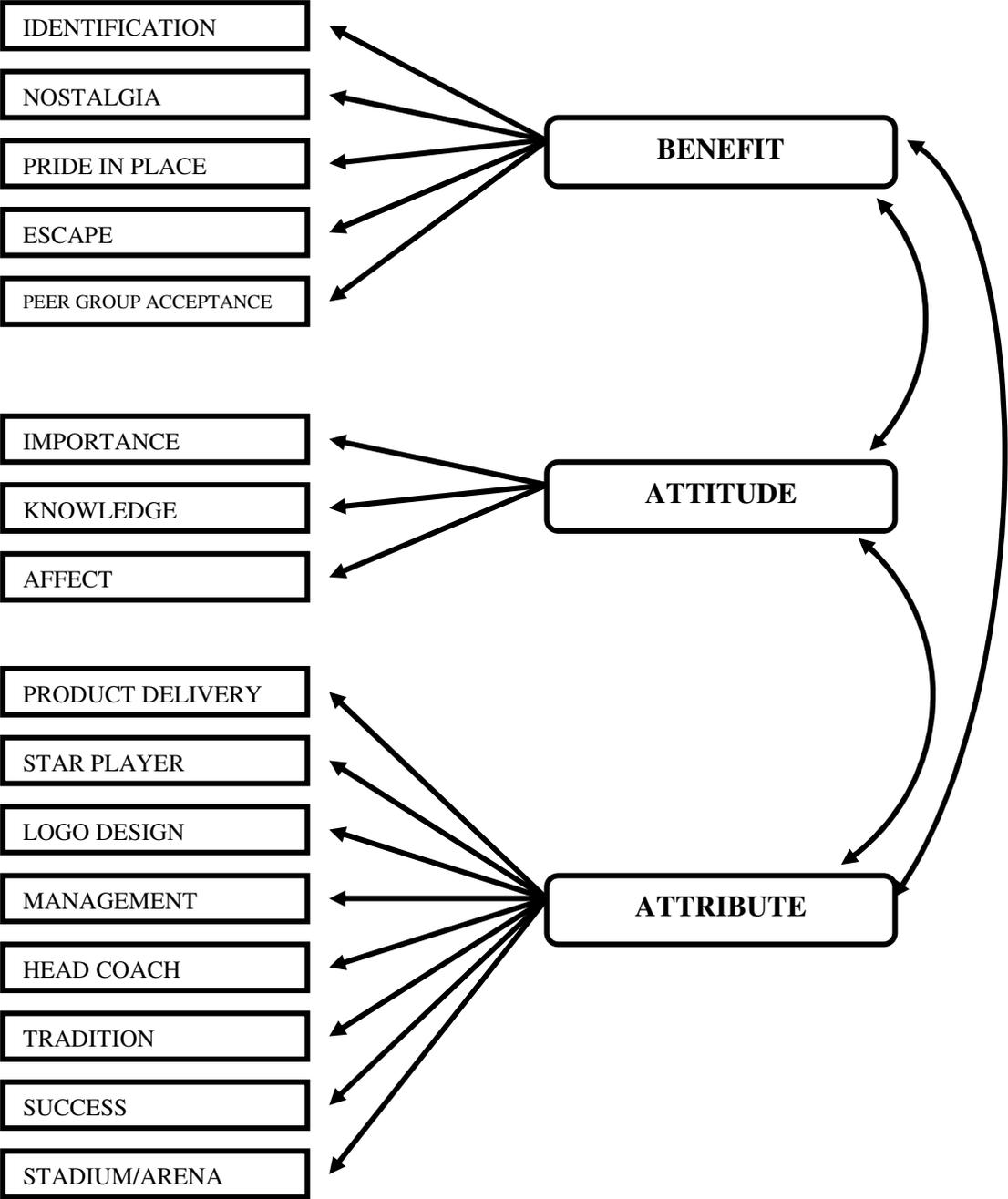


Figure 4: Team Association Model, Proposed by Gladden & Funk (2002).

Attributes:

Keller classified attributes as product related and non product related. Product related attributes are seen as the components necessary for performing the functions of the product. In team sport settings, product related attributes were identified as success, star player, head coach and management by Gladden and Funk (2002). Success is probably the most important creator of brand associations and brand equity. There are number of research showing the positive outcomes of success, most notably increased ticket sales. Second, star player contributes to the attractiveness of a given team. For example, attendance and media exposure increase. Gladden and Milne (1999) found a positive relationship between the head coach and team merchandise sales. For example, Miami Heat benefits from its successful head coach Pat Riley in terms of merchandise sales, media exposure and success of the team. Lastly, Gladden and Funk (2002) mentions that if a sport consumer was given a reason to not to trust a particular sport organization, the brand associations with that organization would be negative.

In contrast, non product related attributes affect purchase or consumption but not the performance of the product (Keller, 1993). In team sport setting, Gladden and Funk (2002) identify four non-product related attributes: logo design, stadium/arena, product delivery and tradition. First, logo of teams plays an important role. NHL, BigTen, Tampa Bay Buckenners changed their logo to

enhance brand equity. Second, the facility in which teams play contribute to the creation of brand equity. Especially the ones who attend games find facility, quality of services in the facility, aesthetic of the facility associated with brand of the team (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Third, Wann (1995) found entertainment as one of the motivations of sport fandom. A sport team entertains through the delivery of the product which includes performance of the team, and other activities taking place in the stadium. Finally, tradition is found associated with brand.

Benefits:

Keller (1993) identified three categories of benefits in order to understand how people attach meaning and value to the products they consume. Functional needs are those that motivate the search for products that solve consumption related problems (p.136). Symbolic needs are those that fulfill internally generated needs for self-enhancement, role position, group membership, or ego identification (p.136). Finally, experiential needs are desires for products that provide sensory pleasure, variety, and/or cognitive stimulation (p.136).

Based on these definitions Gladden and Funk (2002) identified five benefits in the sport setting: fan identification, peer group acceptance, escape, nostalgia, and pride in place. Identification with a team is studied a lot in the literature (Sutton, McDonald, Milne & Cimperman, 1997; Wann & Branscombe, 1990;

Branscombe & Wann, 1991; Kahle, Kambara, & Rose, 1996; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Funk, Mahony, Nakazawa, & Hirakawa, 2001; Al-Thibiti, 2004). Gladden and Funk (2002) conceptualized fan identification as a component of brand association. According to Gladden and Funk (2002) identification with a particular team fulfills a sport consumer's need to affiliate with something successful or desirable. Peer group acceptance demonstrated as a motive of sport event consumption by Wakefield (1995), and Trail & James (2001). People tend to use sport as an escape from their daily troubles and routines (Wann, 1995; Trail & James 2001); and they use sports as a coping strategy and they can find fulfillment and contentment (Smith, 1988). Nostalgia is one of the elements of sport teams that provide association to the team and helps consumer to identify themselves as fan of the given team (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Trujillo & Krizek, 1994). Lastly, pride in place is the people's affiliation with a hometown team. Sport teams are sources that can be used to bring people together. Sport teams provide pride and help establish strong community relations. Thus, identification, escape, peer group acceptance, nostalgia and pride are accepted as a source of brand associations. Gladden and Funk (2002) suggested that fan identification and peer group acceptance tend to be symbolic benefits, while escape, nostalgia, and pride in place are experiential benefits. In addition, they found functional benefits inapplicable because of the intangible and perishable nature of team sports.

Attitudes:

Attitudes toward sport teams have been investigated by researchers such as Funk and Pastore. Funk revealed that importance, knowledge and affective reactions were strong predictive of commitment to a professional baseball team. Depending on these studies, Gladden and Funk (2002) determined knowledge, importance and affection as attitudes. Importance as an attitude represents a person's perception of the psychological significance and value he or she attaches to a sport team (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Knowledge refers to everything a consumer can remember about his or her team and it is usually measured by self-ratings. Finally, affective reactions reflect an individual's feeling about a team.

In sum, Team Association Model evaluates brand equity in two parts: brand awareness and brand image. In order to establish brand equity, customer has to be familiar with the brand and hold favorable and strong brand associations in memory.

Managing sport teams and their brands are getting more important. To manage sport team brands, it is important to understand consumers because consumers control the creation of brand equity; so it is important to study brand equity from the consumers' perspective (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993).

Typically sports fans are aware of their teams and they can recognize and recall the brand anytime; and most of the time, they have strong, favorable and unique brand associations to their favorite sport teams. Thus, to manage the brand equity of a sport team, managers and marketers need to know which aspects of a team are perceived associated with brand value of the team by fans. These brand associations let managers and marketers to improve the value, strength and quality of the brand.

Sometimes sport teams have fostered unfavorable brand associations for a variety of reasons; such as unsuccessful results, increasing franchise relocations, trading key players or head coaches in order to reduce team expenditures. However; these variables are not the only means to generate equity (Mullin et al., 2000), and these variables are not usually under the control of sport managers and marketers. Thus, sport managers look to other ways, a broader, more long-term approach to create brand equity for their respective sport teams and to build positive brand associations with their fans. (Gladden et al., 2001)

As brand associations affect brand image and brand equity, brand associations are important to sport marketers. Marketers use brand associations to differentiate, position, and extent brands, create positive attitudes and feelings

toward franchise (brand), and suggest attributes or benefits of purchasing or using a specific brand.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors which are perceived by fans associated with brand equity of Super League Soccer Teams in Turkey. Descriptive method was used in this study to explore sports fan perceptions on brand associations and differences among groups' perceptions.

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures used to collecting, treating, and analyzing the data to examine the brand association factors perceived related to brand value of Super League soccer teams in Turkey.

3.1. Selection of Participants

The participants of the study were 156 female and male undergraduate university students from Middle East Technical University and Gazi University. They were between the grade level of 1- 4 and participated to the study on a volunteer basis. They were the students who were taking the elective courses opened to all departments of all faculties in these two universities. The courses were selected from all the elective courses opened at 2007-2008 spring season. After selecting them, Team Association Scale was given to all of the students

taking those courses. Total of 194 surveys were administered, out of 194 surveys, 156 of them were used in the study.

3.2. Instrument

For the study, “The Team Association Scale” (TAS) developed by Gladden and Funk (2002) was used. The Turkish version of the scale was translated and adapted to Turkish culture by Mumcu & Koçak (2005).

The original version of the instrument included 50 items and identified dimensions of brand associations. The questionnaire consisted of 16 subscales namely; success, star player, head coach, management, logo design, stadium, product, tradition, escape, fan identification, peer group acceptance, nostalgia, pride in place, importance, knowledge and affect. All the subscales except fan identification and affect included three items, and these two included four items. The items were measured on 7-point Likert type scale where “1” indicated strongly disagree and “7” indicated strongly agree.

The Turkish version of the scale was found to possess the psychometric properties to accurately and reliably measure the underlying factors that associate with brand of sport teams in consumers mind (Mumcu & Koçak, 2005).

The internal consistency of the Turkish version of the TAS was found to be $\alpha = 0.92$. Besides, the internal consistency of the factors ranged between 0.51 (Peer group acceptance) to 0.94 (Commitment to team). Factor analysis' results showed that 46 items were loaded under 9 factors explaining nearly 70 % of the total variance.

The internal consistency of the original version of the TAS has been assessed and the Cronbach standardized reliability coefficient for the factors ranged between .68 (peer group acceptance) to .95 (escape) (Gladden & Funk, 2002).

The survey used in this study also included demographic variables (age, sex, educational level and supported team), past game consumption habits including watching games in stadiums and on television, licensed merchandise consumption habits, and habits on following media for their teams.

Past game consumption habits were adjusted to represent the user type of the spectators. According to Mullin et al. (1993), fans who watched more than 60 % of the games can be classified as heavy users, fans who watched more than 15 % of the games can be classified as medium user, and fans who watched less than 15 % of the games can be classified as light users in the sport market segmentation.

In Turkish Super League, teams play 34 games during the season. Therefore, participants were asked to circle the number of games they watched last year (they could choose either 0 - 4, 5 – 19, or > 20).

3.3. Data Analysis

In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data, means and standard deviations for all the respondents were computed. All data were stored in the computer, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 14.0 (SPSS) was used to treat the data.

In order to determine which associations are perceived by fans as more important in affecting brand equity of the Super League soccer teams, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were applied to the data. Besides, frequencies were calculated to ascertain the demographic profile of soccer fans who were students.

Independent samples *t*-tests were performed to determine if there was any significant difference between male and female fans in relation to brand associations, and to examine the differences between fans who has bought merchandise and who has not.

Analysis of Variance (*ANOVA*) was performed to examine the differences in different grade levels, fans of different soccer teams, and user type.

Pearson product correlations (r) were calculated to determine the degree to which motivational factors and other independent variables are related to each other.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors from spectators' perspective which were perceived associated with the brand value of Super League soccer teams in Turkey. Objectives of the study also included examining the demographic profile of the spectators and differences among different backgrounds.

Results of this study will be presented in five sections. The first section contains the reliability of the survey. The second section contains the demographic profile of the soccer fans in Turkey. The third section presents the consumer-based brand associations. The fourth section is related with the differences among groups in terms of brand associations. The last section presents the correlations among the variables of the study.

4.1. Reliability of the Instrument

Instrumentation is one of the most important faces of survey studies. To be able to measure brand associations in consumers' minds accurately a researcher should have a valid and a reliable instrument accordingly. The first instruments in the field; the "TAS" developed by Gladden and Funk (2002) was used in this

study. Turkish version of the T.A.S. was found to possess the psychometric properties to accurately and reliably measure the brand associations in consumers' minds that helps to establish brand equity (Mumcu & Koçak; 2005). Table 2 represents the internal consistency and inter-item correlation levels of the factors.

Results of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) analysis showed that the instrument was reliable. Overall internal consistency coefficient level of the instrument was found to be .93. Similarly, alpha coefficients of the factors ranged between .51 (peer group acceptance) to .94 (product).

Table 2: Reliability Values of the Instrument.

<i>Associations</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>	<i>Inter-Item Correlation</i>	α^a	α^b
Commitment	12	.50	.92	.94
Product	11	.56	.93	.92
Management	4	.48	.78	.86
Coach & Nostalgia	5	.39	.76	.81
Pride in Place	3	.62	.83	.90
Affect	3	.64	.84	.83
Star Player	3	.47	.73	.78
Peer Group Acceptance	3	.27	.51	.51
Tradition	2	.45	.62	.53
TOTAL	46	.32	.93	.92

α^a = Cronbach's alpha levels of the factors in this study

α^b = Cronbach's alpha levels of the validity and reliability study of this instrument

Inter-item correlations presents how strongly the items under the same factor related with each other, according to Fraenkel & Wallen (2000) it should be over .30. In this study, the inter-item correlation levels of the factors were found to be exceeding .30 levels except peer group acceptance (.27). Other factors' inter-item correlations range between .39 (coach & nostalgia) to .64 (affect) implying that each item has medium to strong relations with the other items under the same factor. Peer group acceptance subscale included items 9, 24 and 38. The item 24 was perceived little different than the items 9 and 38 from content wise.

4.2. Demographic Profile of the Spectator

This part of the study includes 5 sub factors;

4.2.1 Gender

As shown in Figure 5, 80 (51.3%) of participants are male and 78 (48.7%) of the participants are female.

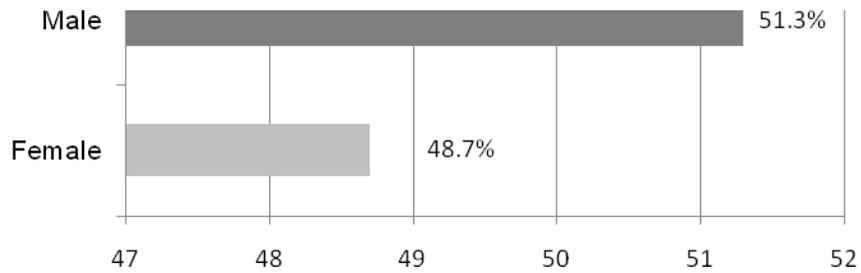


Figure 5: Gender Profile of the Spectators

4.2.2 Age

Participants of this study are university students. Mean age of the participants was 22.44 ± 2.07 . At the same time the youngest participant was aged 18, whereas the oldest spectator was 32 years old.

4.2.3 Grade Level

As shown in Figure 6, 18 (11.5%) of the spectators were sophomore, 31 (19.9%) of the spectators were juniors, and 107 (68.6%) of the participants were seniors. Among 156 student soccer spectators there was no freshman.

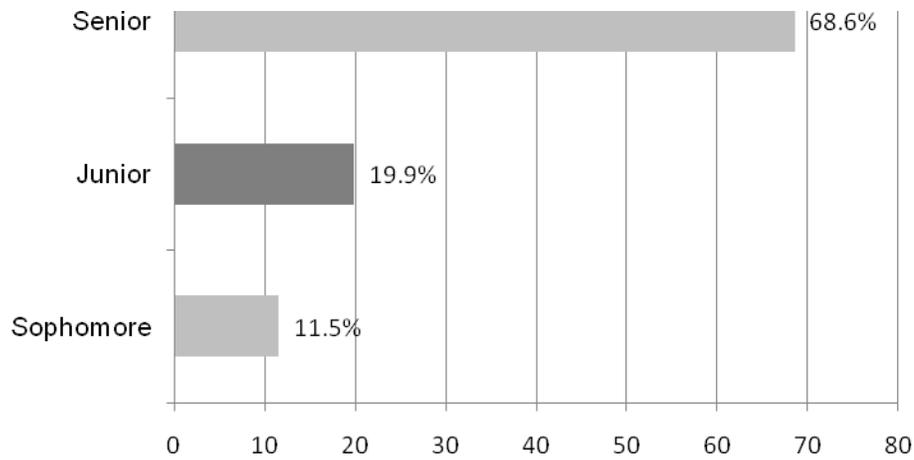


Figure 6: Grade Levels of the Spectators.

4.2.4 User Type

Understanding the spectators and their perception on their teams are important for sport marketers. Different segments of market might show different tendencies toward their team. So, it is important to identify market segments. Game consumption frequency indicates the type of user in sport market segmentation (Mullin et al., 1993). Figure 7 illustrates the user types according to the spectators' past game consumption frequencies both on television and in stadium. First, 41 (26.3 %) of the participants reported that they had watched more than 60 % of the previous season's games, forming the heavy user group. Second, 59 (37.8 %) of the spectators answered that they had watched more than 15 % of their team's previous season's games constituting the medium

user group. Last, 56 (35.9 %) of the spectators reported that they had watched less than 15 % of the previous season's games forming the light user group.

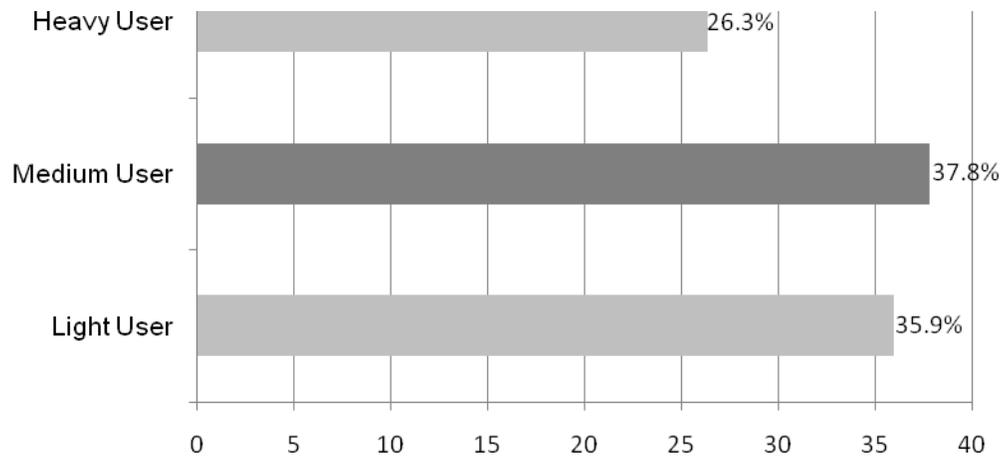


Figure 7: User Segmentation of the Spectators.

4.2.5 Teams

As Figure 8 illustrates, 66 (42.3%) of participants were Galatasaray fans, 52 (33.3%) of participants were Fenerbahce fans and 35 (22.4%) of participants were Besiktas fans. In addition, 2 (1.36%) Ankaragucu fans and 1 (.64%) Genclerbirligi fan participated in the study.

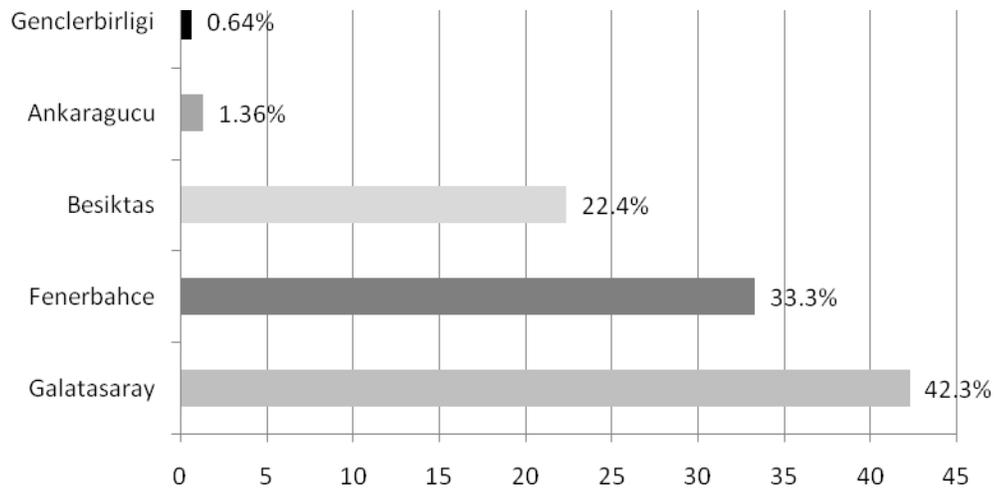


Figure 8: Fans of Soccer Teams

4.3. Associations Related With Brand Equity

Descriptive statistics was used to explain the factors associated with brand value of soccer teams. Means, standard deviations, and rankings were calculated. Results indicated that tradition of the teams ($M = 12.32 \pm 2.51$) was the most important brand association perceived by university students. The second most important factor was found to be product features of the teams ($M = 63.39 \pm 12.83$). On the other hand, affect ($M = 16.32 \pm 4.14$) was found to be the third most important factor, coach and nostalgia ($M = 24.23 \pm 5.98$) was determined to be the fourth most important factor, management of soccer teams ($M = 18.77 \pm 5.31$) was designated to be the fifth most important factor,

commitment ($M = 51.01 \pm 16.83$) was found to be the sixth most important factor, the seventh important brand associations was found to be pride in place ($M = 11.86 \pm 4.99$). While peer group acceptance ($M = 7.35 \pm 3.75$) was identified as the eight important factor , star players ($M = 7.12 \pm 3.90$) was determined to be the least important factor that was perceived as brand associations which affect brand image, by university students for soccer teams in Turkish Super League.

Table 3: Brand Associations of Turkish Soccer Teams

<i>Associations</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Item Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Commitment	51.01	16.83	4.251	6
Product	63.39	12.83	5.763	2
Management	18.77	5.31	4.692	5
Coach & Nostalgia	24.23	5.98	4.846	4
Pride in Place	11.86	4.99	3.953	7
Affect	16.32	4.14	5.440	3
Star Player	7.12	3.90	2.372	9
Peer Group Acceptance	7.35	3.75	2.451	8
Tradition	12.32	2.51	6.160	1

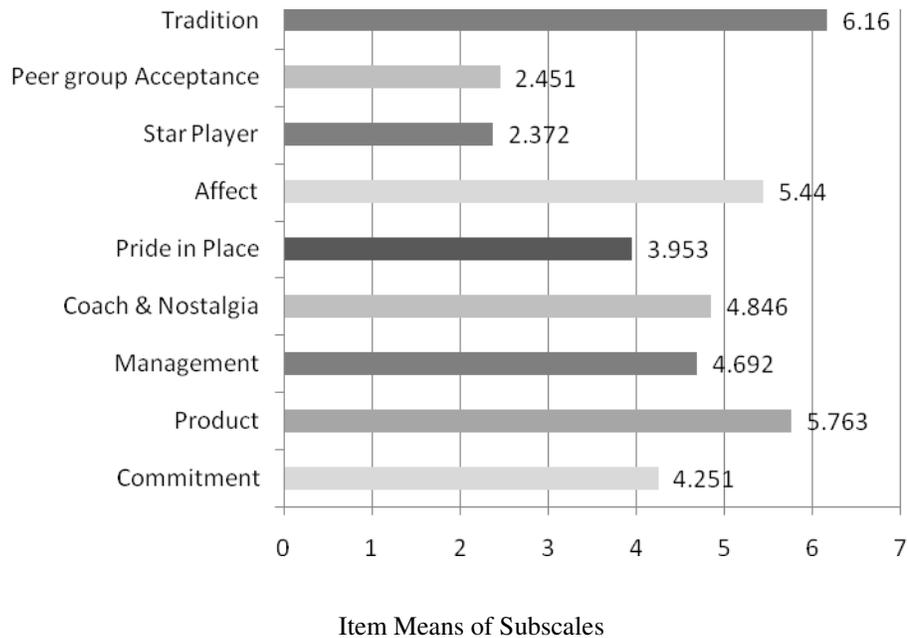


Figure 9: Factors Perceived Associated with Brand Value of Soccer Teams

4.4. Mean Differences among Groups' Brand Associated Factors

In order to apply more effective marketing strategies, sport marketers and managers should understand the preferences of different groups of sport fans. Each individual and specific group might have different perceptions about sporting events and its importance to them. One of the purposes of this study included explaining how different groups perceive brand associations. Therefore; this part of the study includes the differences among groups in terms of brand association perceptions.

4.4.1 Gender Differences

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare perceptions of brand associations of male and female spectators. First, the test was significant for commitment aspect of brand associations, $t(154) = 4.73, p < .001$. Male soccer fans ($M = 56.84 \pm 15.92$) on the average, associate commitment with brand image of their team more than females do ($M = 44.88 \pm 15.62$). Second, there was a significant difference between males and females on perception of product features of soccer teams and its' association with brand value of the teams, $t(154) = 2.59, p < .05$. Male fans ($M = 65.94 \pm 11.43$) evaluate product aspects of their team associated with brand more than females do ($M = 60.71 \pm 13.73$). Third, coach and nostalgia were associated to brand value of soccer teams significantly different by males and females, $t(154) = 3.659, p < .001$. Fourth, t test was significant for pride in place, $t(154) = 2.56, p < .05$. Male soccer fans ($M = 12.84 \pm 4.66$) on average, associate pride in place with brand of their soccer team more than females do ($M = 10.83 \pm 5.16$). Fifth, affect showed significant difference between males and females $t(154) = 3.633, p < .001$. Last, t test revealed significant difference for star player subscale $t(154) = -3.914, p < .001$. Female participants ($M = 8.32 \pm 3.98$) related star players with brand image more than males did ($M = 5.98 \pm 3.49$). Star player, management and peer group acceptance factors were more important factors for female spectators comparing to males (Figure 10).

Table 4: Gender Differences in Brand Associations.

	<i>Male (n = 80)</i>				<i>Female (n = 78)</i>				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Item</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Item</i>				
COM	56.84	15.92	4.74	5	44.88	15.62	3.74	6	4.732	154	.000
PRO	65.94	11.43	5.99	2	60.71	13.73	5.52	2	2.589	154	.011
MAN	18.64	5.89	4.66	6	18.91	4.66	4.73	4	-.317	154	.752
C&N	25.88	5.43	5.18	4	22.50	6.09	4.50	5	3.659	154	.000
PIP	12.84	4.66	4.28	7	10.83	5.16	3.61	7	2.555	154	.012
AFF	17.45	3.51	5.82	3	15.13	4.43	5.04	3	3.633	154	.000
SPL	5.98	3.49	1.99	9	8.32	3.98	2.77	8	-	154	.000
									3.914		
PGA	7.28	3.34	2.43	8	7.43	4.15	2.48	9	-.265	154	.792
TRA	12.68	2.19	6.34	1	11.95	2.77	5.97	1	1.826	154	.070

$p < 0.05$

In addition, brand values were compared for male and female fans and a significant difference was found, $t(154) = 3.871$, $p < .001$. As a result, male fans perceive their soccer teams as a brand more than female fans do.

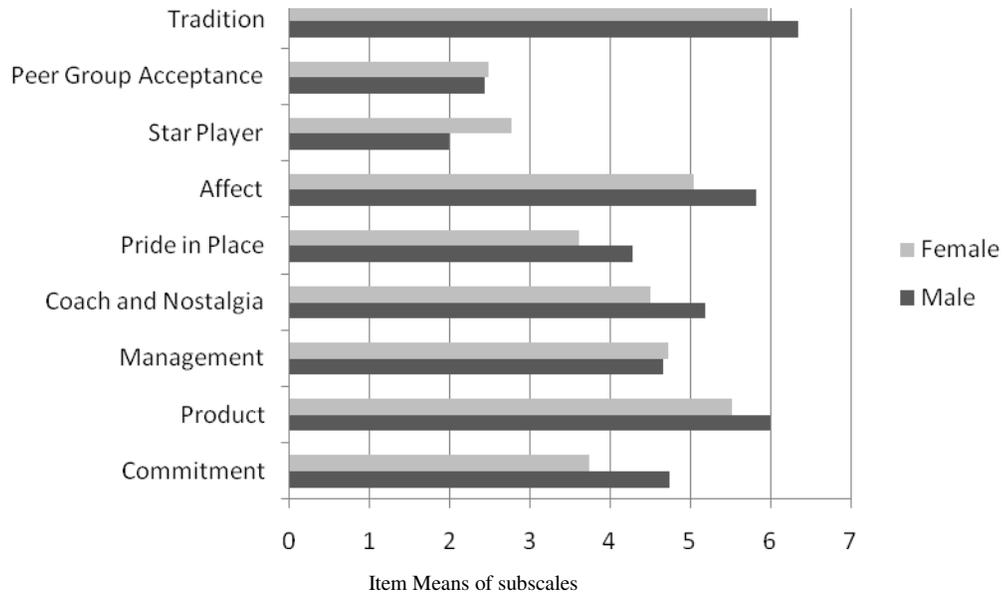


Figure 10: Brand Associations for Males and Females.

4.4.2 Grade Level Differences

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate whether there are differences in perception of brand associations of different grade levels. *ANOVA* were significant at commitment and pride in place factors. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the three grade levels by using the post hoc test of *Bonferroni*. Follow-up tests resulted that;

There were significant differences ($F(2, 155) = 3.93, p < 0.05$) between sophomores ($M = 41.44 \pm 19.80$) and seniors ($M = 53.03 \pm 15.88$) in

commitment. In addition, there were significant differences ($F(2, 155) = 6.52, p < 0.05$) between the sophomores ($M = 8.06 \pm 4.22$) and juniors ($M = 12.84 \pm 4.82$), seniors ($M = 12.21 \pm 4.92$) in the pride in place association. However, no significant difference was measured between juniors and seniors.

Despite no significant differences were found between the grade levels in the product, management, coach and nostalgia, affect, star player, peer group acceptance and tradition, ranking of the factors indicated that tradition, product and affect were the first three factors for all grade levels respectively.

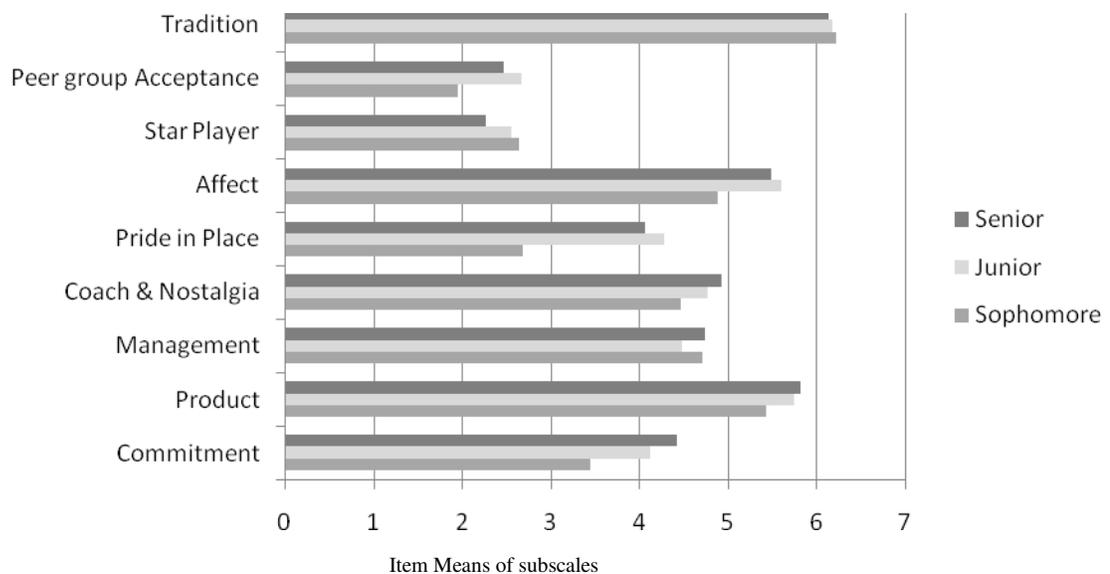


Figure 11: Brand Associations for Grade Levels

In the end, perception of brand value among grade levels was investigated. A one way of variance analysis showed that there was a significant difference ($F(2, 155) = 3.22, p < 0.05$) among grade levels. Benferrini test showed that the significant difference was between seniors' ($M = 215.91 \pm 37.46$) and sophomores' ($M = 191.39 \pm 40.23$) perception of their teams brand value.

Table 5: One Way ANOVA Table for Grade Levels

	Sophomore (n = 18) 1				Junior (n = 31) 2				Senior (n = 107) 3				Df	F	Sig.	Sig. Diff.
	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R				
COM	41.44	19.80	3.45	6	49.61	16.68	4.13	7	53.03	15.88	4.42	6	2,155	3.93	.02	3>1
PRO	59.78	10.54	5.43	2	63.23	11.86	5.75	2	64.05	13.43	5.82	2	2,155	.85	.43	-
MAN	18.83	4.03	4.71	4	17.97	5.01	4.49	5	18.99	5.60	4.75	5	2,155	.44	.64	-
C&N	22.33	6.84	4.47	5	23.84	6.20	4.77	4	24.66	5.76	4.93	4	2,155	1.26	.29	-
PIP	8.06	4.22	2.69	7	12.84	4.82	4.28	6	12.21	4.92	4.07	7	2,155	6.52	.00	3>1
AFF	14.67	4.85	4.89	3	16.81	3.67	5.60	3	16.46	4.11	5.49	3	2,155	1.73	.18	-
SPL	7.94	4.33	2.65	8	7.68	3.66	2.56	9	6.81	3.89	2.27	9	2,155	1.05	.35	-
PGA	5.89	2.68	1.96	9	8.03	3.31	2.68	8	7.40	3.97	2.47	8	2,155	1.92	.15	-
TRA	12.44	2.06	6.22	1	12.35	2.04	6.18	1	12.29	2.71	6.14	1	2,155	.03	.97	-

56

2>1,

4.4.3 User Type Differences

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate whether there are differences in brand associations of different fan types. ANOVA were significant at all of the factors associated with brand except peer group acceptance factor. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pair wise differences among the three fan type groups by using the post hoc test of *Bonferroni*. Follow-up tests resulted that there were significant difference among different fan groups (Table 6, Figure 12).

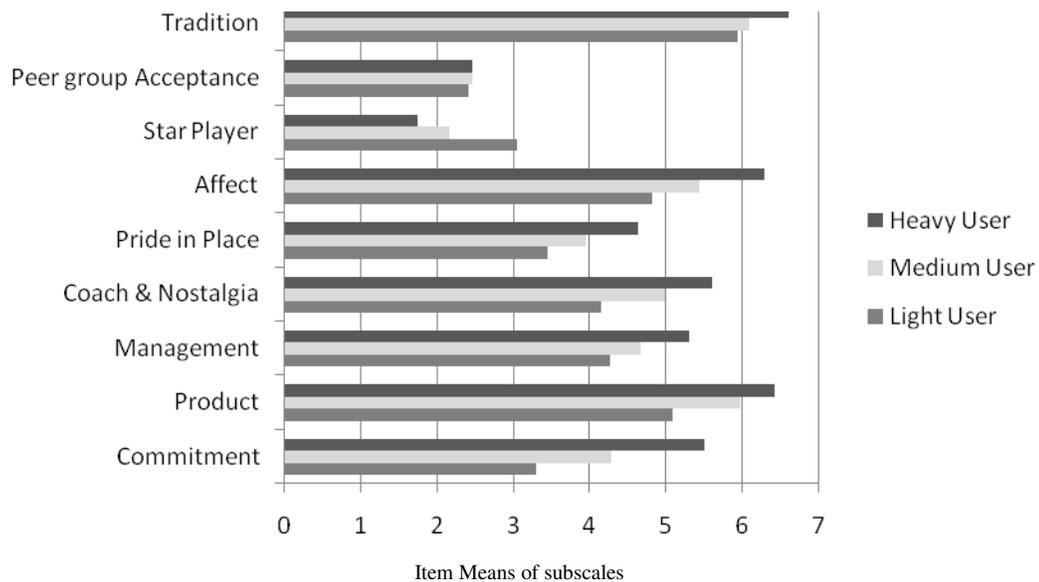


Figure 12: Brand Associations of User Type

There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 46.19, p < 0.001$ between heavy users ($M = 65.98 \pm 10.89$) and medium users ($M = 51.47 \pm 14.05$), light users

($M = 39.57 \pm 14.25$) in commitment. In addition, medium users ($M = 51.47 \pm 14.05$) differed significantly from light users ($M = 39.57 \pm 14.25$) in commitment. There were also significant differences $F(2, 155) = 21.13, p < 0.001$ between heavy users ($M = 70.51 \pm 7.16$) and medium users ($M = 65.58 \pm 12.37$), light users ($M = 55.88 \pm 12.84$) in product. Moreover, medium users ($M = 65.58 \pm 12.37$) differed significantly from light users ($M = 55.88 \pm 12.84$) in product. There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 7.94, p < 0.001$ between heavy users ($M = 21.22 \pm 4.70$) and medium users ($M = 18.69 \pm 5.45$), light users ($M = 17.05 \pm 4.96$) in management. There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 23.09, p < 0.001$ between heavy users ($M = 28.02 \pm 4.25$) and medium users ($M = 24.88 \pm 5.30$), light users ($M = 20.77 \pm 5.90$) in coach and nostalgia. Furthermore, medium users ($M = 24.88 \pm 5.30$) differed significantly from light users ($M = 20.77 \pm 5.90$) in product. There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 6.47, p < 0.05$ between heavy users ($M = 13.93 \pm 4.63$) and light users ($M = 10.36 \pm 5.45$) in pride in place. There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 15.87, p < 0.001$ between heavy users ($M = 18.85 \pm 2.39$) and medium users ($M = 16.32 \pm 3.98$), light users ($M = 14.46 \pm 4.37$) in affect. Furthermore, medium users ($M = 16.32 \pm 3.98$) differed significantly from light users ($M = 14.46 \pm 4.37$) in affect. There were significant differences $F(2, 155) = 15.46, p < 0.001$ between light users ($M = 9.14 \pm 3.83$) and medium users ($M = 6.49 \pm 3.53$), heavy users ($M = 5.24 \pm 3.29$) in star player factor. Lastly, there were

significant differences $F(2, 155) = 3.71, p < 0.05$) between heavy users ($M = 13.20 \pm 1.71$) and light users ($M = 11.85 \pm 2.32$) in tradition.

Table 6: One Way ANOVA Table for User Types

	Light (n = 56) 1				Medium (n = 59) 2				Heavy (n = 41) 3				Df			
	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R	(B-W)	F	Sig.	Sig. Diff.
COM	39.57	14.25	3.30	7	51.47	14.05	4.29	6	65.98	10.89	5.50	5	2-155	46.19	.000	3>1,2 2>1
PRO	55.88	12.84	5.08	2	65.58	12.37	5.96	2	70.51	7.16	6.41	2	2-155	21.13	.000	3>1 2>1
MAN	17.05	4.96	4.26	4	18.69	5.46	4.67	5	21.22	4.70	5.30	6	2-155	7.94	.001	3>1,2
C&N	20.77	5.90	4.15	5	24.88	5.30	4.98	4	28.02	4.25	4.60	4	2-155	23.09	.000	3>1,2 2>1
PIP	10.36	5.45	3.45	6	11.85	4.31	3.95	7	13.93	4.63	4.64	7	2-155	6.47	.002	3>1
AFF	14.46	4.37	4.82	3	16.32	3.98	5.44	3	18.85	2.39	6.28	3	2-155	15.87	.000	3>1,2 2>1
SPL	9.14	3.83	3.04	8	6.49	3.53	2.16	9	5.24	3.29	1.75	9	2-155	15.46	.000	1>2,3
PGA	7.23	3.96	2.41	9	7.42	3.84	2.47	8	7.41	3.38	2.47	8	2-155	.05	.956	-
TRA	11.86	2.32	5.93	1	12.15	2.99	6.08	1	13.20	1.71	6.60	1	2-155	3.71	.027	3>1

Lastly, perceived brand values of soccer teams were compared through user types. A one way analysis of variance showed that there were significant differences ($F(2, 155) = 41.259, p < 0.001$) among light, medium and heavy users in regards to brand value of their teams.

4.4.4 Team Differences

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate differences in brand associations of fans of different teams. *ANOVA* were significant for management, coach and nostalgia, star player and tradition factors in consumers' mind. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pair wise differences among Galatasaray, Fenerbahce and Besiktas fans by using the post hoc test of *Bonferroni*. Follow-up tests resulted that there were significant difference among different fans' of these teams (Table 7, Figure 13).

There were significant differences ($F(2, 155) = 15.63, p < 0.001$) between Fenerbahce fans ($M = 5.45 \pm 1.18$) and Galatasaray fans ($M = 4.52 \pm 1.22$), Besiktas fans ($M = 4.09 \pm 1.15$) in management aspects of teams. In addition, there was a significant difference $F(2, 155) = 6.05, p < 0.05$ between Galatasaray ($M = 5.16 \pm .99$) and Besiktas fans ($M = 4.32 \pm 1.38$) in coach and nostalgia. Also there were significant differences ($F(2, 155) = 5.65, p < 0.05$) between Besiktas fans ($M = 2.90 \pm 1.40$) and Fenerbahce fans ($M = 2.00 \pm 1.21$), Galatasaray fans ($M = 2.28 \pm 1.15$) in perception of star players.

Table 7: One Way ANOVA Table for Soccer Teams

	Galatasaray (n = 66)				Fenerbahce (n = 52)				Besiktas (n = 35)				Df (B-W)	F	Sig.	Sig. Diff.
	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R	M	SD	Item Mean	R				
COM	4.41	1.39	4.41	6	4.37	1.39	4.37	6	3.85	1.41	3.85	7	2-152	2.07	.130	-
PRO	5.94	1.04	5.94	2	5.84	1.15	5.84	2	5.48	1.22	5.48	2	2-152	1.93	.149	-
MAN	4.52	1.22	4.52	5	5.45	1.18	5.45	3	4.09	1.15	4.09	5	2-152	15.63	.000	2>1,3
C&N	5.16	.99	5.16	4	4.85	1.20	4.85	5	4.32	1.38	4.32	4	2-152	6.05	.003	1>3
PIP	4.10	1.66	4.10	7	3.93	1.58	3.93	7	3.88	1.78	3.88	6	2-152	.25	.779	-
AFF	5.69	1.26	5.69	3	5.25	1.94	5.25	4	5.30	1.41	5.30	3	2-152	1.74	.178	-
SPL	2.28	1.15	2.28	9	2.00	1.21	2.01	9	2.90	1.40	2.90	8	2-152	5.65	.004	3>1,2
PGA	2.46	1.17	2.46	8	2.40	1.24	2.40	8	2.46	1.44	2.46	9	2-152	.05	.955	-
TRA	6.30	1.07	6.30	1	6.47	.98	6.47	1	5.66	1.53	5.66	1	2-152	5.45	.005	3<1,2

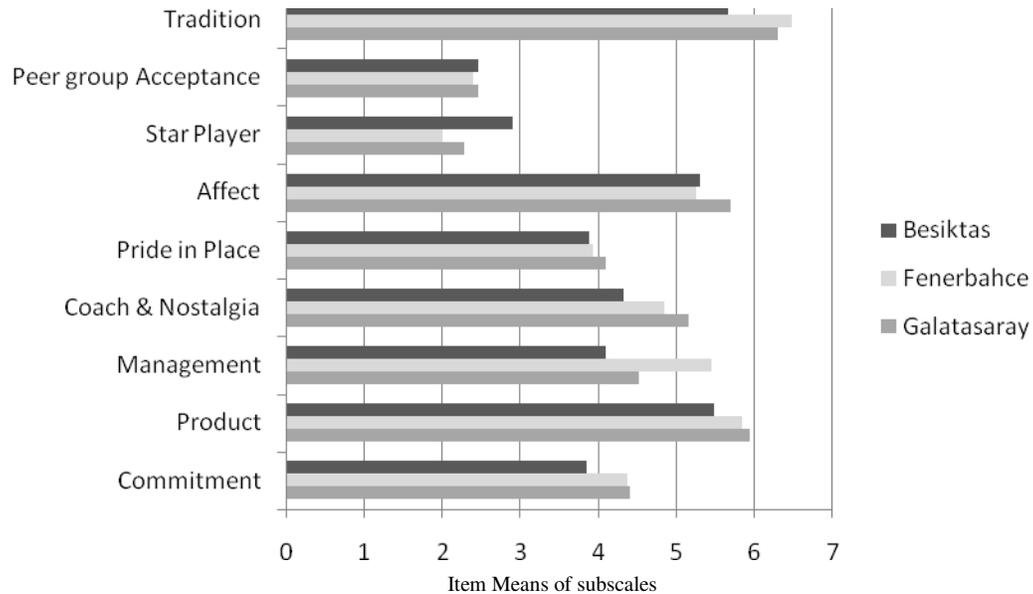


Figure 13: Brand Associations for Soccer Teams

Also perceived brand value of fans of different teams was tested by a one way analysis of variance, and a significant difference was found ($F(2, 153) = 3.194, p < 0.05$) among fans of Galatasaray, Fenerbahce and Besiktas. Galatasaray fans saw their team as a brand more than Fenerbahce and Besiktas fans, and Fenerbahce fans valued their team as a brand more than Besiktas fans.

4.4.5 Merchandise Buyers vs. Non-Buyers

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare perceptions of brand associations of merchandise buyers and non-buyers. First, the test was significant for commitment aspect of brand associations, $t(154) = 7.53, p < .001$.

Merchandise buyers ($M = 62.17 \pm 12.77$) on the average, associate commitment with brand image of their team more than non-buyers do ($M = 44.23 \pm 15.35$). Second, there was a significant difference between buyers and non-buyers on perception of product features of soccer teams and its' association with brand value of the teams, $t(154) = 4.67, p < .001$. Fans who bought merchandise ($M = 69.17 \pm 8.82$) evaluate product aspects of their team associated with brand more than non-buyer fans do ($M = 59.88 \pm 13.63$). Third, management was associated to brand value of soccer teams significantly different by merchandise buyers and non buyers, $t(154) = 4.39, p < .001$. Fourth, t test was significant for coach and nostalgia, $t(154) = 4.68, p < .001$. Merchandise buyer fans ($M = 26.93 \pm 5.48$) on average, associate coach and nostalgia with brand of their soccer team more than fans who do not buy merchandise ($M = 22.59 \pm 5.70$). Fifth, pride in place showed significant difference between merchandise buyer fans and non-buyer fans $t(154) = 2.50, p < .05$. Sixth, t test revealed significant difference for affect subscale $t(154) = 3.79, p < .001$. Merchandise buyer fans ($M = 17.86 \pm 3.45$) related affect with brand image more than non-buyer fans did ($M = 15.38 \pm 4.26$). Seventh, star player factor was perceived significantly different by buyers and non-buyers $t(154) = -4.99, p < .001$. Fans who do not buy merchandise ($M = 8.25 \pm 3.98$) gave more importance to star players than merchandise buyers do ($M = 5.25 \pm 2.97$). Lastly, t test was significant for tradition $t(154) = 2.55, p < .05$. Merchandise buyers ($M = 12.97 \pm 2.24$) perceived tradition as more important factor than non-buyers ($M = 11.93 \pm 2.59$) (Figure 14).

Table 8: Differences between Merchandise Buyers and Non-Buyers.

	<i>Buyers</i>				<i>Non-Buyers</i>				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>R</i>			
	<i>(n = 59)</i>				<i>(n = 97)</i>						
			Mean				Mean				
COM	62.17	12.77	5.18	6	44.23	15.35	3.69	7	7.53	154	.000
PRO	69.17	8.82	6.29	2	59.88	13.63	5.44	2	4.67	154	.000
MAN	21.03	4.80	5.26	5	17.39	5.16	4.35	5	4.39	154	.000
C&N	26.93	5.48	5.39	4	22.59	5.70	4.52	4	4.69	154	.000
PIP	13.12	4.86	4.37	7	11.09	4.94	3.70	6	2.50	154	.014
AFF	17.86	3.45	5.95	3	15.38	4.26	5.13	3	3.79	154	.000
SPL	5.25	2.97	1.75	9	8.25	3.98	2.75	8	-4.99	154	.000
PGA	7.76	3.85	2.59	8	7.10	3.68	2.37	9	1.07	154	.288
TRA	12.97	2.24	6.48	1	11.93	2.59	5.96	1	2.55	154	.012

$p < 0.05$

Furthermore, fans who have bought licensed merchandise of their team and their peers who have not bought were compared to investigate their perception on their teams brand value. Independent sample *t*-test was significant $t(154) = 6.904$, $p < .001$, and fans who bought licensed merchandise ($M = 236.27 \pm 28.01$) evaluated their team as a brand more than their counterparts who have not bought merchandise ($M = 197.84 \pm 36.74$).

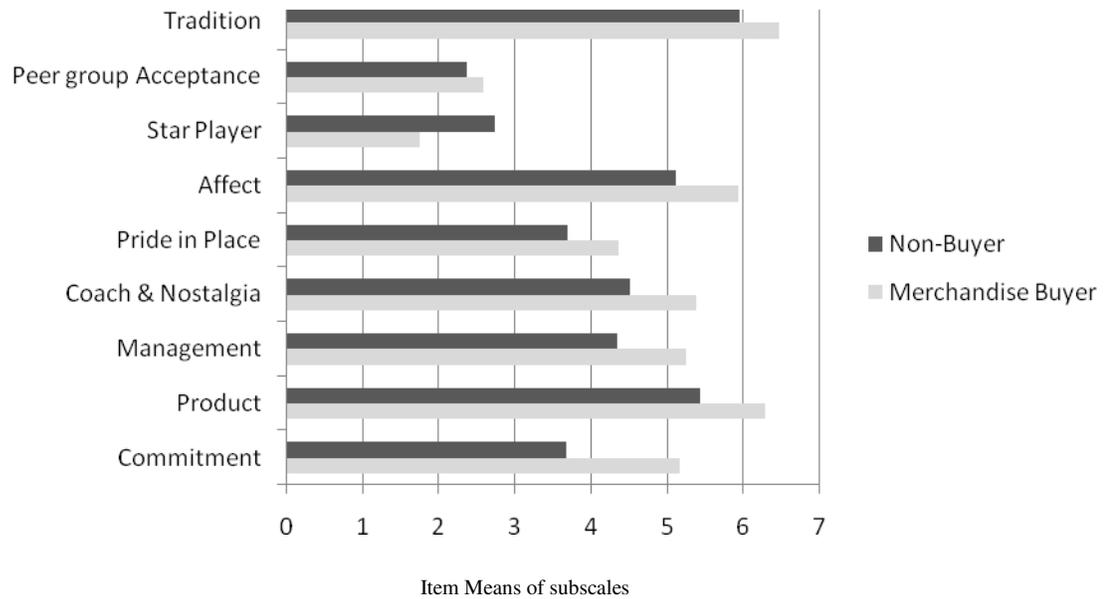


Figure 14: Brand Associations for Merchandise Buyers vs. Non-Buyers

4.5. Correlations Among Variables

Correlation coefficients were computed among the nine brand associations and three independent variables. The results of the correlation analyses presented in Table 9 presents that 49 out of 67 correlations were statistically significant and were greater than or equal to .21. Results indicated that all of the brand associations are significantly related with each other ($p < 0.01$) except peer group acceptance. In addition, older people had higher interest in pride in place and coach and nostalgia ($p < 0.01$). Also correlation coefficient showed that game consumption was found to be significantly correlated ($p < 0.01$) with brand associations except peer group acceptance. The strongest correlation was between game consumption and following media. This indicates that fans who

watch games of their team also follow the news through media. The second strongest correlation was with commitment. This result showed that committed fans watch more games of their team. Furthermore, following news on media was found to be significantly correlated ($p < 0.01$) with all of the brand associations except peer group acceptance, and the strongest correlation was with commitment. Similarly, this result reveals that committed fans follow their team through media.

Moreover, relationships between game consumption and brand, and following media and brand were investigated by correlation coefficient. A positive and strong relationships were found between both game consumption and brand ($r = .63, p < .000$) and following media and brand ($r = .66, p < .000$).

Table 9: Correlations among independent variables and the brand associations

	AGE	GCON	MEDIA	COM	PRD	MAN	C & N	PIP	AFF	SP	P G A	TRA
AGE	1.000											
GCON	.141	1.000										
MEDIA	-.216**	.628**	1.000									
COM	.141	.606**	.678**	1.000								
PRD	.111	.387**	.561**	.729**	1.000							
MAN	.057	.233**	.244**	.416**	.432**	1.000						
C & N	.212**	.435**	.580**	.719**	.719**	.501**	1.000					
PIP	.178**	.226**	.298**	.484**	.290**	.260**	.396**	1.000				
AFF	.148	.421**	.562**	.573**	.475**	.241**	.482**	.173**	1.000			
SPL	.056	.312**	.511**	.631**	.715**	.446**	.558**	.232**	.406**	1.000		
P G A	.036	-.028	.066	.003	-.220**	-.051	-.103	.053	-.112	.182*	1.000	
TRA	.132	.205**	.215**	.313**	.593**	.231**	.334**	.090	.157	.483**	-.286**	1.000

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study was designed to ascertain the brand associations of Turkish soccer teams and to investigate effects of some factors on consumer's perception of soccer team brands. The brand associations were examined with respect to the gender, grade level, age, user type, fans of different soccer teams and the merchandise buying behavior of the spectators. Understanding the factors related with the brand value and brand image of soccer teams was also another aspect of the study. In this chapter, the results of the study (see Chapter IV) are discussed, and possible solutions are offered for the sport clubs to establish a stronger brand image and value and to attract more spectators. This chapter contains three topics; (a) exploration of brand associations, (b) differences among groups & brand associations, (c) relationships between independent variables and brand associations. As discussed earlier (see Chapter 3 & 4), the instrument used in this study ("TAS" developed by Gladden & Funk, 2002) possesses the psychometric properties to accurately and reliably measure the brand associations of sport teams.

Findings of the study showed that 51.3% of the participants were male while 48.7% were females. All of the participants were university students and their age was ranging between 18 and 32. 11.5% of the participants were

sophomores, 19.9% was juniors and 68.6% of soccer fans were seniors. In addition, while 35.9% of participants were light user, 37.8% and 26.3% of participants were medium and heavy users respectively. Besides, 37.2% of the participant had bought licensed merchandise of their team, and 62.2% had not bought merchandise. Lastly, 42.3%, 37.8% and 26.3% of soccer fans who participated in the study were fans of Galatasaray, Fenerbahce and Besiktas soccer teams respectively.

5. 1. Consumer-based Brand Associations of Turkish Soccer Teams

The most important brand associations at this study were found to be tradition of the team, product, affect and coach and nostalgia. Whereas star player, pride in place, and peer group acceptance were found to be the least important factors. Tradition of a team stands for successful history of the teams. Identifying tradition as the most important brand association in this study shows that Turkish soccer fans relate successful history of their team with teams' brand value. Although success and brand equity are distinct construct, it is clear that winning enhances brand equity (Gladden & Milne, 1999) and success is the most important creator of brand associations and brand equity over time (Gladden et al. 1998). This is mainly due to the practice of basking in reflected glory in which sports consumers seek to enhance their self esteem by displaying a relationship between a successful sports team and themselves (Guenzi &

Nocco, 2006). The second most important factor in this study was determined as product features of teams. Similarly product subscale was found as the second important brand association in Gladden and Funk's (2002) study. Product subscale includes items related with the performance of the team and entertainment and atmosphere of games. Since sport managers are not able to control the outcome/result of games, it is very important to increase the entertainment value of games. As stated by Gladden et al. (1998), "providing atmosphere is important. If we remember that sport consumers take nothing away from an athletic event other than memories of their experience, the importance of atmosphere becomes evident" (p.10). In addition, Toronto Maples and FC Barcelona have been using entertainment experience at arena as one of the brand building strategies (Richelieu, A. & Pons, F, 2006). The third most important factor was found to be affect factor. Affect shows an individual's feeling about a team and it is one of the indicators of commitment to a sport team (Funk, 2001). Committed, loyal fans would likely possess strong positive attitudes toward a particular team (Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000), and if people hold more favorable attitudes toward a brand, it will lead to consumption (Funk, Haugtvedt, & Howard, 2000). In addition, brand image strongly influences attitudinal loyalty of a club's fans (Bauer, Sauer & Exler, 2008). The fourth factor was coach and nostalgia. Similarly, Gladden and Funk (2002) ranked nostalgia as third most important association. In the validity and reliability study of TAS, coach and nostalgia subscales became one subscale.

The reason for that can be explained through a relation between coach and winning team in Turkey. In Turkey, when a soccer team loses couple games in a row, head coach loses his job (Basarisizlikta Ilk Onlar Akla Geliyorlar, 2005). So, success of a sport team is related to coach and since nostalgia refers to favorable memories of past, it is apparent that participants of the study perceived coach and nostalgia related, and they attach coach's success and image to their soccer team. Management of a soccer team and commitment to a team determined as fifth and sixth factors in spectators mind. These results revealed that management and commitment are not perceived as important as product, nostalgia and coach and tradition in regards to brand image and brand value of soccer teams. The seventh factor was found to be pride in place. In the US local teams and teams' contribution to a city are very important, and most of the people support their local teams. Turkey differs from this perspective, because the three biggest and most successful soccer teams are located in Istanbul. Over 84% of the Turkish population is fans of these three teams (TFF Futbol Arastirmasi Kamuoyu Anketi, 2005). Thus, in Turkey people support one of these three teams rather than local representatives. Bauer, Sauer and Exler (2008) found similar results in their study. They found that especially for very popular clubs such as Bayern Munich or FC Schalke 04 most of the fans are not local and nonlocal fans do not necessarily appreciate the team's regional provenance for its own sake. On the other hand, hometown of a team is valued more favorably by local fans. If this study was taken place in Istanbul and

specifically data was collected in Kadikoy, Besiktas and Mecidiyekoy, Beyoglu and Florya, the results for this subscale might have been different and pride in place might have received more attention by participants. Lastly, star player and peer group acceptance factors were determined least important brand associations. Similarly, Gladden and Funk (2002) had found peer group acceptance as the least important factor influencing brand value of sport team in consumers mind. In Turkey, instead of peer group acceptance, effect of family members, especially father and brother, could be investigated. According to Genar (2004), kids become fans of soccer teams when they have been born, and 71% of kids under the age of 10 are fan of a soccer team in Turkey. On the other hand star players and their effect on brand image and value of soccer teams were perceived the least important by participants. This finding is contradictory with literature. Gladden and Funk (2002) found star players as the most important factor affecting brand of sport teams. In addition Sozeri and Kocak (2004) found that physical skills of athletes were the most important motive affecting fans attendance decision. However, a recent study done by Bauer et al. in 2008 found supporting results to this study. Bauer et al.'s (2008) study revealed that soccer fans in Germany do not associate star players with soccer teams' brand image. According to the study, most of the fans have a long fan history; they have all experienced ups and downs of their team such as player and coach changes, for example. Perhaps for that reason, fans associate other factors such as tradition, atmosphere and history with brand image.

As a result, soccer teams should work on factors associated with brand value and image of the team in consumer's memory. By this way the Turkish soccer clubs can overcome the insufficient revenue problem.

5.2. Differences among Groups & Brand Associations

This study sought to explore differences among groups based on brand associations. First, independent sample *t* test was conducted to investigate gender differences, and significant difference was found between male and female participants of the study. While commitment to team, product and coach and nostalgia were important for males, females associated star players, management and peer group acceptance with brand of the team. Similarly, according to Alkibay (2005) females find peer group acceptance important and choose their team based on their family's and friend's team preferences.

To compare brand associations for different grade levels one way analysis of variance was used. The test revealed significant differences between sophomores and senior, juniors in commitment and pride in place. In addition, seniors evaluated their team as a brand compared to sophomores. This might also be explained through age and brand relationship. Correlation coefficient showed that there was a positive relationship between age and perceived brand value of soccer team. Thus, older fans perceived their team as a brand

comparing to younger fans. Moreover, older fans associated coach and nostalgia and pride in place with brand more than younger fans did.

When brand associations were compared among user type groups, a one way *ANOVA* revealed significant difference. Heavy users associated commitment to team, product features of team, management, coach and nostalgia, affect, pride in place and tradition factors to brand of soccer teams more than medium and light users did. On the other hand, light users valued star players influence on brand of soccer team's more than heavy and medium users. This result might be supported by differences between males and females perception on brand associations. 75% of light users were females, so it was not surprising that light users perceived star players as an important factor affecting brand image of soccer teams. In addition, fans who have bought licensed merchandise of their soccer team were compared to fans who have not bought merchandise based on their perception of brand associations. Independent sample t-test was significant, and all factors except peer group acceptance were perceived different by buyers and non-buyers. Also, fans who have not bought merchandise perceived star players as an important factor associated with brand of soccer team, and fans who have bought merchandise gave all other factors more important than non-buyer fans did. This result can be supported by user type results, because 82.9% of heavy users have bought licensed merchandise of their soccer team.

Another goal of this study was to find out if brand associations perceived differently from one soccer team to another. One way *ANOVA* showed significant differences among Galatasaray, Fenerbahce and Besiktas. Galatasaray fans perceived their team as a brand more than Fenerbahce and Besiktas fans did. Similarly, Alkibay (2005) revealed that Galatasaray soccer team was recalled as the first professional soccer team who has had brand value by soccer fans of different teams. In addition, coach and nostalgia factor was more important for Galatasaray fans comparing to others. This might be explained by Galatasaray's success in Europe and Fatih Terim who was the head coach during Euro Cup Championship and Super League Championship.

5.3 Relationships between Independent Variables and Brand Associations

The relationships between game consumption and brand and following media and brand were not surprising, because watching games and following news through media are kinds of consumption. Thus, fans who watch their team's games and follow news about their team through media are tend to be heavy users, and heavy users are value their team as a brand.

Some of the results of this study were not being able to compared and discussed with literature, because literature does not exist. Researchers are still discussing brand equity models and there are not many studies in this area.

Brand management for popular professional sport teams should focus on building favorable and distinct brand beliefs among actual and potential fans. Given the unpredictability and instability of the team-sport product, which is defined as the performance and outcomes at games, brand image has the potential to represent one of the few constants in fans' perceptions. Brand image, therefore, offers sport marketers a unique opportunity to present a consistent and stable club appearance to their fans and the public.

From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study allow us to derive a number of implications for successful brand-based management. There should be a strong focus on building a strong brand identity using non-product related attributes. Their major relevance can be explained by their relative consistency over time. Although the core product is subject to variations in composition and quality, the brand context factors allow for stability and continuity. Thus, club management aiming to increase the loyalty of their fan base should foster contact with other fans and cultivate the team's tradition. The strong effect of brand benefits on brand attitude highlights the potential value of a benefit-based positioning of a team brand. In order to develop benefit-based brand positioning, soccer clubs should emphasize commitment, identification, escape and nostalgia. Also, sports clubs should emphasize the creation and conservation of fan loyalty through well-planned interactions designed to deliver extraordinary experiences through atmosphere at stadium, interactions with players and coaches, and entertainment value.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, professional sport clubs are viewed and managed as business. They have CEO, general manager, marketing department, financial department and a department of public relations similar to large corporations. Sport teams aim to make profits (Robinson, 2005), so economic success of a team is very important. In sports industry, there is a marketing myopia, the belief that winning will always sell and losing will not (Schanwald, 2005). However, core product of sport is beyond marketer's control. At this point, brand equity and brand image are very important for sports teams. Due to its intangible, inconsistent and perishable nature, the sports consumption experience is nothing but a perception of the association with a particular sport entity. (Gladden et. al, 1998). The key for professional teams is to differentiate their brand by developing and/or strengthening positive associations with team brands in the minds of their consumers (Gladden et al., 2001). And researchers stated that 2000 to 2010 will be the decade in which team management activities evolve from a focus on winning as a means of realizing short-term profits, to a focus on strategic management of the team brand as a means of realizing long-term appreciation in franchise value. Thus, brand is an important factor for professional sport clubs.

Since the sport product is intangible and the outcome of the event is not under the control of sport managers, brand management could be helpful to generate revenue for sport teams. Brand equity leads to increased national media exposure, corporate sponsorship, increased ticket sales and merchandise sales (Gladden and Milne, 1999). In addition Bauer et al. (2005) were able to demonstrate high and significant effect of brand equity on economic success comparing to athletic success.

Moreover, favorable brand equity increases the probability of brand choice, consumer retention, profit margins, and willingness to pay premium prices, positive word-of-mouth, brand licensing opportunities and brand extensions (Ross, 2006). According to Biel (1992) consumer behavior is driven by perceptions of a brand, and perception consists of factors associated with brand in consumers mind. Aaker (1991) stated that associations and image of a brand in consumer's memory represents the basis for purchase decision and for brand loyalty. Similarly, Funk et al. (2000) revealed that if people hold more favorable attitudes toward a brand, it will lead to regular and/or increased consumption.

In Turkey, soccer teams and their management have to realize the relevance of their brand in economic success. Almost every Turkish soccer club has a budget deficit. The main reason for this is the insufficient amount of revenue

sources such as licensed merchandise sales, sponsorship agreements, and game day sales (ticket sales, concession etc.) (Sözeri, 2005).

As a result of this study, team management has to focus on brand management and brand image of team which is defined as perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory (Keller, 1993). In addition, management should develop strong, favorable, and unique brand associations in the heads of their customers which are tradition, product feature, affect, coach & nostalgia, management, commitment to team, pride in place, star player and peer group acceptance.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of the current study suggest implications of brand equity to soccer teams in Turkey. However, it is clear that more work is needed. Since only 156 university students participated in this study, it is difficult to generalize the results of this study to whole Turkish soccer fans. Future research efforts should explore brand equity models and brand associations in a wider demographic group and collecting data at stadiums should be considered. In addition, reinvestigation of peer group acceptance and star player factors are needed. Moreover, brand associations of basketball teams should also be examined.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SPOR TAKIMLARINDA MARKA İLİSKİLERİ ENVANTERİ

Günümüzde spor kulüpleri, takımlar ve ligler marka olarak görülmeye başlanmıştır. Bu anket Türkiye'deki futbol takımlarının marka değerini ve marka imajını etkileyen faktörleri belirlemek ve taraftarların hangi faktörleri marka ile bağlantılı gördüğünü, markayla ilişkilendirdiğini araştırmak üzere hazırlanmıştır.

Bu anketi doldurmanız yaklaşık 15 dakikanızı alacak ve verdiğiniz bilgiler kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Sorulara doğru cevap vermeniz çalışmanın başarısı ve spor kulüplerince kullanılacak yararlı bilgiler edinilmesi için son derece önemlidir.

Anketi doldururken sorulara taraftarı olduğunuz takımı düşünerek cevap veriniz. Her soruyu dikkatlice okuyarak, sizin duygu ve düşüncelerinizi ifade eden rakamı işaretleyiniz. Bazı sorular size aynı görünebilir ya da tam olarak sizin duygu ve düşüncelerinizi ifade etmeyebilir, bu durumda size en çok uyan cevabı veriniz.

Ar. Gör. Ceyda MUMCU

Yaşınız: _____

Cinsiyetiniz: A) ERKEK B) BAYAN

Kacinci Sınıftasınız: A) 1 B) 2 C) 3 D) 4

Taraftarı Olduğunuz Takım: _____ Kac senedir bu takımın taraftarısınız: _____

Geçen sezon takımınızın kaç maçını stadyumda izlediniz? _____

Geçen sezon takımınızın kaç maçını TV de izlediniz? _____

Taraftarı olduğunuz takımın medyada (TV, radyo, gazete ve diğer) yer alan haberlerini ne sıklıkta takip edersiniz?

- A) Her gün E) Ayda 2 kere
B) Haftada 4-6 kere F) Ayda 1 kere
C) Haftada 2-3 kere G) Ayda 1 kereden az
D) Haftada 1 kere

Geçen sezon takımınızın lisanslı ürünlerinden satın aldınız mı? Aldıysanız kaç ürün satın aldınız? _____

Bu ürünlere toplam ne kadar ödediniz?

- A) 0-50 YTL C) 100-150 YTL E) 200-
B) 50-100 YTL D) 150-200 YTL

Aşağıdaki kelimeler taraftarı olduğunuz takıma olan duygu ve davranışlarınızı anlamaya yöneliktir. Taraftarı olduğunuz takıma olan duygu ve davranışlarınızı nasıl görüyorsunuz? Her kelime çiftinden, takımınıza olan duygularınızı gösteren kutuya X işareti koyunuz.

Akıllica	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Çılgınca
Kötü	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	İyi
Değersiz	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Değerli
Zayıf	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Güçlü

Spor Takımlarında Marka İlişkileri Envanteri

- 1 Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
- 2 Katılmıyorum
- 3 Biraz katılmıyorum
- 4 Kararsızım
- 5 Biraz katılıyorum
- 6 Katılıyorum
- 7 Kesinlikle katılıyorum

1	Taraftarı olduğum takımı izlemek, takım hakkında yazılanları okumak ve konuşmak hayatın sorunlarından geçici olarak uzaklaşmamı sağlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Taraftarı olduğum takımın renklerini severim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Taraftarı olduğum takımın stadyumunun mimari yapısı güzeldir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Taraftarı olduğum takımı düşündüğümde aklıma güzel hatıralar gelir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Taraftarı olduğum takım hakkında çok bilgiliyimdir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Taraftarı olduğum takım benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Taraftarı olduğum takımın antrenörünü severim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Taraftarı olduğum takımın yönetimi, iyi bir takım oluşturmak için ellerinden gelenin en iyisini yaparlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Taraftarı olduğum takımı, arkadaşlarım tuttuğu için desteklemeye başladım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Taraftarı olduğum takım, bulunduğu bölgede yaşayanların oturdukları yerle gurur duymalarını sağlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11	Arkadaşlarımla beni, desteklediğim takımın taraftarı olarak görmeleri benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Taraftarı olduğum takımın maçları heyecan vericidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Taraftarı olduğum takımın yıldız oyuncusu yoktur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Taraftarı olduğum takımın geçmişi başarılarla doludur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Taraftarı olduğum takım hakkında güzel anılarım vardır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Taraftarı olduğum takımın taraftarı olmak benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Taraftarı olduğum takımın logosunu beğenirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Taraftarı olduğum takımın stadyumunun kendine özgü bir "karakteri" vardır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Taraftarı olduğum takımı izlemek, takım hakkında yazılanları okumak ve konuşmak günlük sorunlarımı unutmama yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	Taraftarı olduğum takım hakkında bildiğim her şeyi sıralamam gerekse, uzun bir liste oluşur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Taraftarı olduğum takım, bulunduğu bölgede yaşayan insanların imajını yükseltmeye yardım eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Taraftarı olduğum takımın antrenörü spor camiasında oldukça bilinen, tanınmış bir kişidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

23	Taraftarı olduğum takımın yıldız oyuncularını izlemekten hoşlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Arkadaşlarımla aynı takımı desteklemek benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	Taraftarı olduğum takımın köklü bir geçmişi vardır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	Taraftarı olduğum takımın yönetimi, takımı başarılı bir şekilde yönetir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Taraftarı olduğum takımın ligde Avrupa Kupalarına katılacak bir derece alması benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Taraftarı olduğum takımın maçlarını seyretmek eğlencelidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Taraftarı olduğum takımın formalarını beğenirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Taraftarı olduğum takım hakkındaki bilgimi diğer takımlar hakkındaki bilgilerimle karşılaştırdığımda, kendimi takımım hakkında uzman olarak görürüm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Taraftarı olduğum takımı stadyumda izlemek maç izlemenin keyfini artırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	Bir kişi taraftarı olduğum takımı övdüğü zaman, bana iltifat edilmiş gibi hissedirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Taraftarı olduğum takımında izlemeyi sevdiğim yıldız oyuncular vardır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Taraftarı olduğum takım bulunduğu bölge toplumuna prestij kazandırmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Taraftarı olduğum takımın yöneticileri, antrenör ve oyuncu seçimlerinde doğru kararlar verirler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

36	Taraftarı olduğum takımın kayda değer bir geçmişi yoktur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	Taraftarı olduğum takımı izlemek, takım hakkında yazılanları okumak ve konuşmak beni hayatın zorluklarından uzaklaştırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Taraftarı olduğum takımı, arkadaşlarım da aynı takımı desteklediği için desteklerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	Taraftarı olduğum takım hakkında konuşurken çoğunlukla “onlar” yerine “biz” kelimesini kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	Taraftarı olduğum takımın maçlarını izlemek zevklidir	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	Taraftarı olduğum takımın antrenörü başarılıdır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	Taraftarı olduğum takımın lig şampiyonluğu için mücadele ediyor olması benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

KATILIMINIZ, ÇALIŞMAYA KATKINIZ VE VAKİT AYIRDIĞINIZ İÇİN TEŞEKKÜR EDERİM.

APPENDIX B

TEAM ASSOCIATION SCALE

Please continue thinking about your favorite team. For each set of words listed below, please put an "x" in the box that most closely represents your feelings about your favorite team.

Foolish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wise
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bad
Worthless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beneficial
Strong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weak

Below are some statements about how people feel about their favorite professional sport team. Please think only about the favorite team you indicated earlier. Read each statement, then circle the appropriate number printed below to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement.

Strongly disagree

strongly agree

Watching, reading, and talking about my favorite team provides a temporary escape from life's problems

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like the colors of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I would be willing to defend my favorite team publicly,
even if it caused controversy

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The architecture of my favorite team's stadium is attractive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Thinking of my favorite team brings back good memories

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I do not care whether my favorite team wins or loses

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I possess a great deal of knowledge about my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I consider my favorite team to be personally important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like the manager/head coach of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The front office of my favorite team does its best to
field a good team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I began following my favorite team because of my friends

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team helps its citizens be proud of where they live

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It is important that my friends see me as a fan of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's games are exciting

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team does not have any star players that I like to watch

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team has a history of winning

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I have fond memories of following my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Being a fan of my favorite team is important to me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like the logo of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's stadium has "character"

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Watching, reading, and talking about my favorite team helps me forget my day-to-day problems

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If I were to list everything I knew about my favorite team, the list would be quite long

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team helps elevate the image of its community

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's manager/head coach is well known throughout the sport

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like to watch my favorite team's star players

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It is important to follow the same team as my friends

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team has a rich history

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My friends and family recognize me as a fan of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It would be difficult for me to change my allegiance from my favorite team to another professional team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's front office does a good job running the team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It is very important that my favorite team reaches the post-season

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's games are entertaining

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's uniforms are attractive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Compared to other sport teams, I consider myself an expert about my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Compared to how I feel about other professional teams, my favorite team is very important to me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's stadium enhances the enjoyment of attending games

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

When someone praises my favorite team, it feels like a compliment

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team has star players that I like to watch

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I have fond memories of following my favorite team with friends and/or family members

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I consider myself a committed fan of my favorite team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team brings prestige to the community

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The front office of my favorite team makes wise player personnel decisions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team has no history

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Watching, reading, and talking about my favorite team takes me away from life's hassles

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I follow my favorite team because my friends like the same team

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

When I talk about my favorite team, I usually say "we" rather than "they"

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My favorite team's games are enjoyable

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The manager/head coach of my favorite team does a good job

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It is important that my favorite team competes for league championships

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I would watch a game of my favorite team regardless of which team they were playing against

1 2 3 4 5 6 7