Christian Lucas

Sponsor- and Country-Related Predictors of Sponsorship Effectiveness

Sponsorship in a National and International Environment

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Sponsorship in a National
and International Environment

With a foreword by Prof. Dr. David M. Woisetschläger

Springer Gabler

Christian Lucas
Braunschweig, Germany

Meinen Eltern

Foreword

The role of sponsorship as a marketing communication instrument is still expanding, despite recent economic downturns. Increasing expenditures for sponsorship contracts require more elaborate assessments of sponsorship effectiveness than relying solely on measurements of media exposure and sponsorship recall.

The academic literature provides quite comprehensive models for evaluations of sponsorship success factors and outcomes at the level of individual consumers. Only relatively few studies have analysed managerial and external factors that contribute to differences in sponsorship perceptions and sponsorship effectiveness at the consumer level. Knowledge of the relative importance of managerial and external factors would allow sponsorship management to improve sponsorship strategy and leverage instruments, contributing to enhanced sponsorship effectiveness. The doctoral thesis by Christian Lucas addresses this important research gap in the literature.

In his doctoral thesis, Christian Lucas studies the effectiveness of sponsorship efforts in two contexts. In both studies, two conceptual levels are combined in a single statistical analysis, using a multilevel modelling approach. The first study examines the determinants of sponsorship effectiveness that are controllable by sponsorship management. The study focuses on sponsors of the first and second Bundesliga and analyses how the deployment of different leveraging measures at the sponsor level affects consumer-level outcomes such as brand attitude. The second study sheds light on international differences in sponsorship effects, using field data from 14 countries and five different automotive Formula One sponsors.

The work by Christian Lucas contributes to the understanding of sponsorship effects at the national and international levels. Based on two empirical studies using large datasets, Christian Lucas derives valuable insights for practitioners attempting to optimize their sponsorship efforts. Parts of this thesis have already been accepted for conference presentations by several international academic associations and have the potential to be published in peer-reviewed

marketing journals. I highly recommend this book to any academic or practitioner interested in sponsorship research.

David M. Woisetschläger

Preface

First, I want to thank my doctoral adviser Professor Dr. David M. Woisetschläger. He took me on as a student despite his being an assistant professor at the TU Dortmund and still seeking to advance his own career. His high standards and willingness to work hard himself encouraged me regularly to carry on and made me push myself to higher goals. Being his first PhD student to graduate, I hope to have set the bar high.

Alexander (Alex) Eiting deserves my equally deep gratitude. As a fellow PhD student, he was always available to me. His knowledge of methods and determination to always get to the bottom of all my questions were indispensable in the successful completion of my PhD work. I wish Alex much success and luck on his way to his own professorship!

For the adoption of the second expert's report, I would like to thank Professor Dr. Susanne Robra-Bissantz of the TU Braunschweig. Furthermore, my thanks go to Professor Dr. Heinz Ahn as the chairman of the examination commission during my oral defence at the TU Braunschweig. As an industry partner, I would like to thank Patrick Wendt of Toyota Motorsport GmbH, as well as Jens Falkenau, my former department manager at Sport+Markt (today Repucom).

In addition, I extend my thanks to the team of the Chair in Services Management at the Carolo-Wilhelmina Technical University in Braunschweig, especially and primarily Jan Dreisbach, a colleague from my time at Sport+Markt, who established the contact with my future doctoral adviser. I was pleased to hear when Jan a little later also decided to pursue a PhD and so became a valued colleague and companion, whose critical look at the final review of the text was indispensable. I thank Isabelle (Isa) Kes for unfailingly friendly and helpful support in all areas. I keep my fingers crossed that she will soon be handing in her own dissertation. I also thank Marc Schnöring for his ever-witty and spontaneous nature, which made me smile over and over. His comments methodically pushed my work to grow. I want to thank Irina Hoof, Nadine Pieper, Christoph Weiß, Daniela Müller, and Kerstin Stricker for always having been available and especially for the helpful tips in preparing my defence. I thank them for taking away the fear of the unknown. I also wish for them to be soon

finished and for their work to be able to make a difference. My help and support are there for them always.

Likewise, I thank the professors, PhD graduates, and PhD students of the regularly held inter-university doctoral workshops, particularly Professor Dr. Hartmut H. Holzmüller, professor of business administration, especially marketing, at the Technical University of Dortmund; Professor Dr. Andreas Eggert, professor of business administration, particularly marketing, at the University of Paderborn; Professor Dr. Jens Hogreve, professor of business administration and service management at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt; Professor Dr. Ina Garnefeld, professor of business administration, particularly service management, at the University of Wuppertal; Professor Dr. Vanessa J. Haselhoff, professor of business administration, especially marketing, at the University of Applied Management (FHAM) Erding; as well as Professor Dr. Christof Backhaus and Professor Dr. Markus Blut, both professors of marketing at Newcastle University Business School.

Outside the university, my special thanks go to my dear friends, who have always supported me, and all those who, in their own ways, helped me rebuild myself over and over by giving me new motivation. Among others, I would like to thank Dr. Conrad Neumann and Anczej Köhler for our regular 'Doktoranden Lunches', which provided necessary distraction and the much needed fresh air. I am especially thankful to Deborah (Debbie) Wall, since without her I probably would have not been able to start the whole thesis project. I thank my sister, Mirjam Öztürk, for having been available at all times, day or night, for distraction and motivation. I thank her for always giving me new strength and supporting me fully in every way. My final thanks go to my parents, Maria-Rita (Marita) and Rudolf (Rudi) Josef Lucas, whose unrelenting support and irrevocable faith in me have always encouraged me to carry on and overcome even hardest times in my life. This book is dedicated to them.

Cologne, August 2014   Christian Lucas

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List of Abbreviations

AVE	average variance explained
BIC	Bayesian information criterion
CAPI	computer aided phone interview
CFA	confirmatory factor analysis
CFI	comparative fit index
DEFF	design effect
DFB	Deutscher Fussball Bund e.V.
F1	Formula One
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
HLM	hierarchical linear modeling
ICC	intraclass correlation
IEG	International Events Group
KMO	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy
Level 1 R	level 1 random effect
NASCAR	National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RMSEA	root mean square error of approximation
SOR	stimulus–organism–response
SR	stimulus–response
SRMR	standardized root mean square residual
TLI	Tucker–Lewis index
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
VHB-JOURQUAL	journal ranking of the *Verband der Hochschullehrer für Betriebswirtschaft e.V.*

1   Introduction

Guenter Mast, former manager of the German digestif Jägermeister, is regarded as the progenitor of the jersey sponsorship in Germany. The story goes that Mast held a barbeque in his garden when all his guests suddenly disappeared into the living room to watch a football match (Handelsblatt 2013). Mast realized that football had the potential to reach people of all social classes. Shortly after, the local Bundesliga team Eintracht Braunschweig was suffering financially and Mast decided to support the team with 100,000 DM (~50,000 EUR) in return for a jersey sponsorship. During a time when perimeter board sponsorships were common, this was a small revolution. The Deutscher Fussball Bund (DFB) tried to intervene but Mast and Eintracht Braunschweig changed the official team logo from a lion to the Jägermeister stag and the DFB eventually had to agree to the arrangement (Handelsblatt 2013).

Today, in 2014, jersey sponsorships are, after TV rights, the second most important source of income for a Bundesliga team. In the German Bundesliga (first league), sponsorship fees in the 2012/2013 season ranged from the 1.5 million EUR that AL-KO paid for its title sponsorship of FC Augsburg to the 23 million EUR per year that Deutsche Telekom paid to be the title sponsor of FC Bayern Munich (Handelsblatt 2013). For the entire league (i.e. Deutsche Fussball Liga), at 553 million EUR, sponsorship is the most important source of income, followed by the media, with 546 million EUR (Bundesligareport 2013). These figures are expected to increase since they rose by 5.8% from the 2010/2011 season to the 2011/2012 season and by 13.2% during the last four seasons in total.

Woisetschläger (2006) names various reasons for the fast advancement of sponsorship during the last years to becoming a globally represented tool in a company's communication mix:

- Due to the saturation of markets and the growing interchangeability of products, companies compete foremost at the communication level rather than at the product level (Quester 1997).

- Due to information overload, clients no longer receive most company communication activities. Recipients have additionally started to use avoidance mechanisms, such as 'zapping' to avoid classic TV ads.

- The shift to a more leisure-oriented lifestyle determines the choice and configuration of communication instruments. Sponsorship can transport messages directly into the leisure environment of consumers and become accepted by being perceived as associated therewith (Bruhn 2003).

- Due to the change from a seller's market to a buyer's market, a target group-oriented approach has become necessary.

- The limitations and restrictions of classic ads (e.g. tobacco and alcohol ads) have forced advertisers to look for alternative communication instruments (Ruth and Simonin 2003).

Although sponsorship has become an important part of a company's communication portfolio and its popularity as a marketing tool continually increases, 'academic marketing research has been criticized for an insufficient concern about sponsorship in general, and specifically about the measurement of sponsorship effects' (Woisetschläger and Michaelis 2012, p. 510; also Cornwell and Maignan 1998, Walliser 2003). Especially little is known about how sponsorship effectiveness differs between countries (Wang et al. 2011). The Olympic Summer and Winter Games, the FIFA Football World Cup, and the annual Formula One (F1) Championship are international sport events that are watched by a global audience. In such cases, sponsors are able to reach recipients in many countries with a single sponsorship engagement. On the other hand, sponsors have been increasingly concentrating on few (sport) sponsorship types (e.g. BMW on motorsports, golf, and sailing, McDonald's on the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup, and Red Bull on extreme sports until about 2010). Hence, whether these concentrations are perceived equally worldwide

or if there are variances in the perceptions and if and how these can be managed have to be investigated.

The leverage and activation of sponsorship engagements are a viable means of managing a sponsorship (Weeks et al. 2008) that has become increasingly important. The International Events Group (IEG) indicates that sponsors spent an average of 1.90 USD per 1.00 USD paid in sponsorship rights fees in 2007, compared to 1.30 USD in 2004 (IEG 2007, Weeks et al. 2008), an increase of about 46% in four years. In the world of F1 racing, the BMW Pit Lane Park (see Figure 1-1) was surely an outstanding example of how a sponsor could activate its sponsorship to reach clients on site. 'Nowhere else can the fans get such direct access behind the scenes, touch F1 exhibits for the first time, or enjoy spectacular rides in F1 cars up close and personal' (Theissen 2007, p. 4). The owners of BMWs were granted a privileged entrance upon presentation of their car keys.

Fig. 1-1:   BMW F1 Pit Lane Park
Source: BMW Group PressClub Sport (2008).

Hence, one can see that sponsors have become more creative in reaching fans directly and neglecting these means might result in lower sponsorship effectiveness. So the question remains as to how effective these means are in impacting sponsorship effectiveness. Therefore, sponsorship research needs

to investigate further the effectiveness of various means of sponsorship lever-age and activation.

The literature criticizes that 'little is known about how individuals process […] information' and more specifically that sponsorship is 'lacking explanatory the-oretical frameworks of how sponsorship works in the minds of consumers' (Cornwell et al. 2005, p. 21). With this in mind, based on an updated literature review extending the preliminary work of Cornwell and Maignan (1998), Wal-liser (2003), and Marwitz (2006) and focusing more on psychological pro-cessing mechanisms currently used in sponsorship, this dissertation consists of two studies to answer two research questions.

The first study investigates how sponsorship leverage and activation affect the fans and supporters of sport teams. The second study tests these findings and extends them to the international level to additionally explain country-specific differences. The results of the two studies extend current research to sponsor-ship effectiveness by introducing a multilevel approach to sponsorship investi-gation that is theory based and adds previously unconsidered predictors of sponsorship effectiveness. The studies are also intended to give practitioners a better understanding of how leverage affects clients and which measures have the greatest effect. Especially during the last few years, sponsorship managers not only have aimed at changing their images through the pure branding of sponsored objects, but also have wanted to give their customers and clients a unique experience by bringing them closer to the brand and sponsored object. Sponsors nowadays want to make their brands tangible and experienceable, as, for example, Becks (Bartelt 2013), BMW (Wannieck 2013), Hasseröder (Hasseröder 2013), and Deutsche Lufthansa (Lufthansa 2013). The business-to-business study of Leuteritz et al. (2008) shows that sponsorship is capable of reaching this target better than other communication instruments. The results explored here should be able to help guide these sponsorship managers.

The following **research questions** are answered:

- How does sponsorship leverage affect sports fans and what effects does it have on brand-related variables such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention?

- Does sponsorship differ in effectiveness between countries and which variables are responsible for such variations?

This dissertation specifically concentrates on so-called die-hard fans to examine the first research question to advance already existing exploratory research (see the literature review in Section 3.1). Investigation of these fans is particularly important to sponsorship managers, since they invest more time and spend more money than normal fans (Wann and Branscombe 1993, Carlson et al. 2009). Additionally, behavioural theories are used to underpin the proposed hypotheses, since the shift from a managerial to a consumer perspective in sponsorship calls for an investigation of the internal processes within a consumer organism. This will help to better understand the mechanisms of fan behaviour and guide future sponsor actions more precisely.

Two nested datasets are analysed in each study simultaneously to answer the research questions: individual sport fans, evaluating three sponsors of each of the 36 German Bundesliga teams (for a total of 108 sponsor evaluations) and their respective sponsorship managers in the first (national) study and individual recipients, evaluating five automotive brands in 14 countries and their respective country-specific factors in the second (international) study. Hierarchical linear modelling is therefore applied for the first time in a sponsorship context and constitutes an advancement in sponsorship research. This method originates from empirical social research and is increasingly used within a marketing context (e.g. Steenkamp et al. 1999, Wieseke et al. 2008, 2009, Homburg et al. 2009b). The idea is to analyse the data of participants organized at more than one level (i.e. nested data; Bosker 1999, Hox 2002, Raudenbush and Bryk 2002, Snijders and Langer 2009). Here, fans evaluate a sponsor and the respective sponsorship management in a multiple-sponsor setting. Implications for the measurement of sponsorship effects and future research opportunities are provided, based on the empirical results.

To answer the research questions, this dissertation comprises six sections (see Figure 1-2).

Section 1: Introduction
Problem definition, research objective, course of the investigation

Section 2: Basics and Objectives of Sponsorship
1. Sponsorship Development Worldwide and Sponsorship Types
2. Sport Sponsorship Types and Objectives
3. Brand Consciousness and Brand Objectives within Sport Sponsorship

Section 3: Literature Review and Theoretical Background
1. Literature Review on Sponsorship Effectiveness
2. Theoretical Explanation Approach of Sponsorship Effectiveness
3. Classification of Theories

Section 4: National Sponsorship: Effects of Fan Campaigns on Sponsorship Awareness, Brand Attitude, and Purchase Intention – A Multi-Sponsor Analysis

How does sponsorship leverage affect sport-/ team fans and which effects does it have on brand related variables such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention?

Section 5: International Sponsorship: Effects of Sponsorship on Brand Image – A Cross-National Analysis

Does sponsorship differ in its effectiveness between countries and which variables might be responsible for such variations?

Section 6: Implications and Concluding Remarks
Implications for research and praxis, future research, concluding remarks

Fig. 1-2:   Study organizational outline
Source: Author's own illustration.

After this introduction, Section 2 provides an overview of the fundamental terms and developments within the sponsorship context. The brand concept is introduced and sponsorship-related brand targets analysed. Section 3 gives an updated overview of the Anglophone sponsorship literature. A main focus is on individual- and group-level predictors. In the following, behaviour-based theories are identified, explained, and applied within the sponsorship context. Section 4 deals with the empirical verification of the influence of leverage and activation on brand-related sponsorship variables such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention. Hypotheses are developed and tested and the results presented and implications derived. Section 5 empirically ex-

plores and analyses country-specific variables that predict sponsorship effectiveness. The individual model confirms existing research and, through the addition of a second level of analysis (i.e. the country level), more predictors are found. Implications are given and future research directions proposed. Section 6 closes this analytical work by summarizing a joint conclusion and providing an outlook by offering links for praxis and theory.

2   Sponsorship Basics and Objectives

2.1   Sponsorship Development and Types

Sponsorship, or the promotion of art and culture, has a long tradition and can be traced back to Gaius Clinius Maecenas (70–8 BC), who supported major poets of his days for mainly altruistic reasons (Bruhn 2010). The German term *Mäzenatentum*[1] has its origins in his name (Hermanns and Marwitz 2008). Support was also provided when the sponsor's name was not explicitly mentioned. Corporate giving can be considered a further development of patronage (Porter and Kramer 2003) and includes the systematic support of health facilities, universities, and operas, among many others. From a business point of view, nowadays fiscal reasons play a significant role in these donations; it is rather exceptional to claim something in return from the beneficiary/sponsoree (Bruhn 2010). Sponsorship, on the contrary, has been defined as a 'cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property (typically a sports, entertainment, non-profit event or organization) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property' (IEG 2000), p. 1). Sponsorship-linked marketing, then, is the 'orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship' (Cornwell 1995, p. 15).

Above all, sponsoring is about commercial interests, so it can be distinguished from corporate giving and patronage. Furthermore it is obvious that sponsoring can evolve its full potential only if it is activated through promotional spending in addition to the sponsorship fee (Cornwell et al. 2005). Cornwell et al. (2005) describe it as sponsorship leverage.

Over the last years, sponsoring has emerged as an inherent part of the communications mix within many companies (Bruhn 2010) and has caught up with classic above-the-line marketing and corporate communication tools, such as advertising and promotions (IEG 2000, 2013) The IEG Sponsorship Report of 2013 states that sponsorship has become an 'integrated marketing program that can take advantage of the reach of traditional advertising as well as the emotional and experiential benefits earned through partnerships with sports,

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[1] In English, patronage or philanthropy.

entertainment, cause and cultural entities' (p. 2). Thus, sponsorship can be extended to different property types, such as sports, entertainment, causes, arts, festivals/fairs, and annual events, as well as associations and member-ship organizations. These property types amount to 51.1 billion USD of global spending annually, with a growth rate in 2012 of 5.1% (see Figure 2-1) (Bruhn 2010, IEG 2013).
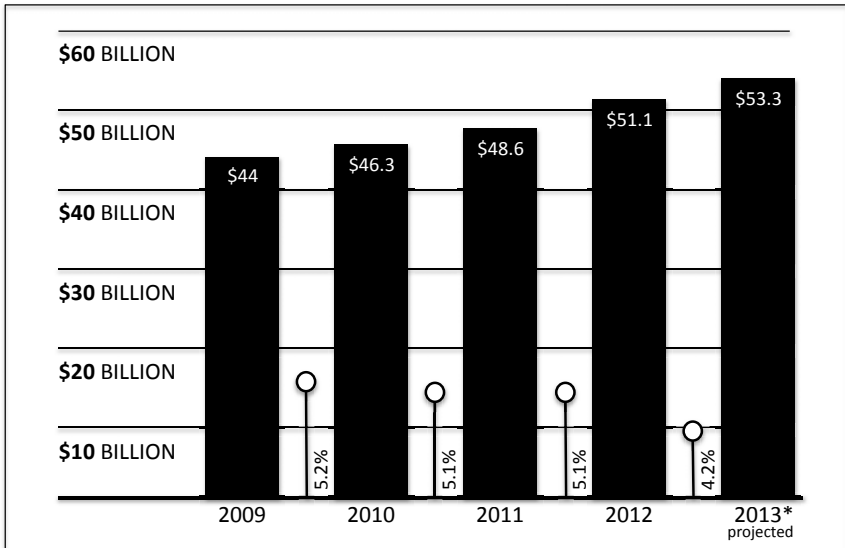
Fig. 2-1:   Total global sponsorship spending
Source: IEG 2013.

The growth rate of spending thus repeatedly outperforms the growth rates of classic communication channels as in media spending and ad spending (GroupM 2012).

Sports, with approximately 13.8 billion USD, makes up 69% of all sponsorship spending in North America in 2013 (see Figure 2-2) and grew the most, with 6%, versus only a 5.1% growth for entertainment (IEG 2013). These figures are topped in Europe, where the European Commission (2013) reports in its *Weissbuch Sport* a sports sponsorship share of 91% in 2005. Hence, one can assume that sports sponsoring is the most important sponsorship property

type worldwide and will become even more substantial in terms of revenue in the future.

ENTERTAINMENT 10%

CAUSES 9%

ARTS 5%

FESTIVALS, FAIRS AND ANNUAL EVENTS 4%

ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATIONS 3%
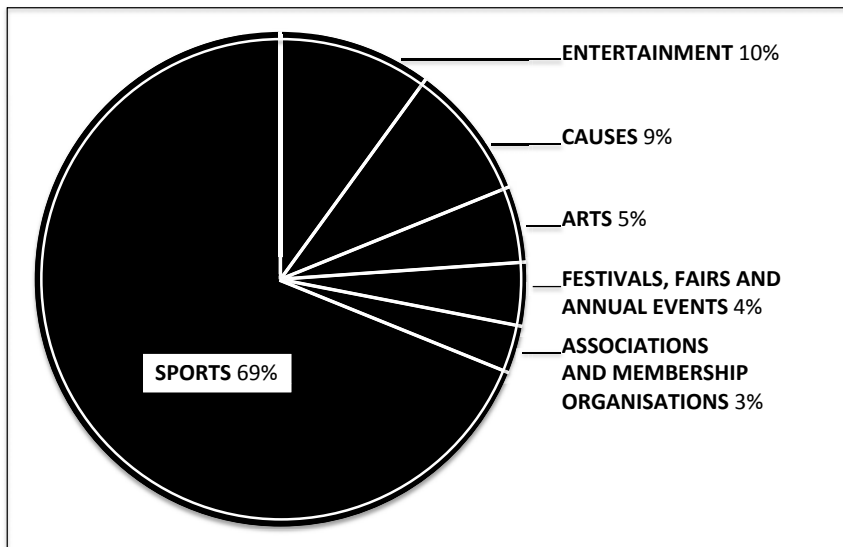
SPORTS 69%

Fig. 2-2:   Projected 2013 shares of the North American sponsorship market
Source: IEG 2013.

A global comparison of sport-sponsoring spending by regions clearly shows that North America makes up the largest part, with 35.8% followed by Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) with 33.3%, Asia Pacific with 26.5%, and Latin America with 4.3% (see Figure 2-3) (PWC 2011). Hence, sport sponsorship is a truly global communication instrument and the investigation of sponsorship effectiveness requires a global approach. It is important to understand how sport sponsorship, with its regional differences, affects people at a global level.

LATIN AMERICA 4%

ASIA
PACIFIC 27%

NORTH
AMERICA 36%

EMEA 33%
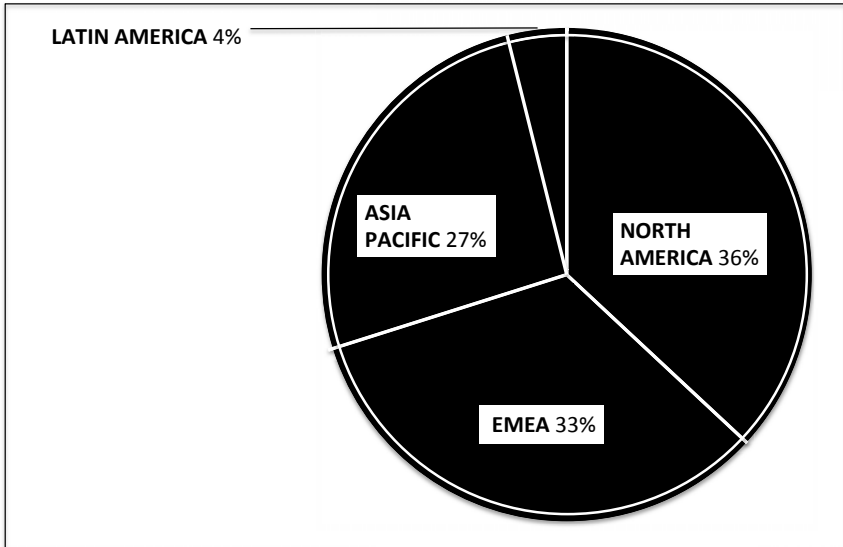
Fig. 2-3:   Global sport sponsorship spending by region in 2013

Source: Author's own illustration, based on PWC (2011).

2.2   Sport Sponsorship Types and Objectives

The relevance of sports sponsorship compared to other sponsorship property types, is more substantial in many respects: It is the oldest type of sponsorship, makes up the largest part of the investment volume (69%), and has the highest growth rate (6%) (Bruhn 2010, IEG 2013). The first sponsorship activities date back to 1928, when Coca-Cola provided beverages to the US Olympic team at the Olympic Games in Amsterdam and marketed this on billboards and ads within the scope of their corporate communication activities (Hermanns and Marwitz 2008). Different dimensions of sports sponsorship have since developed, to the point where today the following criteria can be used to distinguish sports sponsorships:

- Extent or intensity of sponsorship activities. Bruhn (2010) differentiates between full sponsorships, where a single sponsor obtains the right to solely use the sponsoree for their communications, main sponsorships, and co-sponsorships. Especially in regards to major events, such as a

football world championship, one proceeds on the assumption that the investments can only be borne in common by various sponsors. A main sponsorship distinguishes itself by the use of exclusive rights, for example, the branding of sportswear (i.e. shirt/jersey sponsorships) or the denomination of a sports venue (i.e. naming right sponsorships). In contrast, a co-sponsorship only acquires the exclusive rights for a specific product field (e.g. as an official telecommunications sponsor), but not for a specific communication tool (e.g. perimeter boards).

- Scope and frequency of sponsorship engagements. Pricewaterhouse-Coopers (PWC 2011) distinguishes between ongoing events and major events: '"Ongoing events" refer to regular sports events and leagues that occur annually or more often. These are distinct from "major events", which are large international events occurring every few years, such as the winter and summer Olympics, and the FIFA World Cup' (PWC 2011, p. 2). According to this differentiation, ongoing events can be either international (e.g. F1, UEFA Champions League) or national (e.g. DFB-Pokal or the first Bundesliga of the German Football Association). Major events, which occur only every few years, are usually international. Media coverage is distinct from this consideration and can be global, even for ongoing national events (e.g. the Premier League viewership in Asia).

- Performance level of sponsorship engagements. Especially in top-class or competitive sports, sports sponsorship has evolved into a major financial instrument (Ahlert et al. 2006). From this, one can distinguish between sports for the masses, youth, seniors, and the disabled (Drees and Trautwein 2008, Bruhn 2010).

- Organizational unit of sponsorship engagement. Sport teams and sport clubs are sponsored the most frequently, followed by single sportsmen (i.e. testimonials) and events, as well as sports associations (e.g. the International Olympic Committee, the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, and the DFB) (Bruhn, 2010).

Different types of sport can also be distinguished. Football is worldwide the most strongly sponsored sport (Bruhn 2010). In addition, athletics reach many viewers due to its international presence in the Summer Olympic Games, followed by the Winter Olympic Games, motorsports (e.g. Formula 1), tennis, and golf (*Black Book* 2007, Eurodata TV 2008)

Sport sponsorship is a tool that enables reaching both superior cross-company marketing objectives and the specific communication objectives of sport sponsorship itself (Bruhn 2010). Economic marketing objectives, such as revenue and profit, can be quickly achieved, for example, by promotional activities with testimonials at the point of sale (Bassenge 2000). Psychographic marketing objectives, such as customer retention and satisfaction, can be achieved, for example, by hospitality activities for clients at sponsored sports events in a guest tent (Bruhn 2010). Apart from superior marketing objectives, sports sponsorship can also be used to achieve specific communication and sponsorship objectives. Walliser (2003) gives a good overview of potential objectives that can be reached through sport sponsorships and states that enhancing brand image and increasing brand awareness are traditionally the most important. Nevertheless, sponsor objectives vary strongly and depend on many specific factors, such as sponsor industry and company size (Walliser 2003). In addition to brand awareness and brand image, the author mentions objectives such as customer satisfaction, employee motivation, performance demonstration, goodwill, and social reasons, as well as avoiding the ban on advertising for specific industries such as cigarettes and alcohol. Woisetschläger (2006) proposes four subcategories that group these and other sponsoring objectives: internal, business relations based, sociopolitical, and consumer based.

Woisetschläger et al. (2013) show in a business-to-business study that brand-related, consumer-based objectives are the most important sponsorship objectives overall (see Figure 2-4).

Transfer of Attitudes		87.7
Establish and Raise Awareness		82.4
Build Brand Loyalty		77.0
Brand Differentiation		72.1
Communicate Brand Personality		71.6
Build Quality Image		69.1
Increase Corporate Turnover		64.2
Improve Workforce Motivation		62.7
Increase Corporate Profit		55.4

n = 51 Bundesliga sponsors in 2012   0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100
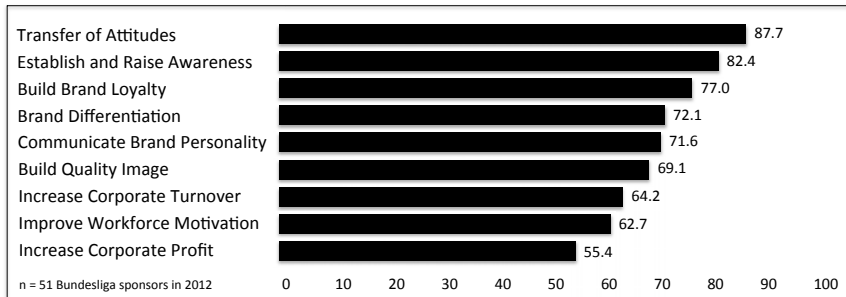
Fig. 2-4:   Sport sponsorship objectives
Source: Author's own illustration, based on Woisetschläger et al. (2013).

If the sport sponsorship objectives are set, one has to decide by the five above-mentioned dimensions (i.e. intensity, frequency, scope, performance level, and organizational unit) how these can be achieved. Cornwell et al. (2005) present three different outcomes of sponsorship that can be examined by their level of target achievement: cognitive outcomes, affective outcomes, and behavioural outcomes. Walliser (2003) follows a similar trichotomy of sponsorship effectiveness by analysing that most of the former research on sponsorship effectiveness was addressed to measure awareness, image, and purchase intention (for an overview see Figure 2-5).
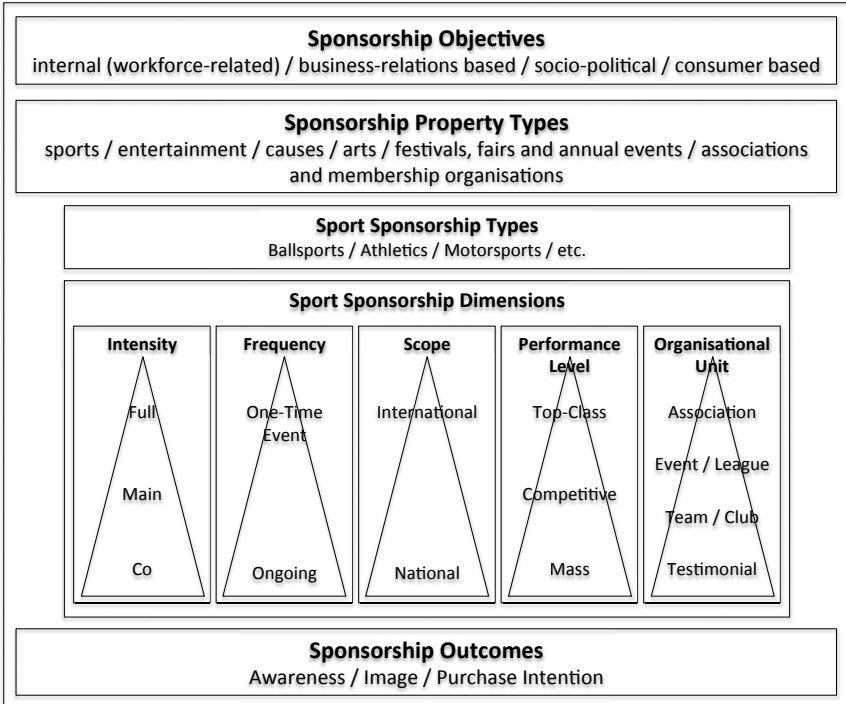
Fig. 2-5:   Sport sponsorship overview

Source: Author's own illustration.

2.3   Brand Consciousness and Brand Objectives within Sport Sponsorship

Kotler (1991, p. 442) define brand as a 'name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors'. *Brand knowledge*, a term used by Keller (1993, p. 2), is 'what comes to mind when a consumer thinks about a brand – for example, in response to marketing activity for that brand' and is 'defined in terms of two components, brand awareness and brand image'. Keller believes that the long-term success of a brand is 'greatly affected by the knowledge about the brand in memory that has been established by the firm's short-term marketing efforts' (Keller

1993, p. 2). For Keller all short-term marketing activities pay off primarily in both the constructs of brand awareness and brand image, whereas he understands brand awareness as a customer's 'brand recall and recognition performance' and brand image as the 'set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory' (Keller 1993, p. 2). These brand associations vary in type, favourability, strength, and uniqueness (Keller 1993). Subsequently, brand knowledge pays off better in the more 'traditional outcome measures such as sales' (Keller 1993, p. 2) (see Figure 2-6).
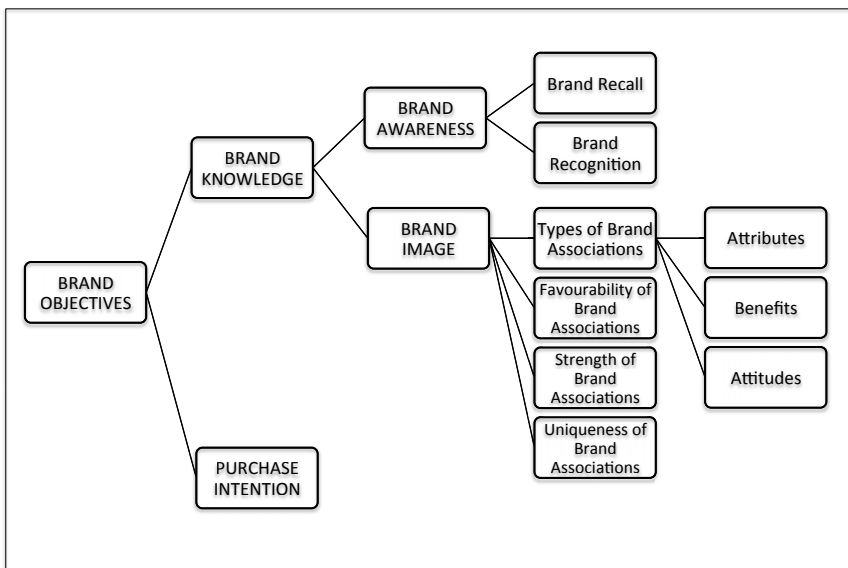
Fig. 2-6:   Brand objectives and dimensions
Source: Author's own illustration, based on Keller (1993).

Brand awareness is economically important for three reasons: First, if a consumer is thinking of a product category, all the brands that come to mind describe the consideration set from which the consumer will choose to purchase (Nedungadi 1990). Second, especially in low-involvement situations, consumers base their purchase decisions on brand awareness alone, even in the absence of a well-formed brand attitude (Bettman and Park 1980, Keller 1993). Third, 'brand awareness affects consumer decision making by influencing the

formation and strength of brand associations in the brand image' (Keller 1993, p. 3). As Keller states, brand awareness is differentiated into brand recall and brand recognition. In the sponsorship context, brand recognition tests whether a consumer is able to recognize having seen a specific sponsor, given the brand name as a cue. Brand recall relates to the consumer's ability to retrieve a specific sponsor from memory given only the product category as a cue or by even solely asking for any sponsor that comes to mind (Keller 1993). In the sponsorship context, Rajaretnam (1994), Lardinoit and Quester (2001), Pruitt et al. (2004), and Michaelis et al. (2009), among others, have analysed the recall or recognition of sponsors (see also the literature review in Table 3-1). Milka, for example, is nowadays the most well-known winter sport sponsor in Germany. This is due to the fact that it started its engagement already in 1995, placing giant purple Milka cows on various ski slopes, and its consistent and extended used of purple in combination with the brand logo over the last two decades. This allowed Mondalez, Milka's parent company, to use just purple helmets, even without the Milka logo, to communicate the brand without an official sponsorship during the Olympic Winter Games 2014 in Sochi (Merx 2013).

Brand image is defined by Keller (1993, p. 3) as 'perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory'. These constitutive 'brand associations are the informational notes linked to the brand node in memory and contain the meaning of the brand for consumers' (Keller 1993, p. 3, see also Anderson 1983). The author identifies, among other dimensions (i.e. favourability, strength, and uniqueness of associations), three major categories (i.e. types of associations) for subsuming the amount of information summarized in these brand associations: by order of increasing scope, attributes, benefits, and attitudes. Attitudes, in this sense, are the consumers' overall evaluation of a brand (Wilkie 1990) and are important because they often determine consumer behaviour (Keller 1993). They can be formed by less thoughtful decision making – for example, on the basis of simple heuristics and decision rules (Chaiken 1987) – and guide brand choice after spontaneous activation upon exposure. These characteristics make brand attitudes important in the sponsorship context, where brand image can mainly only be formed on the basis of pure exposure to a brand (e.g. on perimeter boards).

Especially in high-involvement situations, brand image is important, because it determines consumers' differential responses to a brand. Red Bull, for example, has sponsored many extreme sport athletes and events during the last years, forming a distinct and unique brand image.[2] Nowadays Red Bull is trying to reach a broader audience by sponsoring football clubs worldwide (Mersch 2013).

Making a consumer purchase a product is the ultimate goal of all brand-related objectives. As previously seen, brand awareness and specifically the recognition of a brand at the point of sale are constituent features of a purchase. It is essential for a brand to be part of a consumer's consideration set to at least be considered for a purchase. Brand image or, more specifically, attitude towards a brand might subsequently be able to transfer a brand from a consumer's consideration set to the next steps, the first choice and ultimately the purchase (Lavidge and Steiner 1961, Nedungadi 1990, Keller 1993, Cornwell et al. 2005, Wakefield and Bennett 2010). Hence, sponsorships affect purchase mainly indirectly via brand awareness and brand image. Only in the case of a highly function-based sponsorship fit, where the sponsor product is actually used within the sponsored environment (e.g. Adidas becoming the jersey sponsor of a football team), can the effect of sponsorship on purchase be direct, since fans can only buy the new team jersey from that sponsor (i.e. Adidas). In the sponsorship context, Madrigal (2000, 2001) considers the influence of sponsorship on purchase intention by investigating attendees' likelihood of buying a hypothetical sponsor's products at a football match. The results show that purchase intention depends, among other things, on the respondent's identification with the sponsored team; however, only the intention to purchase a sponsor product could be measured and not the purchase itself.

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[2] They reached a peak with their sponsorship of Felix Baumgartner, who performed a successful jump from space, about 39 kilometres above Earth, in 2012.

Figure 2-7 shows the three main consumer-based sponsorship outcomes.

Fig. 2-7:   Sponsorship outcomes
Source: Author's own illustration, based on Keller (1993) and Cornwell et al. (2005).

The next section reviews the literature on sponsorship effectiveness and intro-
duces the most common theories to predict sponsorship outcomes.

3 Literature Review and Theoretical Background

3.1 Literature Review on Sponsorship Effectiveness

This section provides a literature review that focuses on sponsorship effectiveness. The preceding work of Cornwell and Maignan (1998), Walliser (2003), and Marwitz (2006) is taken as a starting point. Their work will be extended to cover the most recent development in sponsorship research.

In regards to sponsorship research, one can observe a strong development over the last 30 years that concentrates on several practical and theoretical research streams of sponsorship. In particular, Cornwell and Maignan's (1998) literature overview and the work of Walliser (2003), which builds on it, give a good overview of the academic research on sponsorship, starting with the 1980s. Following Cornwell and Maignan's overview, theoretical sponsorship studies can be divided into five elementary fields of research, which are also followed by Walliser (2003): (1) the nature of sponsorship, (2) the managerial aspects of sponsorships, (3) measurement of sponsorship effects, (4) the strategic use of sponsorship, and (5) legal and ethical considerations in sponsorship.

Nature of sponsorship
'Definitions of sponsorship are proposed and its characteristics are identified. The development of sponsorship in a particular country or a given industry is described' (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, p. 2). This research stream is further subdivided into (a) defining sponsorship, (b) differentiating sponsorship from other promotional communication, and (c) perceptions of sponsorship. Research focused on this topic mainly in the 1980s and early 1990s (Walliser 2003).

Managerial aspects of sponsorship
'Corporate motivations and objectives with respect to sponsorship are analyzed. Target audiences and media objectives are described' (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, p. 2). This research is further subdivided into (a) sponsorship objectives and sponsorship selection, (b) sponsorship organization, and (c)

sponsorship control. About 20% of all papers published until 2003 concentrated on this research stream (Walliser 2003).

Measurement of sponsorship effects
'The ideas of communication effectiveness and sponsorship effects, both intended and unintended, are examined' (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, p. 2). This stream of research can be further subdivided into measuring the effects of (a) awareness, (b) image, and (c) purchase intention and other effects (Walliser 2003). This is the research stream in which by far the largest proportion, 54%, of studies were published until 2003. In terms of quality improvement as well, contributions in this area far outpaced the development of the other research streams (Walliser 2003).

Strategic use of sponsorship
'Strategies and counterstrategies associated with sponsorships are investigated' (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, p. 2). This research stream is relatively new and developed only after 1995. It concentrates on analysing the effects of integrated sponsorship activities in the marketing mix and the influences of ambush marketing (Walliser 2003). Most recently researchers have started to investigate the influence of multiple parallel sponsorships and a sponsorship portfolio strategy (e.g. Chien et al. 2011).

Legal and ethical considerations in sponsorships
'The legal constraints and tax implications of sponsorship are considered, along with the issues related to the use of sponsorship to promote products that are detrimental to health' (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, p. 2). This area of research is further subdivided by Cornwell and Maignan (1998) into (a) legal questions in sponsorship, (b) socially undesirable sponsorship, and (c) sponsorship power.

Walliser (2003) identifies various reasons why research in the evaluation of sponsorship impact (i.e. the measurement of sponsorship effects) has progressed most during the past years, which can be agreed upon and extended:

- A shift from exploratory to confirmatory approaches. The (partial) replication of studies on sponsor awareness and sponsor image has led to more certainty about identified effects.

- A shift from descriptive to causal designs. The focus on reporting descriptive sponsorship figures, which was common in the 1990s, has shifted to causal modelling in the 21st century. Accordingly, the parallel influences and relative importance of various predictors could be investigated.

- A shift towards analysing the isolated use of sponsorship in combined marketing mix studies.

- A shift from a managerial to a consumer perspective. By concentrating more on the image effects of sponsorship, the investigation of internal processes within a consumer's organism has become a research focus. The last 10 years (2003 to 2013) in particular have witnessed development in the use of psychological explanations, such as consistency and learning theories, to explain sponsorship effects (Michaelis et al. 2008, Kim et al. 2012). In addition to the two cognitive outcomes of awareness and image, affective sponsorship outcomes (i.e. liking and preference) as well as behavioural sponsorship outcomes (i.e. purchase intention, purchase commitment, and purchase) are now being more prominently examined (Cornwell et al. 2005).

Due to the importance of research on the measurement of sponsorship effects and the focus of this dissertation, that is, the identification of group-level predictors of sponsorship effectiveness, the literature research in this section concentrates on analysing consumer-focused sponsorship-linked marketing communication outcomes.

To provide as comprehensive an overview of the sponsorship literature as possible, three approaches were pursued. The basis and origin of the literature research comprise the 57 studies about brand attitude and brand image identified by Marwitz (2006). Since brand image and image transfer are often examined in context with brand awareness and purchase intention, or, more generally, with consumer behaviour (Marwitz 2006), the additional constructs of sponsor awareness and purchase intention are also covered. This literature overview includes only studies that report a clearly identifiable influence of a predictor along one of the sponsorship constructs investigated. The 'ancestry'

approach has broadened this field, whereby new articles of interest were found in the citations of research articles already available (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, Walliser 2003). Furthermore, for the period from 2006 to 2013 and referring to Cornwell and Maignan (1998) and Walliser (2003), the following English journals were searched manually for sponsoring articles: the *Journal of Marketing,* the *Journal of Advertising,* the *Journal of Advertising Research,* the *International Journal of Advertising,* the *European Journal of Marketing, Psychology & Marketing*, and the *Journal of Consumer Research*. The third approach was to scan the Elton B. Stephens Co. (EBSCO) online database for the keyword *sponsorship,* sorting by relevance, on June 10, 2013. From the top 100 list of papers, only articles published in journals ranked at least E in the German journal ranking VHB-JOURQUAL were included in the literature review. In this way, a total of 112 studies on sponsorship effectiveness were identified and subsequently analysed. Table 3-1 lists these studies and the predictors examined. These predictors are further divided into individual-level factors and group-level factors.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Simkins 1986	◆																	
McCracken 1989	◆				◆	◆	◆											
McDonald 1991	◆			◆				◆	◆					◆				
Nebenzahl & Jaffe 1991							+	+										
Otker & Hayes 1991	◆													◆				
Parker 1991	◆			◆	◆			◆						◆				

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

(+) Significant positive effect, (-) significant negative effect, (x) no significant effect, (∡) mediator variable, (⊥) moderator variable, (◆) effect only theoretically discussed, (⊙) focus of present study.

Table 3-1: Literature review
Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Javalgi, Traylor, Gross & Lampmann 1994								+			+							
Rajaretnam 1994							◆					◆		◆				
Schoch 1994				◆										◆				
D'Astous & Bitz 1995	⊥			+					+		+	x						
Hansen & Scotwin 1995		◆		◆										◆				
Crimmins & Horn 1996	◆						◆					◆		◆				
Ferrand & Pagés 1996	+		+		+													
Kinney & McDaniel 1996								+										
Stipp & Schiavone 1996		+					+	+	+	+								
Gwinner 1997	⊥			◆	∠		⊥				◆					⊥		
Stipp 1998		+					+	+	+	+								
Amis & Slack 1999					◆						◆	◆		◆			◆	
Bennett 1999							+											
Ferrand & Pagés 1999	◆		◆		◆													
Gwinner & Eaton 1999	+				+													
Johar & Pham 1999	+	+																
McDaniel & Kinney 1999				+			∠	∠		+								

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

(+) Significant positive effect, (-) significant negative effect, (x) no significant effect,
(∠) mediator variable, (⊥) moderator variable, (◆) effect only theoretically discussed,
(☉) focus of present study.

Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
McDaniel & Mason 1999			+						∠	+								
Meenaghan & Shipley 1999				◆							◆							
Nicholls, Roslow & Dublish 1999		+								+	∠							
Pope & Voges 1999		+		x			x											
Cornwell, Relyea, Irwin & Maignan 2000				⊥		+											-	
Madrigal 2000				+														
Speed & Thompson 2000	+		+	+	+	+			+									
Cornwell, Pruitt & van Ness 2001	+																	+
Cornwell, Roy & Steinard 2001												+		+				
Harvey 2001				◆													◆	
Lardinoit & Quester 2001		-					+											
Madrigal 2001				+														
Meenaghan 2001a				◆														
Meenaghan 2001b	◆			◆	◆			◆			◆							
Pham & Johar 2001		+																⊥
Polonsky & Speed 2001	◆		◆		◆			◆						◆				
Quester & Thompson 2001					◆								◆	+			◆	

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Becker-Olsen & Simmons 2002	+		∠						∠									
Dean 2002					+				∠									
Gwinner & Swanson 2003				∠	+	+												
Rodgers 2003	+			⊥														
Ruth & Simonin 2003	x		+												⊥			
Walliser 2003	◆	◆		◆								◆						
Grohs, Wagner & Vsetecka 2004	+	+	+	+	+			∠				+		+				
Pruitt, Cornwell & Clark 2004	+							+										+
Rifon, Choi, Trimble & Li 2004	+							∠										
Roy & Cornwell 2004	∠			+														
Smith 2004	◆	◆	◆		◆			◆			◆	◆						
Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2005	+																	
Carrillat, Lafferty & Harris 2005		⊥						+									x	
Chadwick & Thwaites 2005												◆		◆				◆
Cornwell & Coote 2005				∠	+	+												
Cornwell, Weeks & Roy 2005	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆								◆			

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Grohs & Reisinger 2005	+			+			⊥											
Sneath, Finney & Close 2005						+							+					
Christensen 2006	◆																	
Close, Finney, Lacey & Sneath 2006		+	∠	+														
Cornwell, Humphreys, Maguire, Weeks & Tellegen 2006	+																⊥	
Hansen, Hailing & Christensen 2006		∠	∠		⊥						⊥							
Harvey, Gray & Despain 2006				◆				◆				◆					◆	
Johar, Pham & Wakefield 2006	◆			+		+				+								
Koo, Quarterman & Flynn 2006	+		∠				∠											
Poon & Prendergast 2006	◆						∠											
Simmons & Becker-Olsen 2006	+		∠					∠										
Donahay & Rosenberger 2007	+			⊥														+
Ferrand, Torrigiani & Camps i Povill 2007	◆				◆		◆											

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Fleck & Quester 2007	◆																	
Lacey, Sneath, Finney & Close 2007						+												
Martensen, Gronhold, Bendtsen & Juul 2007	+		∠	+		∠												
Sirgy, Lee, Johar & Tidwell 2007				⊥	+			⊥										
Woisetschläger 2007			+	+				∠										
Michaelis, Woisetschläger & Hartleb 2008					+			+	x									
Weeks, Cornwell & Drennan 2008	+							+						+				
Clark, Cornwell & Pruitt 2009	+										⊥					x		
Close, Krishen & Latour 2009	+	+				∠												
Coppetti, Wentzel, Tomczak & Henkel 2009	+					+								+				
Lee & Cho 2009	+		+			+												
Olsen & Thjømøe 2009	+	+																
Pope, Voges & Brown 2009							+	+		+								x

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Carrillat, Harris & Lafferty 2010					+													
Olsen 2010	+		+	+	+				∠									
Prendergast, Poon & West 2010	-																	
Schwaiger, Sarstedt & Taylor 2010							+											
Wakefield & Bennett 2010	∠	∠		∠	+													+
Woisetschläger, Eiting, Haselhoff & Michaelis 2010	∠							+							+	-		
Bodet & Bernache-Assollant 2011				+		+	+											
Herrmann, Walliser & Kacha 2011						+	+											
Ngan, Prendergast & Tsang 2011				∠														+
Olsen & Thjømøe 2011	∠											+		+	+			
Wang, Cheng, Pur-wanto & Erimurti 2011	+			+						x					⊥			
Bergkvist 2012					+													
Carrillat & d'Astous 2012														+				
Chang 2012		x		∠										x				

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)
Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Cobbs, Groza & Pruitt 2012	x														-	-		x
Deitz, Myers & Stafford 2012	∠		+	+														
Grohs, Wagner & Steiner 2012	x	+		x			x		+			+						
Groza, Cobbs & Schaefers 2012	+														⊥	⊥		
Kelly, Cornwell, Coote & McAlister 2012														+				
Kim, Stout & Cheong 2012	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆			◆							
Mazodier, Quester & Chandon 2012				⊥				-	⊥									
McAlister, Kelly, Humphreys & Cornwell 2012												+						
Messner & Reinhard 2012			∠				+											
Olsen & Thjømøe 2012	+	+																
Ruth & Strizhakova 2012			+	+								⊥					⊥	
Sohn, Han & Lee 2012	+													+				
Woisetschläger & Michaelis 2012	+		+		+		◆	+										

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

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Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Author(s), year	Determinants of Sponsorship Effectiveness																	
	Individual-level factors										Group-level factors							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T
Zdravkovic & Till 2012	+						x					+						
Cahill & Meenaghan 2013								+				◆		+				◆
Han, Choi, Kim, Davis & Lee 2013	+								x									
Frequency	60	21	23	39	23	14	23	29	20	9	11	14	3	22	6	4	11	9
Present national study	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙				⊙				⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙		
Present international study		⊙		⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙					⊙	⊙			

(A) Sponsorship fit, (B) brand awareness, (C) brand attitude/image, (D) interest/involvement, (E) sport/event/concurrent sponsor image, (F) attitude towards the sport/event, (G) frequency of following the event, (H) awareness of sponsorship (recall/recognition), (I) attitude towards sponsorship, (K) demographics, (L) type of sport (event), (M) duration of sponsorship, (N) visibility, (O) leverage/marketing spending, (P) nationality/local proximity (of sponsor), (R) level of sponsorship, (S) clutter, and (T) success of team.

(+) Significant positive effect, (-) significant negative effect, (x) no significant effect, (∠) mediator variable, (⊥) moderator variable, (◆) effect only theoretically discussed, (⊙) focus of present study.

Table 3-1: Literature review (cont.)
Source: Author's own table.

The percentage of published studies has surged over the last decades. From 1986 to 1995, only about 10% (i.e. 11 papers) of the 112 identified studies presented were published; from 1996 to 2005, about 42% (i.e. 47 papers) were published; and since 2006 (through June 2013), 48% (i.e. 54 papers) were published.

A total of 18 predictors were identified, which are divided into two basic groups:

- *Individual-level factors* are predictors that are different for each consumer. These can be demographic variables, such as age or education or a consumer's personal interests or involvement in the specific sport sponsored.

- *Group-level factors,* on the other hand, are similar for a certain group of people but differ between groups. At the sponsor level, these factors might involve the duration of a specific sponsorship; at the country level, these factors might involve the number of hours of broadcasting of a specific sport on national TV.

Figure 3-1 shows that these groups of predictors are able to influence the sponsorship outcome in a stimulus–response model (SR model) directly.

Stimulus		Response
Country Specific Factors (Group Level)		Brand Awareness
Management & Market Factors (Group Level)		Brand Image
Individual Factors (Individual Level)		Purchase Intention
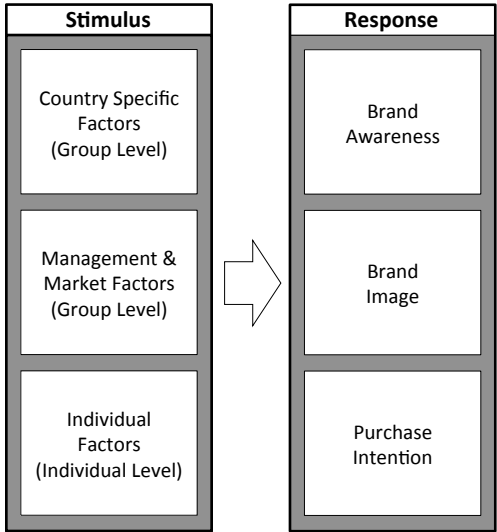
Fig. 3-1: Sponsorship predictors (SR model)
Source: Author's own illustration.

The empirical analysis (see Sections 4 and 5) dwells further on the importance of the differentiation between individual- and group-level factors and examines its respective influence on sponsorship effectiveness. In the following, the most common sponsorship predictors[3] are introduced. Related predictors (e.g. brand image, event image, sport image) are grouped together to simplify read-ability. Predictors are presented in order of relative importance (i.e. the most frequently mentioned predictor first).

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[3] More than 10% of the identified papers investigated their influence.

Sponsorship fit

Since the beginning of research on the measurement of sponsorship effects, the variable sponsorship fit has been regarded as one of the most critical factors of sponsorship effectiveness (Crimmins and Horn 1996, Speed and Thompson 2000, Smith 2004, Coppetti et al. 2009, Prendergast et al. 2010). Nearly all the studies identified report a significant positive relation between fit and sponsorship effectiveness. Only Prendergast et al. (2010) find a significant negative effect as they specifically analyse low fit conditions and three other studies (Ruth and Simonin 2003, Cobbs et al. 2012, Grohs et al. 2012) are unable to find any significant effect of sponsorship fit on sponsorship effectiveness. Most studies identify a direct effect between fit and sponsorship effectiveness, whereas only a few see fit as being mediated through other direct antecedents, such as attitude towards the sponsorship (e.g. Becker-Olsen and Simmons 2002, Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006), awareness of the sponsorship (e.g. Grohs et al. 2004, Koo et al. 2006), or event image (e.g. Martensen et al. 2007). Smith (2004) argues theoretically that sponsorship fit can only be understood as a moderating factor for the image transfer process, since consumers can assess the fit between the sponsor and sponsoree only when the sponsorship has already been formed. Hence, Smith (2004) believes that sponsorship fit does not influence antecedent factors. However, again, researchers consistently believe in a positive relation between high fit conditions and a positive effect on sponsorship outcomes (e.g. Crimmins and Horn 1996, Speed and Thompson 2000, Smith 2004, Coppetti et al. 2009, Prendergast et al. 2010).

Based on the seminal work on brand image formation of Keller (1993), Smith (2004) lists the sponsorship fit examples of six generic types of associations that may constitute a brand's image: product attribute, user imagery, brand personality, functional benefits, experiential benefits, and symbolic benefits. In the present research debate, only two differentiating types of fit are mainly considered: a more general brand fit (i.e. image-based congruence) (Gwinner and Eaton 1999) and a more specific product fit (i.e. functional perspective) (Coppetti et al. 2009). A function-based fit hereby means the relatedness of a sponsor's products and services to the sponsorship object (e.g. Adidas as a producer of sports apparel to a sports club), whereas an image-based fit is the

relatedness of a brand's image constituted by the knowledge the consumer has about various dimensions of the sponsor (e.g. the amount and different types of all the sponsor's sponsorships) relating to the sponsorship object. The functional and more specific product fit, which is nearly similar for all respondents and varies only between sponsors, is in this dissertation understood as a group-level factor. Image-based congruence, since an image is formed in each consumer's mind individually, is, on the other hand, understood here as an individual-level factor.

Interest/Involvement

Besides sponsorship fit, the consumer's interest and involvement in sport events are the most important predictors analysed. Out of 112 papers, 39 considered these predictors. The focus group study of Meenaghan (2001b) finds that respondents vary in their degrees of involvement in different sports, as well as arts activities, from passionate followers to totally uninvolved:

The focus-group discussions showed that sponsorship intervenes in an emotional relationship between consumers and their leisure/social activities. In doing so, the sponsor embarks on a potentially brittle, yet rewarding, relationship with followers of the activity, and this has major implications for the corporate management of sponsorship [...] and related image effects (p. 101).

Other than that, team identification also influences behaviours such as the inclination to purchase a sponsor's product (Madrigal 2000) or the frequency of game attendance (Fisher and Wakefield 1998, Ngan et al. 2011). The literature review shows that the relation is thoroughly positive. Studies differ only in their evaluations of whether interest/involvement moderates (e.g. Sirgy et al. 2007), mediates (e.g. Wakefield and Bennett 2010), or directly predicts sponsorship outcome variables (e.g. d'Astous and Bitz 1995, Grohs and Reisinger 2005).

Awareness

Two types of awareness can be distinguished: brand awareness, as mentioned by Keller (1993) and measured in terms of brand recall and recognition, and sponsor awareness, measured in terms of sponsor recall and recognition (Rajaretnam 1994, Lardinoit and Quester 2001, Pruitt et al. 2004, Michaelis et

al. 2008).[4] Both are believed to predict a sponsor's brand image positively. However, Lardinoit and Quester (2001, p. 51) show that 'the effectiveness of sponsorship in terms of audiences' attitudinal change [towards the sponsor] is influenced negatively by the sponsor's initial market prominence'. Hence, they believe that the positive effect of brand awareness on brand attitude wears off the more prominent a sponsoring brand is and thus effects attitudinal change negatively.

Attitude/Image

Keller (1993, p. 2) refers to *image* as 'the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory' and considers *attitudes* the last of three major categories of increasing scope, classifying associations by their level of abstraction (see Figure 2-6). Hence, the author defines *brand attitudes* as consumers' overall evaluations of a brand (Keller 1993, p. 4; see also Wilkie 1990). The literature uses both constructs to measure sponsorship effective-ness. Scholars differentiate image and attitudes further into (a) of the brand (Ferrand and Pagés 1996, Dean 2002, Chang 2012), (b) the sport (i.e. type of sport) (Amis and Slack 1999, Meenaghan and Shipley 1999, Hansen et al. 2006, Clark et al. 2009), (c) the sport event and its concurrent sponsors (McCracken 1989, Schoch 1994, Quester and Thompson 2001, Hansen et al. 2006, Carrillat et al. 2010, Bergkvist 2012), and (d) sponsorship and its com-mercialization (Kinney and McDaniel 1996, McDaniel and Mason 1999, Weeks et al. 2008, Woisetschläger et al. 2010, Han et al. 2013) as an important pre-dictor of sponsorship effectiveness. Scholars generally predict a positive effect of the various kinds of image and attitudes on sponsorship outcome (i.e. awareness, image, purchase intention) and only a few fail to report a signifi-cant effect (Michaelis et al. 2008, Han et al. 2013). Michaelis et al. (2008) find a positive effect of attitude towards the commercialization of an event (i.e. atti-tude towards sponsorship) on brand awareness, but fail to find the same posi-tive effect on brand image. Han et al. (2013, p. 310) try to predict 'that the strength of [a] positive association between image congruence and sponsor-ship response will be more strongly pronounced for sponsors whose motives are seen as altruistic compared to sponsors that are perceived as motivated

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[4] Brand familiarity and brand prominence (e.g. Johar and Pham 1999, Wakefield et al. 2007) are hereby considered brand awareness (cf., e.g., Keller 1993).

mainly by commercially driven considerations'; although they find the parameter estimate for the interaction term is positive, it is not significant.

Frequency of Following the Event/ Duration of the Sponsorship
Sponsorships can be one-time events as well as long-term commitments, where the sponsor is consistently linked with the sponsored activity over time (Zdravkovic and Till 2012). D'Astous and Bitz (1995) show that it is likely that a longer sponsorship will have a higher impact on consumers, since it takes time to become a trusted and credible sponsor. Additionally, a long-term commitment strengthens the consistency of the relationship through more frequent exposure of the sponsor–sponsoree connection (Zdravkovic and Till 2012). Hence, the sponsor-specific group-level variable *sponsorship duration* and the related individual-level variable for the frequency of following the event both predict sponsorship effectiveness.

While 'most sponsorship research focuses on the initiation and maintenance of properties and the brands that sponsor them, little is known about how brands fare when they terminate sponsorship relationships' (Ruth and Strizhakova 2012, p. 39). This issue is, inter alia, addressed by Ruth and Strizhakova (2012), who investigate the effects of sponsor exit and find that the longer the duration of the sponsorship commitment, the fewer negative evaluations about an exiting brand highly involved consumers have. Lesser-involved consumers patronize exiting sponsors with a shorter sponsorship commitment (Ruth and Strizhakova 2012).

Leverage/Marketing Spending
Leverage is the use of advertising and promotion to support a sponsorship and is often referred to as sponsorship-linked marketing (Cornwell et al. 2001b), which Cornwell (1995, p. 15) defines as 'the orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship'. Besides sponsors that officially link their marketing activities with a sponsorship, so-called ambushers seek associations with events even without a legitimate link (Kelly et al. 2012). Although leverage and marketing spending are believed to be essential to positively affect sponsorship outcomes (e.g. Cornwell et al. 2001b, Sneath et al. 2005, Carrillat and d'Astous 2012), Mazodier et al. (2012) show that the opposite is true for am-

bushing brands: If their ambushing behaviour is disclosed, the effects on sponsorship outcome are negative.

The main predictors of sponsorship effectiveness identified in the literature review (see Table 3-1) are now grouped and discussed. The remaining antecedents (e.g. demographics, visibility, and clutter) are introduced in greater detail if needed in the hypothesis development sections of the following national and international field studies.

Even though this literature review tries to integrate all relevant Anglophone studies, this paper makes no claims of being complete in regards to these studies or to identified predictors. Moreover, with regards to this short introduction of identified predictors, every study could not be treated equally or even be emphasized. Furthermore, the selection of studies presented is not intended for judgement; rather, it is to explain the particular constructs and predicators in an understandable fashion.

The next section provides an introduction to the most common theories of consumer behaviour to explain sponsorship effectiveness.

3.2   Theoretical Explanation of Sponsorship Effectiveness

Walliser (2003) identifies various reasons why sponsorship research in the evaluation of sponsorship impact (i.e. measurement of sponsorship effects) has progressed strongly during recent years. The shift from a managerial to a consumer perspective, by which the investigation of internal processes within a consumer's organism has become a research focus, has especially boosted this development. The use of psychological explanations such as consistency and learning theories to explain sponsorship effects can be regarded an important stream of research from 2003 until 2013 (Michaelis et al. 2008, Kim et al. 2012). This has led to a more prominent examination of affective and behavioural sponsorship outcomes (i.e. liking and preference, as well as purchase intention) (Cornwell et al. 2005). The following section introduces and discusses the consistency and learning theories found in the literature review.

3.2.1 Overview of Theories

Consumer behaviour research can be clustered into three main streams: behaviourism, neobehaviourism, and cognitivism (see Figure 3-2). Each is based on a different understanding of how people function (Kroeber-Riel and Weinberg 2003, Woisetschläger 2006).
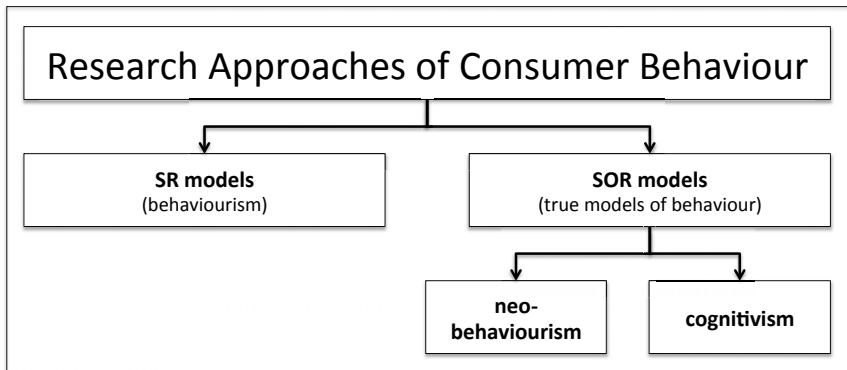
Fig. 3-2:   Streams of research on consumer behaviour

Source: Author's own illustration, based on Amsel (1989), Behrens (1991), and Meffert (2000).

The behaviourist school of thought believes that behaviours can be described scientifically without recourse to either internal physiological events or hypothetical constructs such as thoughts and beliefs (Baum 1994). Behaviourist models are often referred to as SR models (Homburg et al. 2009a). In the sponsorship context, research would alter specific sponsorship information and subsequently monitor the outcome, such as purchase. Since this approach is unable *to explain* behaviour, it is considered to inherit only a minor role in consumer research (Woisetschläger 2006).

Neobehaviourism states that behaviour cannot be fully understood simply in terms of observable stimuli and responses but has to take some central regulatory mechanisms into account. Hence, it builds on the behaviourists' SR model and converts it to a stimulus–organism–response (SOR) model (Hull 1943). Neobehaviourists have since introduced mediating variables such as attitude, motivation, and perception into the SR scheme. These variables are

understood to be aggregates of cognitive and stimulative factors, which transform the incoming stimulus (Behrens 1991). In the sponsorship context, an outcome (e.g. purchase) of a specific sponsorship stimulus (e.g. sponsorship information) is investigated with regards to altering the attitudes, interest, and involvement of respondents. The idea that learning is a singular entity is put into question (Behrens 1991).

Cognitivism builds upon neobehaviourism but integrates thinking and learning not as a behaviour but as a process. It is believed that individuals can acquire and store information that can then be combined with new information to lead to new types of behaviour, even without repeated response to a stimulus (Petri and Mishkin 1994). Cognitivism became the main force in psychology in the late 20th century and the basis for extensive research in the field of consumer behaviour (Anderson 1983, Pachauri 2001, Woisetschläger 2006). Various theories have been developed in the meantime to explain the information processing of individuals (Woisetschläger 2006). Figure 3-3 gives an overview of theories of consumer behaviour.
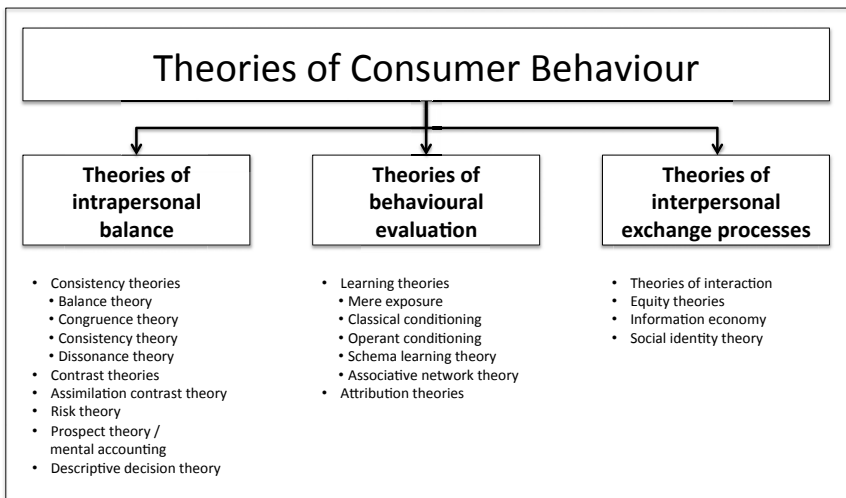
Fig. 3-3:   Overview of theories of consumer behaviour

Source: Author's own illustration, based on Woisetschläger (2006) and Homburg and Krohmer (2008).

The sponsorship literature review reveals a strong and growing focus on theories of intrapersonal balance and behavioural evaluations. Crimmins and Horn (1996) already used balance theory (Heider 1958) as early as 1996 to explain how sponsorships can enhance a brand's image. In the meantime, various other theories have been used to explain sponsorship effectiveness, including mainly Zajonc's (1968) mere exposure theory, Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) classical conditioning learning theory, Heider's (1958) balance theory, Osgood and Tannenbaum's (1955) congruence theory, and Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory (see Table 3-2). Each of the reported theories of consumer behaviour is suitable in an explanation of specific sponsorship outcome.

Underlying these theories is a more basic psychological understanding of individuals' information processing (Cornwell 2008). Anderson and Bower (1973) introduced the idea of associated networks (Anderson 1983), which states that 'knowledge is stored in memory in the form of linked notes of information; activation of a node through some stimulation spreads, and in doing so, supports retrieval of stored information' (Cornwell 2008, p. 47). This basic understanding of information processing is followed by various authors within the sponsorship context, such as Rogers (2003), Smith (2004), Carrillat et al. (2005), Cornwell et al. (2006), Poon and Prendergast (2006), Pope et al. (2009), and Zdravkovic and Till (2012).

Table 3-2 provides an overview of consumer behaviour theories identified in the literature review of the measurement of sponsorship effectiveness.

Theory	Author	Year	Outcome	Freq.	Application in Sponsorship Context
Associative Network Theory	Anderson	1983	Awareness	2	Rodgers (2003); Cornwell, Humphreys, Maguire, Weeks & Tellegen (2006)
			Image	7	Rodgers (2003); Smith (2004); Carrillat, Lafferty & Harris (2005); Poon & Prendergast (2006); Pope, Voges & Brown (2009); Sohn, Han & Lee (2012); Zdravkovic & Till (2012)
			Purchase Intention	2	Rodgers (2003); Carrillat, Lafferty & Harris (2005)

Table 3-2: Theories of consumer behaviour in the sponsoring context

Source: Author's own table.

Theory	Author	Year	Outcome	Freq.	Application in Sponsorship Context
Attribution Theory	Heider	1958	Awareness	-	-
			Image	5	Dean (2002); Rifon, Choi, Trimble & Li (2004); Deitz, Myers & Stafford (2012); Messner & Reinhard (2012); Ruth & Strizhakova (2012)
			Purchase Intention	-	-
Balance Theory	Heider	1958	Awareness	1	Woisetschläger (2007)
			Image	5	Crimmins & Horn (1996); Dean (2002); Woisetschläger (2007); Ruth & Strizhakova (2012); Woisetschläger & Michaelis (2012)
			Purchase Intention	-	-
Classical Conditioning	Fishbein, & Ajzen	1975	Awareness	-	-
			Image	4	Speed & Thompson (2000); Lardinoit & Quester (2001); Grohs & Reisinger (2005); Schwaiger, Sarstedt & Taylor (2010)
			Purchase Intention	-	-
Congruence Theory	Osgood & Tannenbaum	1955	Awareness	-	-
			Image	4	Dean (2002); Rodgers (2003); Woisetschläger, Eiting, Haselhoff & Michaelis (2010); Woisetschläger & Michaelis (2012)
			Purchase Intention	-	-
Heuristics (e.g. Retrieval, Relatedness, Prominence)	Various (e.g. Kahneman & Tversky)	1973	Awareness	6	Johar & Pham (1999); Pham & Johar (2001); Grohs, Wagner & Vsetecka (2004); Johar, Pham & Wakefield (2006); Woisetschläger (2007); Wakefield & Bennett (2010)
			Image	-	-
			Purchase Intention	-	-

Table 3-2: Theories of consumer behaviour in the sponsoring context (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

Theory	Author	Year	Outcome	Freq.	Application in Sponsorship Context
Schema Theory	Fiske	1982	Awareness	1	Koo, Quarterman & Flynn (2006);
			Image	9	D'Astous & Bitz (1995); Gwinner & Eaton (1999); Smith (2004); Koo, Quarterman & Flynn (2006); Coppetti, Wentzel, Tomczak & Henkel (2009); Deitz, Myers & Stafford (2012); Groza, Cobbs & Schaefers (2012); Messner & Reinhard (2012); Sohn, Han & Lee (2012)
			Purchase Intention	1	Deitz, Myers & Stafford (2012)
Social Identity Theory	Tajfel &Turner	1985	Awareness	1	Gwinner & Swanson (2003)
			Image	7	Ferrand & Pagés (1999); Madrigal (2001); Gwinner & Swanson (2003); Woisetschläger, Eiting, Haselhoff & Michaelis (2010); Bodet & Bernache-Assollant (2011); Wang, Cheng, Purwanto & Erimurti (2011); Deitz, Myers & Stafford (2012)
			Purchase Intention	6	Madrigal (2000); Madrigal (2001); Cornwell & Coote (2005); Bodet & Bernache-Assollant (2011); Ngan, Prendergast & Tsang (2011); Deitz, Myers & Stafford (2012)
Other Theories			Awareness/ Image/ Purchase Intention	10	Ferrand & Pagés (1996, social representation theory); Gwinner (1997, elaboration likelihood model); Dean (2002, equity theory); Roy & Cornwell (2004, categorization theory); Grohs, Wagner & Vsetecka (2004, attitude theory); Sirgy, Lee, Johar & Tidwell (2007, self-congruity theory); Close, Krishen & Latour (2009, self-congruity theory); Carrillat, Harris & Lafferty (2009, categorization theory); McAlister, Kelly, Humphreys & Cornwell (2012, spontaneous recovery); Kim, Stout & Cheong (2012, information processing theory)

Table 3-2: Theories of consumer behaviour in the sponsoring context (cont.)

Source: Author's own table.

The following section introduces in more detail the aforementioned marketing communication theories relevant to the analysis of the two field studies. The theories build upon one another and each adds incrementally to the explanation of the measurement of sponsorship effectiveness (see Section 3.3).

3.2.2 Mere Exposure Theory

Zajonc concludes in 1968, that

> The mere repeated exposure of the individual to a stimulus object
> enhances his attitude towards it. By 'mere' exposure is meant a con-
> dition making the stimulus accessible to the individual's perception.
> Support for the hypothesis consists of four types of evidence […]: (a)
> the correlation between affective connotation of words and word fre-
> quency; (b) the effect of experimentally manipulated frequency of
> exposure upon the affective connotation of nonsense words and
> symbols; (c) the correlation between word frequency and the attitude
> to their referents; (d) the effects of experimentally manipulated fre-
> quency of exposure on attitude (p. 1).

3.2.2.1   Basics and General Application

Zajonc (1968, p. 1) determines that 'mere repeated exposure of the individual
to a stimulus is a sufficient condition for the enhancement of his attitude to-
ward it'. This statement is supported by the previous works of Howes and Sol-
omon (1950), Postman (1953), and Johnson et al. (1960), who prove a linear
relation between the frequency of words and their positive evaluation. Howev-
er, this relationship between frequency and value has not been explained and
its implications were focused on instead.

In an experiment with 100 college students, Zajonc (1968, p. 5) shows that
100% of the respondents find the word *able* as possessing a 'more favorable
meaning, represented the more desirable object, event, state of affairs, char-
acteristic, etc.' than the word *unable*. The frequency relationship of the word
pair *able–unable* was 930:239, based on a sample from the 1920s, as counted
by Thorndike and Lorge (1944). The authors find similar results for another
125 word pairs (81.8%) out of a total sample of 154. The ratios for *good–bad*
(5122:1001, or 5.12), *better–worse* (2354:450, or 5.23) and *best–worst*
(1850:292, or 6.34) should especially be emphasized, since one can assume,
subsequent to the previous comment, that *good* is evaluated better than *better*
due to their absolute frequencies. Mosier (1941) demonstrates this experimen-
tally. The results can be further replicated in French, Spanish, and German.

The effect occurs for different word classes (adjectives, verbs, etc.) and is consistent with the evaluation of country and city names, as well as tree species, crops, fruits, and flowers (Zajonc 1968, pp. 6–8). Zajonc (1968) carried out four experiments to validate these results.
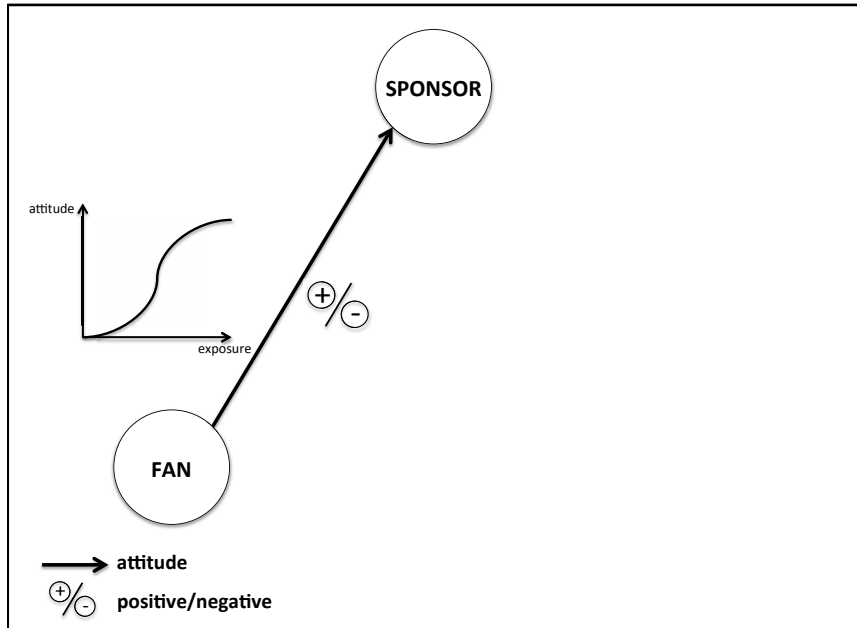
Fig. 3-4:   Mere exposure effect within the sponsorship context
Source: Author's own illustration.

Transferred to the sponsorship context, the more often a sponsor logo or brand name is seen, the better will be the evaluation of/attitude towards the sponsor. The only precondition is that the evaluation not be negative in the first place, in which case the negative evaluation would become even stronger (Faullant 2007). Bornstein (1989) shows in a meta-study that the effect is strongest after 15–20 exposures and might even decline after a longer series of exposures (see Figure 3-4).

In the marketing literature on advertising repetition, Berlyne (1970, p. 279) argues 'that Zajonc had revealed only the first "wear-in" stage of an inverted-U

curve of attitude change' (Mitchell and Olson 1977, Cacioppo and Petty 1979, Micheaux 2011). With more complex ads, attitudes initially increase over low to moderate levels of exposure but 'wear out' and decline with further repetition (Cacioppo and Petty 1979, Calder and Sternthal 1980, Berger and Mitchell 1989). Baker (1999) shows that mere exposure strategies in advertising can be as successful as an affective conditioning-based advertising strategy (i.e. classical conditioning), but with less effort involved, since its execution is easier. Fang et al. (2007) illustrate the relevance and acceptance of the mere exposure effect for online banner advertisements.

3.2.2.2   Application in the Sponsorship Context

The mere exposure effect is used as a theoretical foundation in the sponsorship context of Hansen and Scotwin (1995), Bennett (1999), Cornwell et al. (2000), Olsen and Thjømøe (2003), Woisetschläger (2007), Michaelis et al. (2008), Herrmann et al. (2011), Woisetschläger and Michaelis (2012), and Zdravkovic and Till (2012). Bennett (1999), for example, uses the mere exposure effect in an empirical study to prove the influence of frequency of exposure on the recognition (recall) of football sponsors. The author examines three types of fans: (1) typical owners of season tickets, who regularly go to home and away games and have seen at least a certain number (seven) of games in the investigated season, (2) usual fans, who have seen four to six games so far, and (3) occasional fans, who have seen fewer than four games. A fourth, control group was interviewed that was 'quite interested in football' and whose age and gender distribution was similar to that of the fans. All interviews were conducted in London, where fans from three different Premier League Clubs were interviewed for 90 minutes before the game and then for 90 minutes afterward over a period of four weeks. The seven questions focused mainly on the unaided recall, aided recall, and recognition of perimeter sponsors. The results show that fans who were exposed to sponsor messages on stadium boards more frequently could name sponsors correctly more often, on average, compared to all other types of fans. This result was valid for the pre-event as well as the post-event interviews.

One must note that Bennett applies Zajonc's mere exposure effect only to awareness (recall und recognition) and does not examine the influence of the repeated presentation of a sponsor stimulus on brand attitude.

Olsen and Thjømøe (2003) investigate the effects of peripheral exposure to information on brand preference using Zajonc's mere exposure effect as a theoretical explanation. They compare the results of 176 undergraduate business students, divided into three groups, watching a series of 82 ads within a marketing class. One group saw, inter alia, advertisements of previously tested low-involvement products (soap and toothpaste): seven ads for real toothpaste brands with and without additional brand information and 10 ads each for a fictional soap brand with and without additional brand information. The second group saw the same advertisements, but with reverse frequency (10 ads for real toothpaste brands and seven ads for fictional soap brands). The third group (control group) saw a series of 82 advertisements, but none for the tested brands. To reduce the possible effects of an evaluation of the advertisement itself, only written ads were used that contained no pictures, logos, or graphics, only verbal information. This should replicate a typical stadium promo environment. Finally, a questionnaire about brand preference, brand information recognition, and product category involvement was given to the respondents.

Nevertheless can some people, even within low-involvement product categories, be regarded as information seekers (Bloch et al. 1986). Hence, those who were able to produce the correct product information even in the low-involvement product categories were grouped in an extra cluster to test whether, in low-involvement situations, information additionally presented and understood by the subject *(central route to persuasion)* has a stronger positive influence on attitude change than information that is not understood *(peripheral route to persuasion).* Olsen and Thjømøe (2003) could only confirm this hypothesis for fictional (or 'new') brand names.

A second hypothesis tested, if the presentation of brand names with additional information (*peripheral route to persuasion*) has a more positive influence on brand evaluation than the presentation of brand names without additional information. This hypothesis could not be confirmed. However, it is shown that

the presentation of additional information does not have a negative influence on the mere exposure effect either. The third hypothesis tests the positive influence of the presentation of brand names with additional information on brand evaluation that was actually understood by the respondents *(central route to persuasion).* It can be shown that the evaluation cam be improved significantly through additional information, especially for fictional (new) brand names. This effect is also valid for established brands, even though the effect is only slightly significant ($\rho = .1$). Thus, the effectiveness of the mere exposure effect on brand evaluation can be demonstrated for low-involvement advertisement, as is found in a stadium, and for the peripheral route to persuasion.

The other authors mentioned above use the mere exposure effect to mainly explain the influence of sponsorship exposure on brand preference and brand image. The mere exposure effect 'can take place entirely outside of conscious awareness, involving implicit rather than explicit knowledge' (Bornstein and d'Agostino 1992, p. 545). Hence, according to the mere exposure effect, less prominent brands will gain exponentially through sponsorship, compared to very prominent sponsors, which become the focus of the spectator (Herrmann et al. 2011). The mere exposure effect can be included in the theories of behavioural evaluation and used to explain SR models.

3.2.3 Learning Theory: Classical Conditioning

3.2.3.1   Basics and General Application

The classical conditioning of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) is based on learning theories developed by Pavlov (1927), Tolman (1932), Hull (1943, 1951), and Spence (1956) and belongs to the group of behavioural evaluation theories. Learning theories examine behavioural patterns and behavioural modifications that are based on learning processes (Homburg et al. 2009a). Classical conditioning studies the acquisition of beliefs and attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). The initial point is a situation in which an unconditioned stimulus (e.g. a (sports) team) evokes an unconditioned reaction (e.g. wellbeing, joy). It can be assumed that this unconditioned reaction is a positive one in the sponsorship case (fan–sports (team) relation). Additionally, there is a neutral stimulus (e.g.

sponsor, sponsor logo on stadium board) that does not evoke any reaction until it is connected with the unconditioned stimulus. Now, if the neutral stimulus constantly and repeatedly appears together with the unconditioned stimulus (i.e. sport team), this neutral stimulus becomes a conditioned stimulus. The former non–reaction-causing, neutral stimulus (the sponsor) now evokes a conditioned reaction (wellbeing, joy) as a conditioned stimulus. Learning is said to have occurred (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975).

Based on the aforementioned assumption of a positive fan–sports (team) relation, the fan–sponsor relation results must improve (see Figure 3-5). The unconditioned stimulus (i.e. sports team) helps to extend the effect mere exposure already caused.
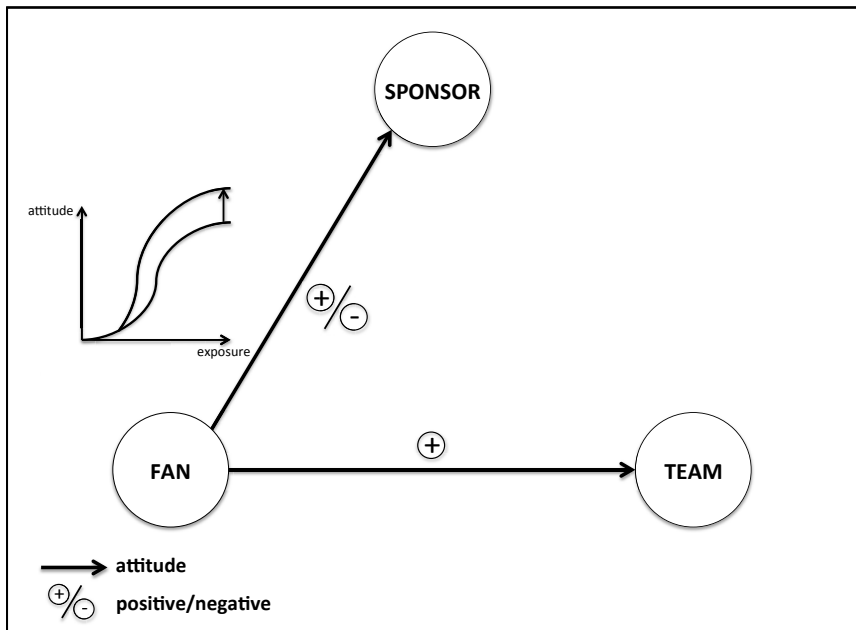

Fig. 3-5:   Classical conditioning within the sponsorship context
Source: Author's own illustration.

The influence of attitudes towards the ad on attitudes towards the brand is the most widely discussed mechanism in advertising research (Gresham and

Shimp 1985, Stuart et al. 1987, Shimp et al. 1991). Nevertheless Gresham and Shimp (1985) find support for a relationship based on the classical conditioning hypothesis only for negatively valenced ads. They report that, especially for mature brands, with which consumers have considerable experience, the more likely flow of influence seems to be reversed: from attitude towards the brand to attitude towards the ad (Berlyne 1966, 1971, Gresham and Shimp 1985).

Classical conditioning is also a frequently applied theory in the context of product placements, which have an advantage over ad messages in the sense that the editorial environment lasts considerably longer and is thus less expensive than obtrusive and expensive message repetition campaigns (Rosenthal 1989, Balasubramanian 1994, Dens et al. 2012). An example of product placement is Tom Cruise driving a BMW i8 in the movie *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol*. Finally, Grossman and Till (1998) show that classically conditioned brand attitudes persist over time.

3.2.3.2 Application in the Sponsorship Context

Learning theories are generally used as a theoretical foundation in the sponsorship context (e.g. Hansen and Scotwin 1995, Speed and Thompson 2000, Lardinoit and Quester 2001, Grohs et al. 2004, Grohs and Reisinger 2005, Poon and Prendergast 2006, Michaelis et al. 2008, Schwaiger et al. 2010, Kim et al. 2012).

Speed and Thompson (2000), use classical conditioning in the sponsorship context to explain how event factors (i.e. the status of an event and or personal liking for an event), sponsorship factors (i.e. sponsor–event fit) as well as sponsor factors (i.e. attitude to sponsor, sincerity of sponsor, and ubiquity of sponsor) influence sponsorship response with regards to a) interest towards the sponsor and its other promotions, b) favourability towards the sponsor, and c) willingness to consider the sponsor's product (usage). The authors interviewed 195 students who could all define the sponsor's business accurately and lived in the country for at least two years. The participants were told the true aim of the research up front, before evaluating various imaginary sponsor–event pairings. The results confirm that attitude towards the sponsor, per-

ceived sincerity, and sponsor–event fit are significant predictors for all three dependent variables. Event status has a significant effect on interest and favourability, whereas personal liking only significantly predicts usage. Finally, perceived ubiquity affects interest and usage significantly. Speed and Thompson thus use classical conditioning to successfully explain affective and behavioural sponsorship outcomes.

In their research on cultural sponsorship, Schwaiger et al. (2010) show that classical conditioning can be used as a theoretical foundation for their image transfer model. They investigate whether 'positive thoughts toward the sponsored event will translate into a positive perception of the company and its products' (Schwaiger et al. 2010, p. 80). To do so, they interviewed about 3000 participants in an online survey rating 10 different German companies once and a second time one year later. In the meantime, the respective companies provided the treatment group of respondents with prepared press releases mentioning a cultural sponsorship, while the control group received the same text but without reference to any culture-sponsoring activities. The results show that cultural sponsorships significantly influence the affective dimension of corporate reputation (i.e. liking).

The literature review reveals that classical conditioning is extensively used to theoretically explain how sponsorship recall relates to an enhanced sponsor's brand attitude (see Section 3.2.1).

3.2.4 Balance Theory

Balance theory belongs to the group of consistency theories, which assume that an individual always strives for a harmonic, cognitively balanced state (Bohner 2002). Heider (1946) states that attitudes towards persons and objects influence each other: A balanced configuration exists if the attitudes towards the parts of a causal unit [i.e. persons and/or objects] are similar. (a) In the case of two entities, a balanced state exists if the relation between them is positive (or negative) in all respects. (b) In the case of three entities, a balanced state exists if all three relations are positive in all respects, or if two are negative and one positive. An imbalanced state will cause tension and will be

tried to change through action or through cognitive reorganization (Cornwell et al. 2005).

3.2.4.1   Basics and General Application

Heider (1946) sets the basis for balance theory while introducing a basic notation for the presentation of attitudes between persons or between persons and objects. Persons are represented by *p* and *o*, respectively, and impersonal entities by *x*. These impersonal entities can be situations, events, ideas, or a thing, and so forth. The relations between persons can be positive or negative and, according to Heider, should be understood as to like, to love, to esteem, to value, and their opposites, the former denoted by *L* and their negatives by *~L*. The relation between a person and a unit is described as either *U* (positive) or *~U* (negative) and indicates similarity, proximity, causality, membership, possession, or belonging.

For example, *pLo* means *p* likes, loves, or values *o*; *pUx* means *p* owns *x* or *p* made *x*; the negative description *p~Ux* means *p* does not own *x*, and so forth. Part (a) of Heider's hypothesis above refers to the relation between two entities (person & person or person & object) and claims that a balanced state exists if the relations (represented by *L* or *U)* are correct for any meanings of *L* and *U.* Since *p* likes *o* does not imply that *p* admires *o*, Heider assumes an imbalance and therefore prognosticates an effort to reach a balance in both states of relationships through cognitive restructuring. The author mentions that there is a tendency to admire loved persons and to also love admired persons. Part (b) of the hypothesis examines the relation between three entities and states that a balanced state exists if every relation (*L* and/or *U*) is positive for any meaning of *L* and *U* or if two are negative and one is positive. As an example that can also be applied in the sponsoring context, Heider outlines the relation (*pUo*) + (*pLx*) + (*oLx*). The balance situation, interpreted for the sponsoring context, would be read as follows: *p* is part of a group of people *o* (i.e. *p* is a fan of a football club *o*) and *p* likes sponsor *x* because the football club *o* likes sponsor *x*. Hereby Heider speaks of transitivity. Heider interprets this as a balanced state and requires that the club emphasize its relation to the sponsor so that it transfers to the fans. Restrictively, the author notes that *L* relationships are often stronger than the equivalent *U* relationships. Conse-

quently, *pLx* influences *pUx (p* wants to have a thing he/she likes) more often than *pUx* influences *pLx (p* starts to like a thing that he/she owns).
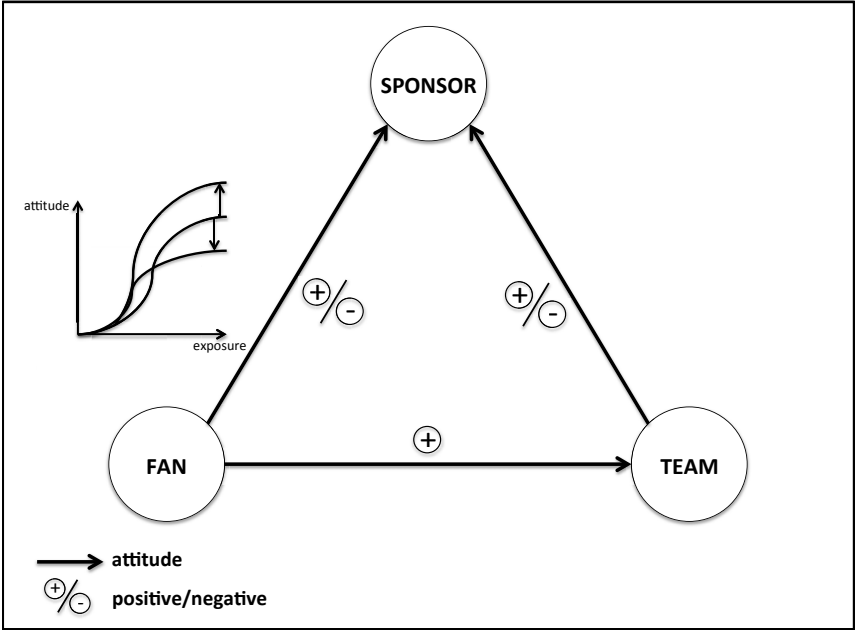
Fig. 3-6:   Balance theory within the sponsorship context
Source: Author's own illustration.

As Figure 3-6 shows, the positive evaluation the team has of the sponsor and the positive evaluation the fan has towards the team both influence the fan's evaluation towards the sponsor.[5] This theory extends the current model by predicting that the relationship between the fan and the sponsor must be positive. A shortcoming of the theory is that it does not consider the level of intensity of a positive or negative evaluation. The theory also implies that the attitudi-

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[5] Balance theory (as well as the following congruence theory) explains not only the attitude of a fan towards a sponsor or that of a team towards a sponsor, but also the opposite (e.g. the attitude of a sponsor towards a fan). However, since this study focuses on explaining sponsorship effectiveness with regards to an individual (here the fan), only the presented path directions are of interest.

nal change is only unidirectional (Dean 2002). Congruence theory (see Section 3.2.5) solves these shortcomings and is introduced later.

The psychological research literature uses balance theory, for example, to explain how individuals achieve balance with their selves and their in-groups (Ammaniti and Sergi 2003, Peterson 2006). Sociologists use it, inter alia, to predict a person's discomfort with another and any attempt to create psychological distance from that person (Hess 2000, Peterson 2006). In marketing, balance theory has been successfully utilized to explain attitude formation within cause-related marketing activities (e.g. Basil and Herr 2006), product placements (e.g. Russell and Stern 2006), and celebrity endorser contexts (e.g. Roy et al. 2012).

3.2.4.2   Application in the Sponsorship Context

Balance theory is used as a theoretical foundation in the sponsorship context by Crimmins and Horn (1996), Dean (2002), Basil and Herr (2006), Woisetschläger (2007), Parker and Fink (2010), Kim et al. (2012), Ruth and Strizhakova (2012), and Woisetschläger and Michaelis (2012).

Dean (2002, p. 79) uses balance theory in the context of charitable events to predict that the sponsorship of a 'well-liked event, all else being equal, will result in a more favorable attitude towards the sponsor'. To test this hypothesis, the author conducted a paper- and pencil-administered questionnaire with students. Dean chose a locally prominent grocery chain and asked respondents to evaluate whether the brand was a 'good corporate citizen', 'works to satisfy its social responsibilities', 'fulfills its social obligations', and 'tries to give something back to the community' (Dean 2002, p. 81). In the second section of the questionnaire, respondents had to judge the Special Olympics, an annual local sport event for the intellectually disabled. The third and fourth sections measured whether the respondents evaluated potential sponsorship of the Special Olympics by the local grocery chain as being an altruistic or non-altruistic act. Finally, the fifth section stated that the grocery chain had decided to sponsor the local Special Olympics and the logo would appear together with a statement of its sponsorship on its grocery bags. Following this, the respondents had to answer the questions of the first section, regarding their attitude to-

wards the brand (now a sponsor), again. The results show that the favourable attitude towards the grocery chain brand improved significantly after the respondents learned about its sponsorship of the charitable event (Dean 2002).

Ruth and Strizhakova (2012) use Heider's balance theory in the context of a terminated sponsorship to check whether the violated expectations of an ongoing relationship can result in a significant decrease of perceived attitudes towards the exiting brand and reduce respondents' purchase intentions. The authors include independent variables such as sponsor motives, sponsorship duration, and involvement to moderate these effects. The results show that the respondents decreased their attitudes and purchase intentions towards an exiting sponsor if sales goals were the predominant reason for the termination. This effect is mitigated for more highly involved respondents and longer sponsorship durations. Hence, the balanced state between the respondent, the sponsor, and the sponsoree is more stable for highly involved respondents and longer-lasting sponsorships.

All the authors reviewed here use Heider's (1958) balance theory as a theoretical foundation for understanding brand attitude formation and change. Only a few (e.g. Ruth and Strizhakova 2012) additionally use it to explain the behavioural outcome of purchase intention. As presented, balance theory helps understand sponsorship effect in ongoing sponsorship relations, as well as in terminating sponsorship relations.

3.2.5 Congruence Theory

3.2.5.1   Basics and General Application

Congruence theory, as a special case of Heider's (1946) balance theory, also belongs to the consistency theories, which assume that individuals are always searching for balanced (congruent) structures between the cognitive elements (Festinger 1957, Heider 1946, 1958, Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955). The difference from Heider's balance theory is the precise consideration of the intensity of the relation between these cognitive structures, as well as the predisposed direction of change (Zajonc 1960). The balancing happens by taking into account the assumption that 'judgemental frames of reference tend toward maximum simplicity' (i.e. black and white, all or nothing) so that there is 'a con-

tinuing pressure toward polarization' (Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955, p. 42) and related concepts will tend to be evaluated similarly (Zajonc 1960). Specifically, in the case of sponsorship, this means that the attitudes of the fan (person A) towards the source B (group of fans/team) and towards the sponsor (object) are balanced. Since one can assume that a fan (person A) evaluates the group of fans as well as the team (source B) positively, there are four theoretical initial situations (see Figure 3-7): positive and negative evaluations of the sponsor by the fan (source A), as well as positive and negative evaluations of the sponsor by the group of fans/team (source B). Osgood and Tannenbaum (1955) measure these evaluations through a semantic differential on a scale from -3 to +3. The theory assumes and it can be proven that in each of the four cases the attitudes towards the sponsor and source change to a balanced state. If, for example, a sponsor is evaluated neutrally (0) by a fan and very positively (+3) by the team (or source) and at the same time the evaluation of the sponsor by the team (or source) is very positive (+3), then the fan would adjust his or her prior neutral evaluation of the sponsor to a positive one and also weaken his or her very positive evaluation of the team a little (Zajonc 1960, Fishbein and Ajzen 1975).

In contrast to balance theory, with congruence theory one can predict the direction of change in attitudes, as well as their intensity (Zajonc 1960). As shown in Figure 3-7, it can be assumed that a team evaluates its sponsor positively. Now, dependent on this intensity as well as the fan's evaluation of the team, both the fan's evaluations towards the team as well as the sponsor might be adapted positively or negatively. Hence, the fan's evaluation of the sponsor becomes increases or decreases.

The marketing literature studies congruence theory within various contexts. It is especially often used as a self-concept theory in the triangle of one's perceived self, one's ideal self, and a brand (e.g. Onkvisit and Shaw 1987) or object/ product (e.g. Graeff 1996). Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) specify that a person's consuming behaviour will be directed towards enhancing his or her self-concept through the consumption of goods as symbols. Hence, people seek products with desired personality traits to improve their self-concept. D'Astous and Lévesque (2003), for example, analyse the brand personality

traits of retail stores and relate them to a person's self-image. They can show that 'the greater the distance between store personality and consumer's perception of their own personality, the lower their appreciation of the store' (D'Astous and Lévesque 2003, p. 464). The same conclusion can be drawn for countries and their perceived personality traits (d'Astous and Boujbel 2007).
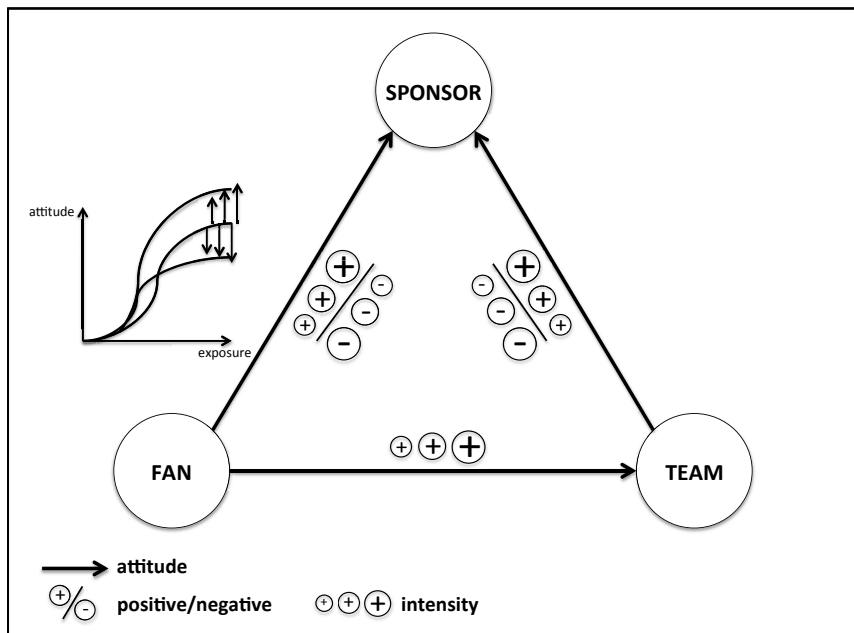
Fig. 3-7: Congruence theory within the sponsorship context
Source: Author's own illustration.

3.2.5.2 Application in the Sponsorship Context

Congruence theory is used as a theoretical foundation in the sponsorship context (e.g. Dean 2002, Rodgers 2003, Woisetschläger and Michaelis 2012). Woisetschläger and Michaelis (2012) use congruence theory in the sponsorship context to explain attitudinal brand image change and its direction over time. They introduce three states of evaluative congruence: negative incongruence, congruence, and positive congruence. Negative congruence exists when the sponsors' brand image is stronger than the respective event image

at $t = 1$, which will hypothetically lead to a less favourable brand image of the sponsor at $t = 2$ (e.g. a very prominent brand sponsors an event with a weak image). This hypothesis was rejected by the authors. A balanced state of congruence exists when the brand image and the event image are both positive, neutral, or negative. In this case no attitude change will occur. Positive congruence exists when the attitude towards the event is stronger than that towards the sponsor's brand. In this case, 'the perceived connectedness of a weak […] brand to a strong event work as signal of quality for the weak brand' (Woisetschläger and Michaelis 2012, p. 513). Hence, the sponsor's brand image will improve from $t = 1$ to $t = 2$. Woisetschläger and Michaelis demonstrated the validity of the two latter hypotheses in a field experiment conducted before and after the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany.

Rogers (2003, p.68) used Osgood and Tannenbaum's congruence theory (1955) to prove that 'sponsor recall will be higher for a relevant than an irrelevant sponsorship linkage'. The author assumed, based on congruence theory, that congruent information is preferred over incongruent information.

Hence, congruence theory has been used within the sponsorship context to predict sponsor/brand awareness, as well as brand image.

3.2.6 Social Identity Theory

3.2.6.1   Basics and General Application

Tajfel and Turner (1986) develop and present social identity theory based on several experiments and tests with a 'minimal group' (cf. Tajfel et al. 1971, pp. 153–154). These experiments demonstrate in-group bias, even in cases with randomly divided subjects. Therefore, group members were chosen by lottery and their identity kept secret from the other group members. Additionally, the subjects were told that they would not find out the identity of the other members even after the experiment. Despite all limitations whilst eliminating variables that usually lead to in-group favouritism or out-group discrimination, such as 'face-to-face interaction; conflict of interests; any possibility of previous hostility; any utilitarian or instrumental link between the subjects' responses and their self-interest' (Tajfel 1974, p. 67), the subjects shared significantly more money and/or points with members of their in-group. Even though 'fairness'

acted as a significant moderating variable for in-group favouritism, the dominance of group separation is shown in an additional experiment in which respondent valued group separation more than aiming for maximum profit for their own group (i.e. in-group).

Social identity theory consists out of three interlinked steps, as defined by Tajfel and Turner (1986) – social categorization, social identity, and social comparison –and is based on the assumption that 'an individual strives to achieve a satisfactory concept or image of himself' (Tajfel 1974, p. 68; also Festinger 1954). Social categorization is used to categorize and simplify the environment. Persons are thus sorted into groups that make sense to the particular individual (e.g. a fan group of a specific football club). As Tajfel (1974, p. 69) states,

> The second concept [...] is that of social identity. For our purposes we shall understand social identity as that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership.

Hence, the groups function as an important source for the aspired self-esteem, which evolves through 'social comparison' to other relevant groups. Several consequences regarding group membership follow (Tajfel (1974, p. 69):

- Individuals remain in a group until they find another group that emphasizes the positive aspects of their identity even more.

- Individuals will leave a group ('social mobility') if it no longer supports the positive aspects of their social identity. Exit out of a group thus depends on 'objective' reasons that speak against it, as well as on individual ideals.

- If they cannot leave the group for the reasons mentioned above, group members can either justify negative group attributes by, for example, making them more acceptable through reinterpretation or they can accept the situation for the moment and cause a positive change in these group attributes by social actions ('social change').

- The aforementioned only works if there are several groups from which one can separate oneself or to which one can compare one's own group.

As can be seen in Figure 3-8, the sponsor belongs to an in-group with the sponsored object (i.e. team) and the fan. To border with other teams, the fan's evaluation of the sponsor improves compared to other, out-group sponsors.
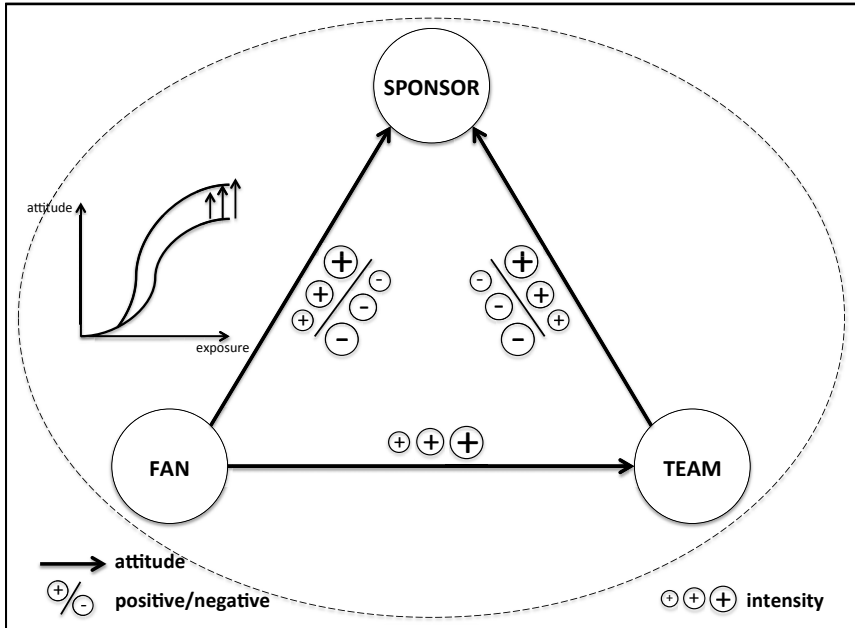
Fig. 3-8:   Social identity theory within the sponsorship context
Source: Author's own illustration.

In the marketing literature, social identity theory is used, for example, by Homburg et al. (2009b), who propose a service–profit chain that is extended by a social-identity path to better predict a company's financial performance. They show that the conventional, satisfaction-based service–profit chain (job satisfaction → customer satisfaction → customer outcomes [e.g. loyalty, willingness to pay] → firm financial performance) can be enhanced by a second, complementary, social identity-based service–profit chain (employee–company identification → customer–company identification → customer outcomes [e.g. loyal-

ty, willingness to pay] → firm financial performance) to better predict a firm's financial performance. In the branding and brand management field, Lam et al. (2010) show that one has to include both utilitarian as well as psychological brand switching drivers to evaluate customers' relationships with brands. Based on social identity theory, the authors argue that consumers switch to another brand not only for utilitarian reasons (e.g. a price cut) but also for identity reasons (e.g. social mobility). It is important to differentiate these as managerial implications, because both cases are distinct and the latter case can also include a rebranding (Lam et al. 2010).

3.2.6.2 Application in the Sponsorship Context

The social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner (1986) is used as a theoretical foundation in the sponsorship context by Ferrand and Pagés (1999), Madrigal (2000, 2001), Gwinner and Swanson (2003), Cornwell and Coote (2005), Woisetschläger et al. (2010), Bodet and Bernache-Assollant (2011), Ngan et al. (2011), Wang et al. (2011), and Deitz et al. (2012).

Gwinner and Swanson (2003) use social identity theory in the sport sponsorship context to explain how team identification influences cognitive, affective, and behavioural sponsorship outcomes. They interviewed 881 respondents during an afternoon game of American football during a major National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I conference. The sample consisted of university students (26.4%), alumni (42.7%), and general spectators (30.9%) and consisted of 32.5% season ticket holders. To test for sponsor recognition, respondents were given a list of six actual sponsors in various industries and six direct competitors that were not active in sponsorship. The respondents had to circle the names of all known sponsors. Sponsor attitude were tested using three seven-point semantic differentials (good–bad, unfavourable–favourable, unsatisfactory–satisfactory), assessing the 'overall impression of firms that sponsor [university name] football'. Patronage intentions were operationalized by asking whether the respondent would 'purposely look for sponsors', 'indicate a greater likelihood of purchasing from sponsors', and 'believe [he or she is] influenced by sponsors'. Finally, satisfaction was measured by asking the respondents to choose one sponsor they had done business with from a provided list and evaluate them. The results of a structural

equation model show that team identification significantly affects the four hypothesized sponsorship outcomes.

Wang et al. (2011) also investigate the influence of team identification on sponsorship outcomes in the sport context. Additionally, they control for country effects by conducting the same research in two different Asian countries: Taiwan and Indonesia. They selected a specific sports team and its respective sponsor in each country according to the following criteria: (a) the team is playing the most popular local team sport, (b) the team has visible local sport sponsorship, and (c) the team has a local fan club. In total, 474 members of the two chosen fan clubs participated in the survey (242 from Taiwan and 232 from Indonesia). The results show that team identification plays a significant role in predicting sponsor credibility in Indonesia, whereas no significant effect of team identification could be found in Taiwan. Section 5 of this dissertation further investigates the differences of sponsorship effectiveness between countries.

The literature review reveals that social identity theory can be used to explain the mediating effect of team identification on all variables of the sponsorship funnel (i.e. sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation). It can be used to predict sponsorship outcomes not only in the sport sponsorship context, but also in the social sponsorship context (Cornwell and Coote 2005).

3.3 Theory Classification

Following scientific realism (Leplin 1984, Hunt 1990), each of the aforementioned marketing communication theories can be used to explain complementary parts of sponsorship effectiveness (Woisetschläger 2006). Hence, since sponsorship effectiveness is measured along the complete purchase funnel (see Section 2.3) all its constitutive parts (cognitive, affective, and behavioural outcomes) should be explained by the theories introduced. As shown, Zajonc's (1968) mere exposure effect is mainly used to explain how awareness influences image within the sponsorship context (i.e. cognitive outcome). Nevertheless, it also helps explain the establishment of brand awareness (e.g. Bennett 1999, Michaelis et al. 2008, Herrmann et al. 2011). Classical conditioning

(Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) and Heider's (1946) balance theory focus on explaining attitude and image change within the mind of sponsorship recipients. Osgood and Tannenbaum's congruence theory (1955) also helps describe image effects but it is used here to predict the direction of image change. The social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner (1986) is hence used to explain the intensity of image and attitude changes by comparing highly involved respondents (i.e. fans) versus less involved respondents (i.e. non-fans). Finally, Heider's (1958) balance theory can be used again to additionally explain behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention and purchase (e.g. Ruth and Strizhakova 2012). Table 3-3 gives an overview of the contribution of each theory in the measurement of sponsorship effectiveness.

Explanatory Contribution	Relevant Theories
Awareness	Heuristics
	Mere Exposure
Attitude & Image Change	Classical Conditioning
	Balance Theory
Direction of Attitude & Image Change	Congruence Theory
Intensity of Attitude & Image Change	
	Social Identity Theory
Purchase Intention	Balance Theory

Table 3-3: Contribution of theories in the measurement of sponsorship effectiveness
Source: Author's own illustration.

Figure 3-9 integrates all the theories presented into a neobehaviouristic SOR model to show how the various stimuli (S) will be processed within the organism (O) to explain the specific responses (R).

Stimulus	-	Organism	-	Response
Country Specific Factors (Group Level)		Heuristics Mere Exposure Classical Conditioning		Brand Awareness
Management & Market Factors (Group Level)		Balance Theory Congruence Theory		Brand Image
Individual Factors (Individual Level)		Social Identity Theory		Purchase Intention
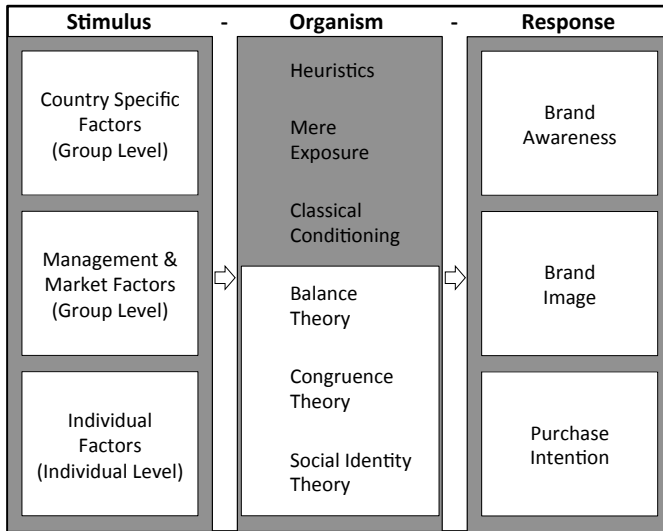
Fig. 3-9:   Model of consumer-focused sponsorship-linked marketing communications (SOR model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

This procedure is used in an approach by Cornwell et al. (2005), who developed a model for the theoretical understanding of the functionality of sponsorships. The theories introduced are further used for hypothesis development.

The following theories are also used within the sponsorship context to explain its effectiveness but add no additional insight in this dissertation's objectives and are therefore not discussed in more detail: attribution theory (e.g. Dean 2002, Rifon et al. 2004, Deitz et al. 2012, Messner and Reinhard 2012, Ruth and Strizhakova 2012); (self-) congruity theory (e.g. Dean 2002, Rodgers 2003, Sirgy et al. 2007, Close et al. 2009, Woisetschläger and Michaelis 2012), attitude theory (e.g. Grohs et al. 2004, Sirgy et al. 2007), and categorization theory (e.g. Smith 2004, Roy and Cornwell 2004, Carrillat et al. 2010, Groza et al. 2012, Sohn et al. 2012). Cornwell et al. (2005) as well as Cornwell (2008) give a good overview of the theories used within the sponsorship context.

Table 3-4 gives an integrated overview of the present research design. The two research questions are assessed through a national and an international study, respectively. The national field study (see Section 4) concentrates on finding sponsorship leverage activities at the sponsor level, to guide sponsorship managers and practitioners in reaching improved sponsorship effectiveness.

The study is based on the field survey data of highly involved football fans gathered for three sponsors of each of the 36 German Bundesliga teams (for a total of 108 sponsors) and the survey data of their respective sponsorship managers. The results of the HLM approach show that including a second level (a sponsor level) in the analysis reveals that sponsor-specific marketing leverage predictors significantly influence sponsorship funnel constructs at different steps. Eight sponsor-level variables are tested on four different sponsorship funnel constructs, out of which 13 significant effects are observed. These results are discussed, with several managerial implications.

The international field study (see Section 5)[6] concentrates on finding country-specific predictors of sponsorship effectiveness. The results can assist sponsorship managers in gaining insight into where (i.e. in which country) to leverage a sponsorship for higher impact rates. Additionally, these results can guide event managers in adapting their events to make them more attractive to sponsors.

This study hypothesizes that there are differences between countries, that these differences can be measured, and that the measured differences have a significant influence on brand image. Based on psychological theory, a single study analyses the field study survey data of five different automobile brands, all sponsoring the F1, gathered in 14 different countries. The results show that the inclusion of a second level (here, a country-level) into the analysis reveals new and heretofore unknown predictors that also significantly influence brand image. Hence, this study opens up a new area for sponsorship research activity. Nine country-level variables are tested, of which six significant predictors

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[6] The international study is based on conference papers by Lucas et al. (2010a, 2010b).

are discovered. These new results have several managerial implications, which are discussed.

Research Question	#	Scope	Level	n	Stimuli	Response
How does sponsorship leverage affect sport/team fans and which effect does it have on sponsorship effectiveness?	1	National	Individual	13320	Image-Based Fit	Sponsorship effectiveness (i.e. awareness, image, purchase intention)
					Team Fandom	
			Group (Sponsor)	37	Integrated Sponsorship Ads	
					Below-the-Line Comm.	
					Fan Support	
					Frequency Promotions	
					Duration of Sponsorship	
					Visibility of Sponsorship	
					Level of Sponsorship	
					Function-Based Fit	

Table 3-4: Overview of field studies
Source: Author's own illustration.

Research Question	#	Scope	Level	n	Stimuli	Response
Does sponsorship differ in its effectiveness between countries and which variables are responsible for such variations?	2	International	Individual	7000	Sponsor Awareness	Brand image
					Brand Awareness	
					Event Consumption	
					Event Image	
					Team Fandom	
					Possession of Brand (CV)	
			Group (Country)	70	National Event	
					National Event Interest	
					National Event Broadcast Intensity	
					Nat. Event Participants	
					National Sport Interest	
					National Sponsorship Acceptance	
					Integrated Sponsorship Ads	
					Ad Spending (CV)	
					Distribution Density (CV)	

Table 3-4 Overview of field studies (cont.)

Source: Author's own illustration.

4 National Sponsorship: Effects of Fan Campaigns on Sponsorship Awareness, Brand Attitude, and Purchase Intention – A Multi-Sponsor Analysis

4.1 Introduction

Sporting events and especially football are experiencing increased interest throughout all social milieus, both by attendance within sport venues and by viewing in pubs, at public screenings, and at home, on TV, during the past 15 years (Wipper 2003, Crawford 2004, Bouchet et al. 2010). This is mainly due to a shift in people's allocation of their leisure time (Woisetschläger 2006). The increasing interest has also contributed to a diversification of sport viewers, from traditional fans to new types, such as satellite fans (Kerr and Gladden 2008), which support clubs according to performance criteria or other factors independent of the club's geographical location (Bouchet et al. 2010). Although the literature identifies various independent sport fan groups in different ways (Hunt et al. 1999, Giulianotti 2002, Tapp and Clowes 2002, Madrigal 2004), scholars concur in the conclusion that fan identification constitutes a strong driver for numerous affective, cognitive, and behavioural reactions (Wann 2006). Bennett et al. (2009) report that involvement in sports influences a sponsor's brand attitude (Peter and Olsen 1987), brand use, and brand loyalty (Traylor 1981, Beatty et al. 1988). Hence, so-called highly identified fans (Wann and Branscombe 1990, p. 113) are more likely to spend additional time attending events and watching them on TV (Stone 1984, Kahle et al. 1996, Laverie and Arnett 2000, Donovan et al. 2005). These fans will be better informed and will influence other fans as multipliers by expressing their opinion, for example, in online fan forums (Rowe et al. 2010, Forster 2012). Wann and Branscombe (1993) find that die-hard fans express their identification by the attachment they show to the team, the money they spend, and the time they invest (Carlson et al. 2009). Hence, to reduce scattering losses, practitioners need to understand the heterogeneity of sport crowds' behaviours and attitudes to align their marketing instruments to the specific target groups they want to address. This study therefore focuses the analysis on highly identified

sport fans by recruiting respondents exclusively from football fan forums, since this fan group is believed to have an influence on other fan groups.

Sponsorship effectiveness varies for different sponsors among die-hard fans, which is a practical management problem. Hence, sponsors need to understand which factors and actions will have a positive or negative effect on such sponsorship outcome variables as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention. In conjunction with the aforementioned, strongly identified fans are a highly important target group for sponsors and it is therefore critical to know how different sponsorship means affect the evaluation of these fans. Kwon and Armstrong (2002) and Carlson et al. (2009) find that this fan group acts as peers to other fans and spends significantly more money on their team than other groups (see also Forster 2012).

An extensive literature review reveals that the effectiveness of sponsorship has been analysed by various researchers in the past (for detailed overviews, see Cornwell and Maignan 1998, Walliser 2003, Cornwell et al. 2005, Marwitz 2006, Cornwell 2008), but mostly concentrating on individual factors (see Section 3.1). These differences in individuals' attitudes, characteristics, and knowledge are identified as critical variables that determine or moderate sponsorship outcomes such as brand awareness, brand image, and purchase intention. Past research has also analysed the effectiveness of group-level variables at the sponsor level, but only to a limited extent. Analysed predictors include but are not limited to the duration of sponsorship engagement (d'Astous and Bitz 1995, Cornwell et al. 2001b, Lacey et al. 2007), the visibility of the sponsoring brand (Quester and Thompson 2001), additional marketing spending to support the sponsorship (Otker and Hayes 1991, Schoch 1994, Harcey et al. 2006, Coppetti et al. 2009), the nationality of the sponsor (Ruth and Simonin 2003), and the success of the sponsored team (Donahay and Rosenberger 2007). To the best of my knowledge, no study has yet examined the effectiveness of managerial input (e.g. support of fan clubs and projects, frequency of stadium promotions, integrated sponsorship ads) on the sponsorship funnel (awareness, attitude, and purchase intention), especially for highly identified, die-hard fans. This is an important field of research, since die-hard fans act as multipliers in influencing other fans.

The aim of this study is to investigate how sponsorship leverage affects sport/team fans and the effects it has on brand-related variables such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention. Its contribution to the literature is to conceptualize and empirically identify individual and sponsorship management-specific factors that explain differences in sponsorship effectiveness in awareness, attitude, and purchase intention. To do so, the study concentrates on highly identified fans (i.e. die-hard fans), addressed in a field survey at the beginning of the 2011/2012 Bundesliga season, and combines their data in a hierarchical linear model with management data gathered shortly after the individual-level survey, in the same season. The conceptual model is tested using the field data of fans of 36 Bundesliga teams and 37 sponsorship and marketing managers of participating sponsors.

The paper is organized as follows. The next section defines the three main sponsorship objectives and acknowledges current research on individual and company-specific factors that determine the effectiveness of sponsorship. Based on this research, a theoretical framework for the proposed model is established and the model empirically tested. In conclusion, management implications are discussed and directions for future research proposed.

4.2   Theoretical Background

The literature review in Section 3.1 reveals that marketers are interested in three main brand-related objectives through corporate sponsorship: increasing brand awareness (Hansen and Scotwin 1995, Lardinoit and Derbaix 2001, Tripoldi et al. 2003), enhancing brand attitude (Rajaretnam 1994, Stipp and Schiavone 1996, Cornwell et al. 2005), and forming purchase intention (Pope and Voges 2000, Chebat and Daoud 2003, Irwin et al. 2003).

This study's review of 112 papers (see Section 3.1) concentrates on explaining the effects of sponsorship on brands and shows that no broadly accepted model has emerged so far. The review reveals that two types of factors – individual-level and group-level factors – can be distinguished. Individual-level factors (e.g. involvement) are different for each respondent, whereas group-level factors (i.e. at the sponsor level) are the same for a whole group of respondents and vary only between sponsors (e.g. leverage).

One of the most important antecedents of sponsorship success and certainly the most frequent factor considered in sponsorship research is sponsorship fit. Current studies assess the consequences of low versus high fit conditions (Becker-Olsen and Simmons 2002, Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006) as well as function-versus image-based similarities (Gwinner and Eaton 1999, Poon and Prendergast 2006). A function-based fit represents the relatedness of a sponsor's products and services to the sponsorship object (e.g. Adidas as a producer of sports apparel to a sports club) and does not vary between respondents. An image-based fit, on the other hand, represents the relatedness of a brand's image held in mind by a specific respondent to the sponsorship object. Since this depends on predisposed information gathered by the respondent, it varies between respondents and is thus an individual-level variable. Other individual factors that are frequently considered in sponsorship research include the interest/involvement of consumers in a sport (d'Astous and Bitz 1995, Roy and Cornwell 2004, Close et al. 2006) and event image. For instance, Grohs et al. (2004) find positive effects of event image on the image of sponsoring brands.

Sponsor-level factors, which are the same for all individuals within a group (i.e. a fan group of a specific football club), comprise, for example, the duration of sponsorship (Lacey et al. 2007), as well as marketing spending (Cornwell et al. 2001b, Harcey et al. 2006). General factors such as the success of a sports team (Donahay and Rosenberger 2007) vary only between sponsors but are not directly influenceable. Sponsorship studies that consider leverage (i.e. marketing spending) as a sponsor-level factor usually only control for high versus low spending by comparing different brands at the perceptual level (e.g. Cornwell et al. 2001b). To the best of my knowledge, no field study exists that comprehensively analyses the impact of different types of activation and leverage means on all sponsorship funnel variables. From a sponsorship management perspective, it is relevant to determine whether sponsorship activation works equally across sponsors. If differences exist, managers would be interested in finding explanations and suitable management levers. In the next section, a conceptual model is developed that considers individual-level effects of sponsorship on sponsor awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention, as well as sponsor-level factors.

Customer Journey Approach: The Sponsorship Funnel

Given the various distinct dependent variables that are important in measuring sponsorship outcome, such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention (Walliser 2003), a theoretical framework and concept to anchor these variables are needed. A customer journey approach is recommended in this case. In the customer journey approach, a customer transitions from 'never a customer' to 'always a customer' (Ang and Buttle 2002) and, in the sponsorship case, from 'does not know the sponsor' to 'would even recommend the sponsor'. This practical approach is widely discussed by various authors (e.g. Payne 1994, Ang and Buttle 2002, Nenonen et al. 2008) as the customer journey or customer ladder and is an evolution of the purchase funnel/attention–interest–desire–action (AIDA) model of Lewis (1903). In consultancy companies (e.g. McKinsey), this approach is used to measure and compare conversion rates from one step to the next with those of other companies and industry benchmarks (Court et al. 2009).

The complete journey comprises four steps (i.e. sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation) and is referred to as the sponsorship funnel (see Figure 4-1).

1. *Sponsor awareness*. Contrary to the literature, this study differentiates between sponsor awareness and brand awareness to take into account the fact that sponsorships cannot transfer information (Cornwell et al. 2005). Therefore sponsor awareness is defined as the respondents' ability to recall (unaided) the sponsor (Percy and Rossiter 1992).

2. *Brand awareness*. Brand awareness is defined as the respondent's extent of knowledge about the sponsoring brand or the sponsor's products (Close et al. 2006).

3. *Brand attitude*. Brand attitude is defined according to Keller (1993), as respondents' overall evaluation of a brand.

4. *Brand recommendation*. Last in the proposed sponsorship funnel, I measure brand recommendation, a more precise predictor of consumer response than purchase intention, since the recommendation of a brand to others involves greater uncertainty and respondents only recommend

those brands that involve lower levels of uncertainty (Hutton 1997, Del Rio et al. 2001).
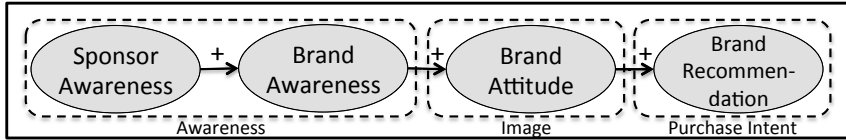
Fig. 4-1:   Sponsorship funnel
Source: Author's own illustration.

4.3   Hypothesis Development

4.3.1 Individual-Level Model

To fulfil the requirement of a parsimonious model and considering that this study concentrates on finding sponsor-related group-level factors that influence sponsorship effectiveness, only the most frequently mentioned contingency variables at the individual level are included (i.e. image-based sponsorship fit, as well as interest/involvement with the sports team) in addition to the aforementioned sponsorship funnel variables (see Figure 4-1).

Brand Awareness
The first sponsorship objective is to generate awareness. Awareness can be differentiated into sponsor awareness and brand awareness. Sponsor awareness is the respondents' recall and recognition of a sponsor (Percy and Rossiter 1992) and can be achieved through mere repeated exposure to a stimulus (i.e. sponsoring brand). However, this study defines brand awareness as a respondent's degree of knowledge about a certain brand (Close et al. 2006). Although in the literature brand awareness is measured similarly to sponsor awareness by using the three classic measures of aided, unaided, and top-of-mind awareness (Hoyer and Brown 1990, Percy and Rossiter 1992, Laurent et al. 1995), this study goes further by asking how aware respondents are of a

certain brand.[7] This is to consider that sponsorships do not necessarily transport messages (Cornwell et al. 2005) and therefore the intensity of brand awareness may vary between sponsorship perceivers. An experiment by Cornwell and Roy (2004) shows that consumers with higher levels of knowledge about a sporting event, through following it more frequently and thus merely being exposed more often to a sponsorship (i.e. highly identified sport fans), employ different information-processing strategies than consumers with lower levels of knowledge. Hence, these respondents engage in connecting sport event-related information to the newly learned sponsor (e.g. typical sponsorship fee of such an engagement, typical reason for such a sponsorship) and thus build higher brand awareness levels. For example, the congruence between a nuclear power plant operator (e.g. Areva) and Nürnberg's football club is very low for novices, whereas highly identified sport fans might see a strong connection, since they know that sponsors of smaller football clubs are often local companies aiming to increase their acceptance within the region. This information is then connected to the sponsor, resulting in higher brand awareness levels. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed.

H1: Sponsor awareness has a positive effect on brand awareness.

Brand Attitude
Brand attitude is defined as the consumer's overall evaluation of a brand (Wilkie 1990, Keller 1993) and depends on specific considerations concerning the attributes and benefits of the brand from which it is disjunct (Srinivasan 1979, Ajzen and Fishbein 1980, Keller 1993). Researchers have shown that the general construct of attitudes towards a brand can be formed by less thoughtful decision making, for example, on the basis of simple heuristics and decision rules (Petty and Cacioppo 1986, Keller 1993). This study therefore uses the brand attitude construct as a substitute to measure the overall acceptance and evaluation of a sports sponsor. This is done to once again satis-

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[7] Keller (1993) sees brand awareness as related to brand familiarity and follows the definition of Alba and Hutchinson (1987, p. 411), who define brand familiarity as 'the number of product-related experiences that have been accumulated by the consumer (through product usage, advertising, etc.)'. Hence, since sponsorship is only one product-related experience, I believe that brand awareness follows in the proposed sponsorship funnel behind sponsor awareness. Sponsorship is part of building higher brand awareness levels.

fy the requirement of a parsimonious model, since the scope of this study is to measure the influence of management practices on the complete sponsorship funnel.

The mere exposure effect of Zajonc (1968, 2001) as a psychological explanation indicates that repeated exposure to a brand generates an affective response, that is, the liking of the brand indicated and subsequent preference formation (Bornstein 1989, Cornwell et al. 2005, Fang et al. 2007). In a field study of UK football fans, Bennett (1999) shows that this effect is also relevant in the sport sponsorship context. Specifically, football fans who show a high level of interest and involvement with a certain football team will be more strongly exposed to sponsorship-related information. Accordingly, as mentioned, these fans have more time (measured in sponsor contacts) to build up brand awareness, which than leads to a higher brand attitude.

On the other hand, sponsor awareness without brand awareness is believed to have no direct influence on brand attitude for highly identified fans. This is a logical consequence of the fact that repeated exposure to a sponsor directly leads to higher brand awareness through the better processing of information previously noted. Hence, following mere exposure theory, die-hard fans build up brand awareness automatically during repeated exposure to a brand, which than affects brand attitude.[8] The following two hypotheses are therefore proposed.

H2: Sponsor awareness has no direct effect on brand attitude.

H3: Brand awareness has a positive effect on brand attitude.

Brand Recommendation
Keller (1993) argues that both the constructs brand awareness and brand image (measured here by the general construct of attitude towards the brand) have a positive effect on consumer response. Keller believes that high levels of a brand's awareness and a positive brand image should increase the prob-

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[8] Nevertheless, could one imagine, at least for normal fans, sponsor awareness without it resulting in higher brand awareness: Ability to recall a stadium name (e.g. Lanxess Arena in Cologne) due to repeated exposure to the name through the radio or the like does not necessarily imply the knowledge that Lanxess is a chemical company based in Cologne.

ability of that brand's selection, as well as produce greater consumer loyalty compared to an unnamed version of the same product or service. Similarly, various researchers find that brand associations have a positive effect on consumer choice, preferences, intention to purchase, and the consumer's willingness to recommend the brand to others (Park and Srinivasan 1994, Cobb-Walgren et al. 1995, Hutton 1997). According to Hutton (1997), the recommendation of a brand to others usually involves a great deal of uncertainty, even more than when buying the brand for oneself. Therefore, consumers are expected to only recommend those brands that involve a lower level of uncertainty (Del Río et al. 2001). Hence, brand recommendation seems to be a stricter means of measuring consumer response, in the sense of purchase intention, than purchase intention itself. Speed and Thompson (2000) indicate that this effect is transferable to the sponsorship context by showing that positive brand attitude towards a sponsor is positively associated with favourability towards the sponsor's products and the willingness to consider them.

Heider's (1958) balance theory argues that individuals strive for consistency and avoid perceived inconsistencies in behaviour and attitude (Cornwell et al. 2005)[9]. Dean (2002) shows that, based on balance theory, in the sponsorship context respondents can reconsider a neutral attitude towards a sponsor of a positively perceived event, resulting in a more favourable evaluation of that sponsor. For the introduced sponsorship funnel, this implies that a positive brand attitude towards a sponsor causes the respondent to amend his or her behaviour in the sense of potentially recommending the sponsoring brand to others. Hence, the following hypotheses can be proposed in which a higher level of brand attitude will have a positive effect on brand recommendation and in which brand awareness directly predicts a sponsors' brand recommendation.

H4: Brand attitude is positively related to sponsors' brand recommendations.

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[9] For example, individuals (e.g. the Jews) with a very negative image of a certain country (e.g. Germany) avoid, under normal conditions, buying a positively perceived German car (e.g. VW New Beetle) unless they engage in changing the perceived relationships between the three anchors. They can try emphasizing being only 'half-Jewish' and that no family member died in the Holocaust or convince themselves that VW is no longer a German enterprise, since it has production facilities throughout the world (Woodside and Chebat 2001).

H5: Brand awareness is positively related to sponsors' brand recommendations.

Image-Based Sponsorship Fit

Sponsorship fit is a widely discussed and broadly accepted determinant of brand attitude and brand equity in the sponsorship literature (Speed and Thompson 2000, Cornwell et al. 2005, Becker-Olsen and Hill 2006, Chien et al. 2011). A high sponsorship fit between the sponsoring object (e.g. football team) and a sponsor (i.e. certain brand) results in positive meaning transfer and posits the creation of a shared set of associations (Becker-Olsen and Hill 2006). A low fit condition, on the other hand, includes no readily identifiable linkages and leads to negative attributions, higher perceived risk, and ultimately negative attitudes (Weiner 1985). It therefore weakens the brand image. Recently scholars have started to differentiate between product-related fit conditions (i.e. function-based fit) from sponsorship portfolio fit conditions (Smith 2004, Chien et al. 2011). Companies that sponsor more than one event create a category or image to which consumers compare new sponsorship engagements. For example, a brand that progressively sponsors many 'underdog' X Game events holds a certain image (Lee and Cho 2009) to which every new sponsorship (e.g. of a more traditional football club) will be compared. Hence, according to Gwinner and Eaton (1999), fit can be distinguished between, inter alia, a more general brand fit on the individual-level basis (i.e. image-based congruence) and a more specific product fit at the group level (i.e. functional perspective; Coppetti et al. 2009).

McDaniel (1999) uses schema theory to explain why a higher perceived fit may lead to better brand evaluations. A schema is a cognitive structure of knowledge about a certain type of stimulus – an event, object or person – that helps individuals to function in complex situations (Bartlett 1932, Gwinner and Eaton 1999). Instead of having to continuously recall specific information about previously made evaluations of a certain brand (e.g. a specific fast food restaurant), individuals simply recall information about a more abstract group of fast food restaurants in general. For the sponsorship context, this means that the more closely two objects (i.e. event and sponsor) are connected, the higher the likelihood that they will be perceived similarly and the evaluation of one

object will transfer to the other. For highly identified fans, this implies that a respondent's positive attitude towards football and his or her favourite team transfers to the sponsoring brand. This reasoning leads to the following individual-level fit hypotheses.

H6a: Image-based sponsorship fit at the individual level differs significantly from function-based sponsorship fit at the group (sponsor) level.[10]

H6b: A sponsorship fit between a sponsor and a football club based on a higher perceived image results in a more positive brand attitude for the sponsor.

Team Fandom
Identification with a sports team is a strong predictor of time spent following a specific team (Pooley 1978, Donovan et al. 2005, Carlson et al. 2009), as well as of impulsive sport-related purchases (Kwon and Armstrong 2002) and brand loyalty (Traylor 1981, Beatty et al. 1988). However, the following questions remain: What makes consumers identify with a team and how does identification affect the sponsorship funnel variables? Do fans of a sports team know their team's sponsors better than other sport sponsors, like them more, and even recommend their team's sponsors more strongly than other sponsors?

Sports fan identification (Trail and James 2001, Donavan et al. 2005), organizational identification (Bergami and Bagozzi 2000), and consumer–company identification (Bhattacharya and Sen 2003) involve a cognitive state in which an individual views himself or herself as a member of a social entity (Bergami and Bagozzi 2000) upon realising the similarities and dissimilarities between members of the social in-group and various out-groups (Mael and Ashforth 1992). The individual creates a social identity by grouping himself or herself into a social category based on demographics, employment affiliation, or team membership, partly to enhance self-esteem (Tajfel 1978, Tajfel and Turner 1986, Hogg et al. 1995). Fans are subsequently drawn to sport teams that

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[10] In this study the paired-sample *t*-test shows that the mean of function-based sponsorship fit differs significantly from the mean of image-based sponsorship fit, with mean (M) -.24511, standard deviation (SD) 1.03315, standard error of the mean .00978, t -25.073, *df* 11168, and significance (two tailed) .000. Hence, H6a is supported.

have a strong similarity to them, which may be real (i.e. source with actual-self) or aspirational (i.e. source with ideal-self) (Carlson et al. 2009). In the sponsorship context, social identity theory is used as a theoretical explanation by, for example, Madrigal (2000), who studies a college football game to show that team identification is positively related to purchase intention. Other sponsorship scholars, such as Cornwell and Coote (2005) or Crimmins and Horn (1996), report that the 'gratitude' a sponsor can earn is described in various studies, including motorsport events with NASCAR fans and cultural events such as the 1982 Chicago Gospel Festival. Gwinner and Swanson (2003) measure the effect of fan identification on different sponsorship outcomes such as sponsor recognition, attitude towards sponsors, sponsor patronage, and satisfaction with sponsors. They propose social identity theory to explain the differences in sponsor recognition between highly identified team fans and non-supporters. Firms active in sponsoring the favoured sports team may be considered in-group members and are therefore more likely to be recognized as sponsors. A test of 881 respondents at a football game during a major NCAA Division I conference shows that team fan identification positively predicts sponsor recognition (Gwinner and Swanson 2003; also Lings and Owen 2007). The present study controls for these findings by including the fan identification variable at each step of the sponsorship funnel. Hence, it controls for the finding that highly identified fans have a more positive attitude towards their home team sponsors than other fans. Therefore the following hypotheses are proposed.

H7a: Team fandom has a positive effect on sponsor awareness.

H7b: Team fandom has a positive effect on brand awareness of sponsors.

H7c: Team fandom has a positive effect on brand attitude.

H7d: Team fandom has a positive effect on brand recommendation.

Figure 4-2 graphically summarizes the proposed hypotheses.
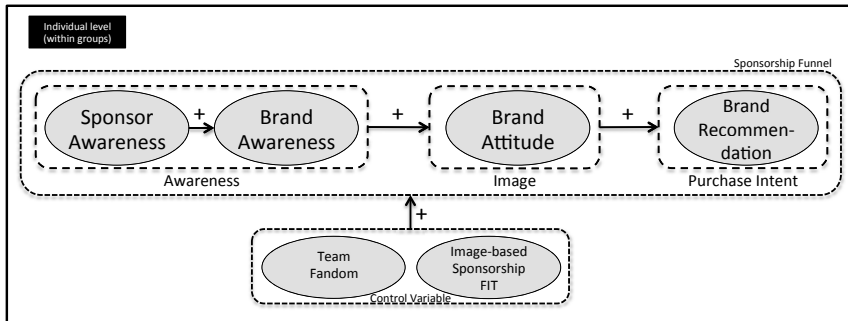
Fig. 4-2:   Individual-level model
Source: Author's own illustration.

4.3.2 Sponsor-Specific Group-Level Effects

Prior research has predominantly focused on variations in sponsorship out-
comes that result from individual factors and largely ignored variations of
group-level factors on a sponsor basis. The effects that vary from sponsor to
sponsor can be grouped into two categories: (1) sponsorship-related efforts
that are only directly manageable at the beginning of the sponsorship relation-
ship (e.g. function-based fit between the sponsor and sponsoree, visibility
through the degree of sponsorship, or the league in which the sponsoree
plays, which relates to broadcast time on national TV) and (2) general market-
ing mix-related efforts of the sponsor that can be managed during the entire
sponsorship relationship (e.g. integrated marketing efforts and its intensity).
Cornwell et al. (2005) refer to these classifications as management factors and
label them (1) sponsorship policy and (2) activation and leverage, respectively.
I now concentrate on activation and leverage while considering a few sponsor-
ship variables of the first group (i.e. sponsorship policy) as control variables.
Hence, at the sponsor level, the study tests the influence of integrated spon-
sorship advertisements, below-the-line marketing activities (i.e. merchandising,
licensing, and product placement), the support of fan clubs and projects, and
the frequency of promotions within a stadium. For the duration of the sponsor-
ship, the sponsor's visibility, function-based congruence to football, as well as

the league in which the sponsored team plays are controlled. For highly identified hard-core fans especially, since this fan group typically acts as an opinion leader, these variations of sponsorship effects are relevant to sponsors (a) understanding them and (b) learning how to manage them.

For group-level variables, two distinct effects are possible. The tested variables can influence *(a) the level* of the intercepts of awareness, attitude, or recommendation *(mean differences)* and/or *(b)* can *strengthen or weaken the effects themselves* (slope effect). Both possibilities are therefore manageable and are reported here.

Integrated Sponsorship Advertisements with Team Members
Integrated sponsorship ads in which team players and officials act as endorsers have a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables. Football fans immediately recognize the football-related endorsers and, through greater emotional involvement (arousal), are better able to remember the advertised brand (Kroeber-Riel 1979, Quester and Farrelly 1998, Cornwell et al. 2005). Two psychological effects affect a positive brand attitude change. Balance theory (Heider 1958) suggests, as mentioned, that positive feelings towards a sponsored football player increase the evaluation of the promoted brand to balance the two stimuli. Additionally, following the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner (1986), the football player in question is assessed as part of a broader sports-related in-group in the respondent's perception, resulting in positive spillover effects towards the advertised brand. Cornwell and Coote (2005) show that, in the sponsorship context, social identity theory can also explain increased purchase commitment for the products of sponsors. Consequently, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H8a: Integrated sponsorship ads with team members positively affects the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H8b: Integrated sponsorships ads increases the effects of sponsor awareness on brand awareness, of brand awareness on brand attitude, and of brand attitude on brand recommendation *(slope effect)*.

Below-the-Line Communication: Licensing and Merchandising

As Meenaghan (1991) state, sponsors must leverage their sponsorships effectively through additional promotional activities to bring about the association with the activity to the intended audience rather than only observing awareness and attitudinal changes in respondents' assessments, as usually done with advertisements. Additional promotional activities can take on many forms, such as merchandising (e.g. selling team kits with the sponsor logo), and licensing products (e.g. bank account cards displaying the sponsored team logo). These activities are intended to affect all stages of the sponsorship funnel but should have a greater impact on the latter part by influencing sponsors' brand attitudes and brand recommendations. The following hypothesis is proposed.

H9: Below-the-line communication has a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

Fan Support

The support of fan projects and fan clubs is intended to foster the relationship of a sponsor's brand with team fans. Such support, especially in the view of hard-core fans, embodies the ultimate cause of sponsorship: Not only is the football team supported (e.g. financially, to back the payment of football players' loans), but so are the team's fans. Therefore, since this communication means is not only indirectly related with the fans, as sponsorships are, but directly, fans are expected to return this goodwill through increased brand attitude and brand recommendations. Heider's (1958) balance theory may again offer a theoretical explanation. Consequently, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H10a: Fan support has a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H10b: Fan support increases the effects of sponsor awareness on brand awareness, of brand awareness on brand attitude, and of brand attitude on brand recommendation *(slope effect)*.

Frequency of Fan Promotions in the Stadium

Considering the mere exposure effect (Zajonc 1968, Fang et al. 2007), this study proposes that brand awareness and brand attitude are increased through greater fan contact. The more frequently sponsors are in contact with spectators through promotional activities in the stadium, the more possibilities they have to learn the sponsors' brand names. Additionally, fans feel the obligation to give something back (balance theory) and will recommend the brand more often to their peers. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H11a: The frequency of fan promotion in the stadium has a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H11b: The frequency of fan promotion in the stadium increases the different effects of sponsor awareness on brand awareness, of brand awareness on brand attitude, and of brand attitude on brand recommendation *(slope effect)*.

Duration of Sponsorship

The length of sponsorship also positively affects the sponsorship funnel. The more time respondents have to learn that a brand sponsors a certain club, the greater the awareness of the sponsorship (Marshall and Cook 1992). This may not always be true, since Smith (2004) reports contradicting anecdotal evidence of Volvo-sponsored equestrianism in which protracted links had become less effective over time. In the present study, it is believed that the duration of sponsorship increases the likelihood of learning the sponsor event connection and, through greater exposure to the sponsor, attitudes towards the sponsor will also improve (see Section 3.2.5). In this vein, Lacey et al. (2007) show that repeated attendance at an event with the same sponsor present every time (e.g. the weekly attendance of football fans at the football field to follow their teams) impacts brand image as well as purchase intention. The authors show that this effect holds even for products that are not purchased frequently, since the tested sponsor was a car manufacturer. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H12: The duration of the sponsorship has a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

4.3.3 Control Variables

Additionally, this study controls for visibility, function-based sponsorship fit, as well as the league in which the respective sponsored team plays.

Visibility

Based on the fundamental work of Stipp (1998), who finds that the visibility of a sponsor during the Olympics has a great influence on brand awareness and brand image, the variable visibility is also included in the analysis. The more prominently visible a sponsor, the more effective the sponsorship will be. This is also shown in the case of art sponsorship by Quester and Thompson (2001), who show that sponsors engaging in additional promotional support gain higher levels of awareness and increase their brand image. Although the authors refer to leveraging the sponsorship with additional promotional support (e.g. through advertisements on the sides and backs of buses, leaflet distribution at the venue, extra print media advertising), it can also be supposed that the increased effects are based on the fact that the sponsorship itself was made more visible. Hence, it can be hypothesized that since title sponsors are more visible than naming rights partners (i.e. sponsors of a stadium name such as Allianz Area in Munich) and are also more visible than premium sponsors (e.g. an official airline), the sponsorship will work differently for them. Title sponsorships gain the most, followed by naming rights partners and, finally, premium sponsorships. Hence, hypotheses 13a and 13b are proposed.

H13a: Sponsorship visibility has a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H13b: Sponsorship visibility increases the different effects of sponsor awareness on brand awareness, of brand awareness on brand attitude, and of brand attitude on brand recommendation *(slope effect)*.

Function-Based Sponsorship Fit

Sponsorship fit can be distinguished into individual-level brand fit (image-based sponsorship fit) and group-level product fit (function-based sponsorship fit). Here, the influence of function-based sponsorship fit (product fit) at the group level (sponsor level) on the sponsorship funnel variables is analysed. Coppetti et al. (2009) show that the disadvantages of an incongruent sponsor-ship condition can be overcome by building the perception of a congruent sponsorship. Cornwell et al. (2005) report two diverging effects of congruence on awareness. On the one hand, following Srull (1981), higher congruence be-tween the sponsor and sponsoree is better remembered by respondents while, on the other hand, Hastie (1980) shows that incongruent sponsorship results in greater recall due to more elaborate processing. McDaniel (1999) shows, based on schema theory (see above), that a high brand–event fit significantly improves brand attitude. Subsequently, it can be supposed that through more elaborate processing the positive effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness will be further improved under low function-based fit conditions, whereas a high function-based fit condition improves the effect of brand awareness on brand attitude. High function-based fit conditions will have also a positive effect on the sponsorship funnel (intercept effects). Hence, the fol-lowing hypotheses are proposed.

H6c: Function-based sponsorship fit is positively related to the sponsorship funnel variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H6d1: A lower function-based sponsorship fit positively affects the relationship of sponsor awareness on brand awareness *(slope effect)*.

H6d2: A higher function-based sponsorship fit positively affects the relation-ship of brand awareness on brand attitude *(slope effect)*.

League

Leagues are believed to influence the perception of and attitude towards the commitment of the sponsorship and thus such sponsorship funnel variables as brand attitude and brand recommendation. A sponsorship engagement in the second league is due to limited public propagation, more obviously intended to

support the sponsoree, compared to a sponsorship engagement in the first league. To control for such cases, league is included as a control variable. The following is therefore hypothesized.

H14a: A higher league (first vs. second league) is negatively related to the sponsorship funnel variables brand attitude and brand recommendation *(intercept effect)*.

H14b: A higher league (first vs. second league) negatively affects the relationship of brand attitude to brand recommendation *(slope effect)*.

Figure 4-3 graphically summarizes and groups the proposed individual-level as well as group-level hypotheses.
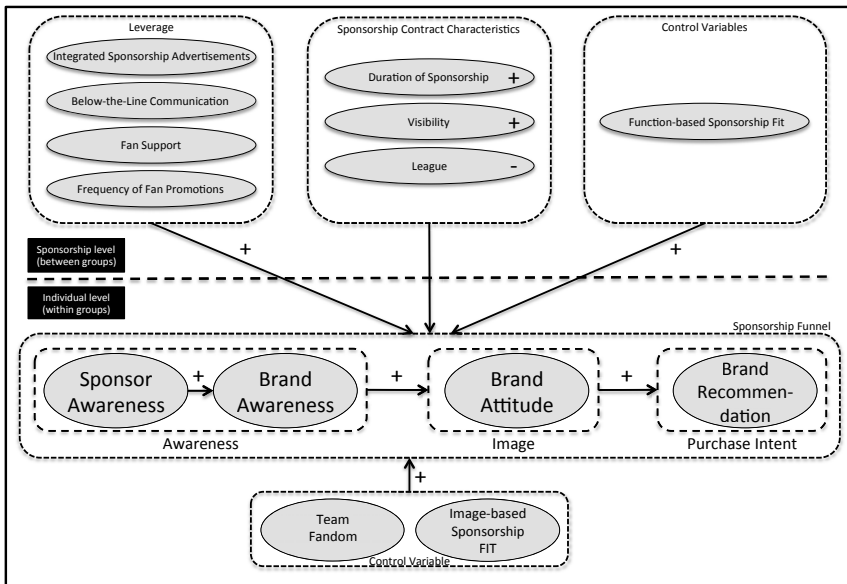
Fig. 4-3:   Multi-level sponsorship model: Intercept effects of fan campaigns on sponsorship funnel

Source: Author's own illustration.

4.4   Methodology

4.4.1 Data

Individual-Level Data

The individual respondents were recruited from fan forum websites. Prior to the study itself, each of the 36 first and second league football clubs were contacted to determine whether the club operates its own fan web forum, cooperates with a local fan forum, or could name at least the biggest and most important fan forum for its team. The fan forums were then contacted and links to the study were posted in the forums. I also contacted large general football fan forums such as Fußball News & Bundesliga Blog (soccer-fans.de), Sportnachrichten – kicker online (kicker.de), and Das Fußball Portal über die Fußball Bundesliga und Transfergerüchte Forum (transfermarkt.de), which attract up to 230,000 visitors daily in the case of kicker.de. Participants were entered into a drawing for three Apple iPod prizes. The data were collected during a three-week period at the beginning of the 2011/2012 Bundesliga season, from 2 August 2011 until 22 August 2011. The forums were regularly visited during this period to post answers to informants' questions, thus keeping the thread current and visible. After two weeks, a special invitation was sent to former respondents of a similar survey from a year earlier to make up for insufficient numbers of participants for some teams. This helped boost the number of fans for most teams to at least 30. For only five out of 36 teams was the threshold of 30 respondents not reached, with these teams represented by only 29, 28, 22, 22, and 15 fans, respectively.

A total of 1807 fans were gathered anonymously via online fan forums, with 1533 male respondents and 274 female respondents (15%). A total of 413 more respondents were also obtained through a direct mailing from an earlier

football study, with 7.7% female fans.[11] Hence, 2220 fans completed the survey, 13.8% of whom were female. The number of team fans ranged from 15 for FSV Frankfurt (ranked 13th out of 18 teams in the second Bundesliga of former season) to 177 for Borussia Dortmund, the champion of the former first Bundesliga season.

The survey respondents had to choose their favourite team at the beginning of the questionnaire and answer questions regarding their involvement with football and their relationship to the chosen team, as well as sponsor-related questions. The respondents were then randomly assigned to different teams from the remaining 35 teams and were asked the same questions about their relationship/liking of the random team, as well as the same sponsor-related questions. Thus, about 60 non-fans additionally evaluated each team. The sponsor-related questions always referred to the title sponsor, the naming rights partner of the stadium (if applicable), and/or at least one premium (first-tier sponsor). Three sponsors were evaluated for each team. Hence, each of the 2220 respondents answered questions about three sponsors of his or her favourite team and then three sponsors of a randomly assigned team, summing up to 13,320 different sponsor evaluations.

Group-Level Data
The group-level data were collected in a three-week period at the beginning of the second half of the 2011/2012 Bundesliga season. Of the 108 possible sponsors analysed in the individual-level survey, team title sponsors missing from the individual-level survey, sponsors unreachable due to lack of contact information, and sponsors that refused to take part in the questionnaires were omitted from the sample, for a total of 90 sponsors in the group-level analysis.

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[11] Independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare age, gender, and interest in the football under fan forum and direct mailing groups. There was no significant difference between the age scores for the fan forum (M = 31.51, SD = 23.271) and the direct mailing (M = 31.45, SD = 12.123) groups, with t (2236) = -.51 and p = .959. For gender, there was a significant difference between the fan forum (M = 1.14, SD= .372) and direct mailing (M = 1.07, SD = .282) groups, with t (2236) = -3.733 and p = .000. Ultimately, in regards to interest in football, there was also a significant difference between the scores for the fan forum (M = 4.75, SD = .737) and direct mailing (M = 4.87, SD = .469) groups, with t (3337) = 3.286 and p = .001. Hence, through the additional direct mailing, the complete sample became significantly more masculine and even more interested in football compared to the sample gathered from fan forums alone.

Hence, a total of 90 sponsorship managers were contacted, 64 started the online questionnaire (71%), and 37 completed it and were thus included in the analysis (41%).

4.4.2 Measures

This study contains two levels of analysis: the individual fan level and the sponsor level. At the first level (individual fan level), the dependent variable brand recommendation is measured using a 10-point Likert-type scale, according to Hutton (1997) and del Río (2001), obtained by asking the respondent for the probability of recommending the brand in question to friends and colleagues. Brand attitude is measured similarly as in Gwinner and Swanson (2003), by asking respondents to rate their overall impression of a brand sponsoring a specific football club. Subjects had to indicate their impressions on a five-point Likert-type scale, with anchors of '1 = totally disagree' and '5 = totally agree', for whether 'Brand X is very pleasant', 'Brand X is a very good brand', 'Brand X is a very attractive brand', and 'I evaluate Brand X as very positively overall', where Brand X is the brand in question. The measurement reliability of the reflective construct is examined through explorative factor analysis; for the analysis itself, a composite index is constructed for each respondent.[12]

Brand awareness was measured by asking respondents to indicate on a five-point Likert-type scale their 'familiarity with Brand X', where '1 = not at all familiar' and '5 = very familiar', and whether they had heard of Brand X, where '1 = never heard of before' and '5 = heard of very often'. Similarly to brand attitude, a composite index score for each respondent is constructed. Following Percy and Rossiter (1992), the sponsor awareness variable differentiates between brand recall and brand recognition. If a category need is experienced (e.g. need for a lunch at a fast food restaurant), 'the consumer must recall a brand, or several brands, from memory in order to make a decision' (Percy and Rossiter 1992, p. 265). Additionally, brand recall implies higher variance than

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[12] Several composite measures can be found in the economic literature. Examples include the index of sustainable economic welfare (Daly and Cobb 1989), the human development index (UN Development Program 1990), the quality of life index (Johnston 1988), various country risk and market potential indices (e.g. Dichtl and Köglmayr 1986), and quality-adjusted price indices (e.g. Griliches 1971). In the sponsorship context, Stipp and Schiavone (1996) work effectively with indices.

brand recognition, since consumers need to retrieve brand names from memory, and brand name recall is therefore the sponsor awareness variable used in this study. Individual-level image-based sponsorship fit is measured following Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006) by evaluating the connection between Team Y and Brand X on three five-point Likert-type scales with the anchors '1 = dissimilar' and '5 = similar', '1 = not complementary' and '5 = complementary', and '1 = inconsistent' and '5 = consistent', where Team Y is the respondent's favourite team and Brand X its respective sponsor.

Respondents were presented a list of all 36 Bundesliga football clubs of the first and second leagues from which they could choose their favourite team. After answering various questions about the chosen team and its sponsors, the respondents were randomly assigned to a different team and asked the same set of sponsor-related questions for this other team. Hence, the variable team fandom is equal to zero for the sponsor of a randomly assigned team and one for the sponsor of the favourite team.

Factor	Indicator	Indicator Reliability	Cron-bach's Alpha (Std)	Factor (Composite) Reliability	Average Variance Explained
Brand Awareness	How familiar are you with Brand X? (not at all familiar to very familiar)	.843	.905	.790	.722
	How familiar are you with Brand X? (never heard of to often heard of)	.602			
Brand Attitude	Brand X is very pleasant	.806	.956	.949	.847
	Brand X is a very good brand	.857			
	Brand X is a very attractive brand	.832			
	I evaluate Brand X very positively in total	.893			
	How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? (not complementary to complementary)	.830			
	How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? (inconsistent to consistent)	.832			
Global goodness Criteria: CFI (.979), TLI (.966), RMSEA (.063), SRMR (.015)					

Table 4-1: Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) table of individual-level constructs[13]

Source: Author's own illustration.

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[13] 'If the structural model will contain a mix of single indicators and latent variables, it is important to include the single indicators in the measurement model. If not, specification error may occur when single indicators are added to the SEM model' (Brown 2006, pp. 138–139). The measurement errors of the single indicators in the current study are set at zero.

Factor	Indicator	Indicator Reliability	Cron-bach's Alpha (Std)	Factor (Compo-site) Reli-ability	Average Variance Explained
Image-Based Sponsor-ship Fit	How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? (dissimilar to similar)	.733	.922	.904	.798
	How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? (not complementary to complementary)	.830			
	How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? (inconsistent to consistent)	.832			
Sponsor Awareness	Which brands or companies do you recall being a sponsor of Team Y?	1.000			
Brand Recom-mendation	On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being 'not likely at all' and 10 being 'very likely', how likely is it that you will recommend Brand X to a friend or colleague?	1.000			
Team Fandom	For which of the listed teams do you keep your fingers crossed?	1.000			
Common Method Bias	How content are you with the result of the female German football na-tional team at this year's World Cup?	1.000			
Global goodness Criteria: CFI (.979), TLI (.966), RMSEA (.063), SRMR (.015)					

Table 4-1: Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) table of individual-level constructs (cont.)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Table 4-1 shows that all the quality criteria yield satisfactory results. Hence, the model fulfils all the minimum requirements. A subsequent discriminant va-lidity test (see Table 4-2) shows satisfactory results, since the correlation coef-ficients are smaller than .9. Even the stricter test criteria of Fornell and Larcker (1981), where the squared correlation coefficients of the latent variables need to be smaller than the average variance explained, are fulfilled by the present data. Thus, the reliability test and the validity test imply that the results are both reliable and valid.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Brand Awareness	1.00						
Brand Attitude	.384	1.00					
Image-Based Sponsorship Fit	.260	.583	1.00				
Sponsor Awareness	.318	.138	.192	1,00			
Brand Recommendation	.369	.647	.446	.118	1,00		
Team Fandom	.386	.163	.168	.381	.133	1,00	
Common Method Bias	.018	.026	.020	.041	.021	.000	1,00
Average Variance Explained	.722	.847	.798				
Fornell–Larcker Criteria	fulfilled	fulfilled	fulfilled				

Table 4-2: Test of discriminant validity

Source: Author's own illustration.

To avoid a common method bias, various ex ante remedies are used, including using different sources for individual-level and group-level data, using different scale types within the individual-level questionnaire, and assuring respondents of the 'anonymity and confidentiality of the study, that there are no right or wrong answers, and that they should answer as honestly as possible' (Chang et al. 2010, p. 180). I abstained from reporting the results of an ex post testing technique such as Harman's single factor test, since Richardson et al. (2009) finds that these techniques add no value and therefore does not recommend them. A lack of data precludes the use of a CFA marker technique (e.g. Williams et al. 2010), the only technique found to add at least some value (Richardson et al. 2009).

The sponsor-level (group-level) data were collected in a distinct survey about six month after the fan-level study. Most of the data were measured dichotomously (i.e. '0 = no' and '1 = yes') by asking sponsorship managers which actions their sponsorship engagement comprises (e.g. 'brand or product advertisements with players of the football club' or 'brand or product advertisement with the management of the football club (coach etc.)'). Specifically, advertisements with team members are measured '1 = yes' if advertisements featured either players or management. Merchandising and licensing are measured '1 = yes' if sponsors either engaged in offering merchandising materials or licensing products to fans. Support of fan projects and clubs consists of the two items 'support of fan projects (initiated through the football club)' and 'support of fan clubs'. The frequency of promotions in the home stadium is meas-

ured with an ordinal scale of '1 = never', '2 = once a full season', '3 = once a half season', '4 = once every month', and '5 = every home game'. The number of seasons being a team sponsor ranged from '1 = one season' to '7 = seven seasons' and ending with '8 = more than that'. The league was measured as '0 = 2nd league' and '1 = 1st league' and visibility as '1 = title sponsor' and otherwise zero. The functional fit of products and services to football, as opposed to image-based congruence at the individual level, is constructed by building the mean value over all respondents of the individual-level 'products/services of the sponsor fit with football' measure on a Likert-type scale with anchors '1 = totally disagree' and '5 = totally agree'.

4.4.3 Method

To investigate the set of determinants' effects on the sponsorship funnel, one must differentiate between two levels of analysis, that is, the fan level (i.e. individual level) and the sponsor level (i.e. group level). At the fan level, the impact of individual-level variables such as the funnel variables themselves (i.e. sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and recommendation) plus fit and fanhood are analysed. However, it can be assumed that these variables are not only influenced by individual-level variables, since a certain amount of variance of certain sponsorship funnel variables is determined by variables at the sponsor level. Thus, fan-level data are 'nested' in the sponsor-level data, with each football fan rating one specific sponsor. If this is the case, a certain amount of homogeneity of each variable (e.g. brand attitude) among the fans of a specific football club who rated the same sponsoring brand should be observed, while there should be heterogeneity between the sponsors themselves. Consequently, the second goal of the analysis is to assess the direct and moderating impacts of sponsor-level variables on the sponsorship funnel.

To statistically separate and investigate such level-of-analysis effects, HLM is employed (for overview of the method, see Snijders and Bosker 1999, Raudenbush and Bryk 2002, Raudenbush et al. 2004). The appropriateness of multilevel modelling depends on the existence of substantial variance at the sponsor level. To measure the degree of homogeneity within and between sponsorships, intraclass correlations (ICC) are calculated for all variables in the sponsorship funnel (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). With σ_B^2 as the between-

class correlation and σ_W^2 as the within-class correlation, the ICCs can be computed as

$$ICC = \sigma_B^2 / (\sigma_B^2 + \sigma_W^2)$$

Following Muthen and Satorra (1995), ICCs need to be adjusted for the average class size c to estimate the need for multilevel analysis. The design effect (DEFF) provides a measure of deviation from the assumption of independent observations across all classes:

$$DEFF = 1 + (c - 1) \times ICC$$

where *c* is the average size of the class. Muthen and Satorra (1995) suggest that whenever DEFF is larger than two, severe violation of the assumption of independent observations across all classes is likely; in such a case, multilevel analysis should be employed.

This analysis calculates a design effect of 8.269 (1 + (111.139 - 1) x .066) for brand recommendation, a brand attitude of 12.454, a brand awareness of 30.077, and a sponsor awareness of 26.993 (see Table 4-3). Hence, the design effect for each variable of the sponsorship funnel is substantially larger than two, suggesting that a multilevel analysis should be employed (Muthen and Satorra 1995).

	ICC	DEFF
Sponsor Awareness	.236	26.993
Brand Awareness	.264	30.077
Brand Attitude	.104	12.454
Brand Recommendation	.066	8.269

Table 4-3: Values for ICC and DEFF
Source: Author's own illustration.

4.5   Analysis Overview and Results

This section now analyses if the variation between classes is a result of variation in the intercepts and/or variation in the slopes. To do so, the variance components have to be calculated (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002).

	Variance Component	Significance
Intercept Brand Awareness	1.32375	.000
Slope Sponsor Awareness	0.03819	.003
Slope Team Fandom	0.53922	.000
Level 1 R	0.87092	---
Intercept Brand Attitude	0.19735	.000
Slope Sponsor Awareness	0.00812	.358
Slope Brand Awareness	0.01747	.000
Slope Image-based Sponsorship Fit	0.01957	.000
Slope Image-based Sponsorship Fit *		>.500
Brand Awareness	0.00286	
Slope Team Fandom	0.04161	.000
Level 1 R	0.46366	---
Intercept Brand Recommendation	0.98745	.001
Slope Brand Awareness	0.01654	.245
Slope Brand Attitude	0.08911	.000
Slope Team Fandom	0.12442	.001
Level 1 R	4.86716	---

Table 4-4: Final estimation of variance components

Source: Author's own illustration.

As Table 4-4 shows, by far the largest part of the different variances between the remaining 37 groups (1.32375 over 2.19467 for brand awareness, 0.19735 over 0.66101 for brand attitude, and 0.98745 over 5.85461 for brand recommendation) can be traced back to variation of the intercepts between the 37 groups, while a smaller part (0.57741 over 2.19467 for brand awareness, 0.08963 over 0.66101 for brand attitude, and 0.23007 over 5.91418 for brand recommendation) of the variations can be explained by the slopes of the 37 groups. Level 1 R indicates the individual-level random effect. Therefore, the model aims to explain both the intercept and slope variances. Although the slope variance for the fandom and fit variables is greatest, I focus on explaining the variance of the intercepts and slopes of the sponsorship funnel variables, since this is the study's main focus. At each part of the funnel, only the significant slopes are investigated; these also show a noteworthy amount of

variation (1.7% for the relation between sponsor awareness and brand aware-
ness, 2.6% for that between brand awareness and brand attitude, and 1.5%
for that between brand attitude and brand recommendation).

Structural Model Estimation

To test the hypothesized relationships, a structural model was estimated by
using each scale item as an indicator of its associated latent variable con-
struct. Brand recommendation and team fandom are modelled as manifest
variables, with the former as a continuous variable and the latter a categorical
one. The tested model includes all individual-level variables, as well as group-
level intercept predictors, and was calculated using Muthen's MPlus software
(version 3.11). The group-level slope predictors were calculated separately for
each individual-level relationship (e.g. Sponsor Awareness → Brand Aware-
ness) using HLM (version 6.06) due to hardware performance restrictions.[14]
The causal paths between the latent variables were specified in accordance
with Figure 4-3 and the model was tested using the maximum likelihood meth-
od (with robust standard errors and chi squared) of parameter estimation.
Strong support can be found for concluding that the model fits the data well.
The chi-squared statistic for the structural model is 338, with seven degrees of
freedom (*p* < 0.0000). The CFI is .90, while the SRMR for within is .028 and
.015 for between. The RMSEA estimate is equal to .109.

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[14] The 'intercept-only model', the 'one-way random effects ANCOVA model', as well as the
'intercepts and slopes as outcomes model' with predictors only for the intercepts, were
calculated using MPlus version 3.11. The chi-squared difference test significantly im-
proves the model at each step. Due to the complex structure of the structural equation
model with two mediator variables at the individual level, MPlus (version 3.11) was una-
ble to calculate any results allowing for random slopes. Therefore, I decided to use HLM
(version 6.06) to calculate the 'intercepts and slopes as outcomes model' with predictors
for cross-level interactions at each step of the sponsorship funnel separately.

Based on these results, the final two-level random intercept and random slope calculations for each variable are as follows.

Individual-level model of brand recommendation:

(1) $BRECOM = \beta_0 + \beta_1(FAN) + \beta_2(BAWARE) + \beta_3(BATTITUDE) + r$

Group-level model of brand recommendation:

(2) $$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(ADS) + \gamma_{02}(BTLCOM) + \gamma_{03}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{04}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{05}(FREQ*DUR) + \gamma_{06}(DURATION) + + \gamma_{07}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{08}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{09}(PFIT) + u_0$$

(3) $$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + \gamma_{31}(ADS) + \gamma_{32}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{33}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{34}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{35}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{36}(PFIT) + u_3$$

With individual-model of brand attitude:

(4) $$BATTITUDE = \beta_0 + \beta_1(FAN) + \beta_2(SAWARE) + \beta_3(BAWARE) + \beta_4(IFIT) + \beta_5(IFIT*BAWARE) + r$$

Group-level model of brand attitude:

(5) $$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(ADS) + \gamma_{02}(BTLCOM) + \gamma_{03}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{04}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{05}(FREQ*DUR) + \gamma_{06}(DURATION) + + \gamma_{07}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{08}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{09}(PFIT) + u_0$$

(6) $$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + \gamma_{31}(ADS) + \gamma_{32}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{33}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{34}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{35}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{36}(PFIT) + u_3$$

With individual-level model of brand awareness:

(7) $BAWARE = \beta_0 + \beta_1(FAN) + \beta_2(SAWARE) + r$

Group-level model of brand awareness:

(8) $$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(ADS) + \gamma_{02}(BTLCOM) + \gamma_{03}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{04}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{05}(FREQ*DUR) + \gamma_{06}(DURATION) + + \gamma_{07}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{08}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{09}(PFIT) + u_0$$

$$(9) \quad \begin{aligned} \beta_2 &= \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}(ADS) + \gamma_{22}(FANSUPPORT) + \gamma_{23}(FREQUENCY) \\ &+ \gamma_{24}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{25}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{26}(PFIT) + u_2 \end{aligned}$$

With individual-level model of sponsor awareness:

$$(10) \quad SAWARE = \beta_0 + \beta_1(FAN) + r$$

Group-level model of sponsor awareness:

$$(11) \quad \begin{aligned} \beta_0 &= \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(ADS) + \gamma_{02}(BTLCOM) + \gamma_{03}(FANSUPPORT) \\ &+ \gamma_{04}(FREQUENCY) + \gamma_{05}(FREQ*DUR) + \gamma_{06}(DURATION) + \\ &+ \gamma_{07}(LEAGUE) + \gamma_{08}(VISIBILITY) + \gamma_{09}(PFIT) + u_0 \end{aligned}$$

where β_i = individual-level coefficients,
SAWARE = sponsor awareness, *BAWARE* = brand awareness, *BATTITUDE* = brand atti-
tude, *BRECOM* = brand recommendation, *IFIT* = image-based sponsorship fit between
sponsor brand and football team, *FAN* = fandom for football team (of which brand is a spon-
sor), *IFIT*BAWARE* = moderator of image-based sponsorship *FIT* and brand awareness, *r* =
individual-level random effect.

γ_{ij} = group-level coefficients,
ADS = advertisements with team members, *BTLCOM* = licensing and merchandising,
FANSUPPORT = support of fan projects and clubs, *FREQUENCY* = frequency of promotions
in home stadium, *FREQ*DUR* = moderator of frequency and duration, *DURATION* = number
of seasons being a team sponsor, *LEAGUE* = first or second league sponsor, *VISIBILITY* =
title sponsor of the team, *PFIT* = fit of sponsor products and services with football, and *u* =
group-level random effect.

The results shown in Tables 4-5 to 4-8 indicate that, at the individual fan level,
the sponsorship funnel hypotheses (H1, H3, H4) (sponsor awareness influ-
ences brand awareness, which influences brand attitude, which influences
brand recommendation) are supported. Contrary to expectations, football team
fandom does not influence the sponsorship funnel at all steps. It influences the
funnel most at its beginning and helps a sponsor to be recalled as a sponsor
and boosts brand awareness, but the influence diminishes at the level of brand
attitude and it has no influence on brand recommendation at all. Hence, H7 is
only partially supported. As expected, image-based sponsorship fit has a
strong influence on brand attitude (H6b).

At the group level (i.e. sponsor level), the results show that advertisements featuring team members do not increase the intercepts of the regressions of sponsor awareness and brand awareness, but affects the intercepts of brand attitude and brand recommendation positively (H8a). For licensing and merchandising, no effect at all could be demonstrated (H9). Supporting fan projects and fan clubs also increases the intercepts of the regressions of only the later part of the sponsorship funnel, that is, brand attitude and brand recommendation. Interestingly, the frequency of promotions can even decrease these two intercepts. Hence, fan actions have a qualitative influence on a brand (attitude and recommendation), but the influence diminishes with increasing activities in this area (H11a). The length of time being a sponsor does not have any effect on the intercepts of the sponsorship funnel, but being a title sponsor (visibility) does. The more visible a sponsor is (in the extreme, by being a title sponsor), the more positively the intercept of the sponsor awareness regression is influenced. No other intercept effects are observed for visibility (H13a). Being a sponsor of the first or second league does not influence the two awareness variables significantly, but it does affect brand attitude and brand recommendation. The intercepts of the latter two variables are higher for second league sponsors than for first league sponsors. Thus, football fans rate the financial support of sponsors more positively if the sponsor's commercial interests are subordinate (H14a). As expected, a sponsor's matching product offer (function-based sponsorship fit) positively affects the intercepts of the sponsorship funnel at all levels (H6c).

Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	t-Ratio
Individual-level – Sponsor Awareness		
(dependent variable is Sponsor Awareness)		
Team Fandom	**.313***	**9.923**
Group-level – Sponsor Awareness		
(dependent variable is the intercept β_0)		
Advertisements with Team Members	-.049	-0.444
Licensing and Merchandising	-.042	-0.345
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	.146	1.249
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	-.090	-0.477
Moderator of Frequency and Duration (Frequency*Duration)	-.021	-0.087
Duration of Sponsorship	-.023	-0.093
League	.082	0.835
Visibility	**.678****	**4.194**
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**.357****	**3.970**

Significant effects (p < .05 or lower) are shown in bold.

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Table 4-5: Sponsor awareness results (estimates of the two-level model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	*t*-Ratio
Individual-level – Brand Awareness		
(dependent variable is Brand Awareness)		
Team Fandom	**.204***	**5.539**
Sponsor Awareness	**.127***	**7.151**
Group-level – Brand Awareness		
(dependent variable is the intercept β_0)		
Advertisements with Team Members	.162	1.446
Licensing and Merchandising	.028	0.242
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	.170	1.006
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	-.477	-1.936
Moderator of Frequency and Duration (Frequency*Duration)	.389	1.266
Duration of Sponsorship	-.028	-0.137
League	.068	0.617
Visibility	.149	1.035
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**.503***	**6.563**
(dependent variable is the slope β_2)		
Advertisements with Team Members	.008	0.819
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	**-.019***	**-2.895**
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	.006	1.370
League	-.013	-1.262
Visibility	.012	1.295
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**-.074***	**-2.182**

Significant effects ($p < .05$ or lower) are shown in bold.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4-6: Brand awareness results (estimates of the two-level model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	*t*-Ratio
Individual-level – Brand Attitude		
(dependent variable is Brand Attitude)		
Team Fandom	**.056***	**2.150**
Sponsor Awareness	.013	0.719
Brand Awareness	**.204***	**10.240**
Image-based Sponsorship Fit	**.510***	**21.145**
Moderator of Image-Based Sponsorship Fit and Brand Awareness (Image-Based Fit *Brand Awareness)	.031	1.538
Group-level – Brand Attitude		
(dependent variable is the intercept β_0)		
Advertisements with Team Members	**.409***	**3.012**
Licensing and Merchandising	-.225	-1.661
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	**.395***	**2.501**
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	**-.920***	**-2.996**
Moderator of Frequency and Duration (Frequency*Duration)	.393	0.922
Duration of Sponsorship	-.428	-1.387
League	**-.296***	**-2.582**
Visibility	.126	0.635
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**.270***	**2.598**
(dependent variable is the slope β_3)		
Advertisements with Team Members	.003	0.208
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	**.023***	**2.067**
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	-.011	-1.130
League	-.003	-0.204
Visibility	-.036	-1.689
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**.192***	**2.581**

Significant effects (p < .05 or lower) are shown in bold.

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 4-7: Brand attitude results (estimates of the two-level model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	*t*-Ratio
Individual-level – Brand Recommendation		
(dependent variable is Brand Recommendation)		
Team Fandom	.008	0.555
Brand Awareness	**.105***	**8.614**
Brand Attitude	**.530***	**27.975**
Group-level – Brand Recommendation		
(dependent variable is the intercept β_0)		
Advertisements with Team Members	**.476***	**3.268**
Licensing and Merchandising	-.151	-1.312
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	**.418***	**2.194**
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	**-.901***	**-2.943**
Moderator of Frequency and Duration (Frequency*Duration)	.636	1.521
Duration of Sponsorship	-.488	-1.758
League	**-.209***	**-2.314**
Visibility	.029	0.148
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	**.296***	**2.489**
(dependent variable is the slope β_3)		
Advertisements with Team Members	**.058***	**1.955**
Support of Fan Projects and Clubs	.013	0.627
Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	-.016	-1.226
League	**.059***	**1.966**
Visibility	-.024	-0.596
Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	-.053	-0.462

Significant effects (p < .05 or lower) are shown in bold.

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 4-8: Brand recommendation results (estimates of the two-level model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Based on these results, the sponsorship funnel variables can be calculated as follows:

(12) $BAWARE = \beta_0 + .204 \times (FAN) + .127 \times (SAWARE) + u$

with

(13) $\beta_0 = + 3.477 + .503 \times (PFIT) + u_0$

and

(14) $SAWARE = .127 - .019 \times (FANSUPPORT) - .074 \times (PFIT) + u_2$

plus

(15) $BATTITUDE = \beta_0 + .064 \times (FAN) + .207 \times (BAWARE) + .512 \times (FIT) + u$

with

(16) $\beta_0 = + 5.980 + .409 \times (ADS) + .395 \times (FANSUPPORT) - .920 \times$ $(FREQUENCY) - .296 \times (LEAGUE) + .270 \times (PFIT) + u_0$

and

(17) $BAWARE = .204 + .023 \times (FANSUPPORT) + .192 \times (PFIT) + u_3$

plus

(18) $BRECOM = \beta_0 + .105 \times (BAWARE) + .530 \times (BATTITUDE) + u$

with

(19) $\beta_0 = + 2.112 + .476 \times (ADS) + .418 \times (FANSUPPORT) - .901 \times$ $(FREQUENCY) - .209 \times (LEAGUE) + .296 \times (PFIT) + u_0$

and

(20) $BATTITUDE = .530 + .058 \times (ADS) + .059 \times (LEAGUE) + u_3$

The final estimation shows that by including the significant predictors for the sponsorship funnel intercepts, the variance components of the intercepts are reduced from 1.324 to 1.019 for brand awareness, from 0.197 to 0.163 for brand attitude, and from 0.988 to 0.974 for brand recommendation (see Table

4-9). In addition, interestingly, a huge part of the slope variance in the sponsor awareness → brand awareness link ($β_2$) between the 36 groups (specifically (0.038 - 0.012)/0.038, which is about 68%) can be explained by support fan projects and clubs and function-based sponsorship fit.

	Variance Component	Significance
Intercept Brand Awareness	1.01912	.000
Intercept Brand Attitude	0.16288	.000
Intercept Brand Recommendation	0.97374	.000

Table 4-9: Variance components after the significant predictors for the intercepts are considered

Source: Author's own illustration.

4.6   Discussion and Managerial Implications

The findings presented extend current research by determining the effect of sponsorship leverage on brand awareness, attitude, and recommendation while concentrating on die-hard football fans and controlling for heterogeneity between sponsors using HLM. These outcomes offer unique results from which managerial implications can be derived.

At the individual level (fan level), the existence of a sponsorship funnel that comprises the variables sponsor awareness, brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand recommendation is demonstrated. This finding is in line with what is called the customer journey approach (e.g. Ang and Buttle 2002, Nenonen et al. 2008) in other management disciplines and can thus be applied to the sponsorship context. This approach also adds an extra step, which is not yet broadly accepted (e.g. Schwaiger et al. 2010). It is found that sponsor aware-ness predicts brand awareness but has no direct effect on brand attitude. The findings demonstrate that sponsor awareness can affect brand attitude only via brand awareness. In sum, the individual-level results presented here, with their focus on die-hard football fans, advance existing but more general findings (e.g. Walliser 2003, Cornwell et al. 2005, Weeks et al. 2008, Messner and Reinhard 2012, Woisetschläger and Michaelis 2012). It is especially interesting that these findings are true not only for sponsor–team pairings for the favourite team, but also for any other sponsor–team pairings. This implies the proposed

sponsorship funnel is true for die-hard fans in general, regardless of whether the sponsors of the home team are analysed or those of any other team. Hence, the presented effects are stable across sponsors.

Additionally, this study finds that the intercepts of the dependent individual-level variables vary between sponsors. This study's objective and contribution to the literature are to analyze sponsor-level variables that explain these variations, specifically for the target audience of highly identified sport fans. At the group level (sponsor level), many positive effects are found that are discussed further. Nevertheless and contrary to expectations (e.g. Meenaghan 1991, Marshall and Cook 1992, Lacey et al. 2007), no significant effect of the below-the-line marketing activities tested (licensing, merchandising and product placement) or the length of the sponsoring engagement is found on any variable within the sponsorship funnel.

In line with the work of Coppetti et al. (2009) and McDaniel (1999), the results show that the different values of function-based product fit significantly influence the effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness and the effect of brand awareness on brand attitude between sponsors. Thus, the variance of the slope effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness can be partly explained by various degrees of product fit, in addition to a sponsor's engagement in supporting fan clubs and projects and the frequency of conducting promotional activities with fans in the home stadium. Similar to the expectation and findings of Hastie (1980), a lower product fit increases the influence of sponsor awareness on brand awareness, since respondents have to elaborate the information more intensively. As a result, they feel better informed about the sponsor brand. On the other hand, a better product fit (Srull 1981) increases the influence of the sponsorship funnel stage of brand awareness on brand attitude. Furthermore, it is found that function-based sponsorship fit also positively affects all intercepts of the dependent sponsorship funnel constructs. Taking all product fit effects (i.e. intercept as well as slope effects) into account, it can be concluded that greater congruence of a sponsor's products and services with the sponsored object results in a higher levels of all the variables within the funnel. This finding confirms existing knowledge (e.g. Cornwell et al. 2005, Poon and Prendergast 2006, Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006)

by demonstrating the generalizability of the effects for an entire sport and for all relevant brand variables at the individual level. The effects occur even in a comprehensive model by controlling for many other and further identified predictors such as advertisements with team members, the sponsorship level (first tier, second tier, etc.), and the duration of the sponsorship engagement.

Group-level (i.e. sponsor-level) variables are found to predict the sponsorship funnel constructs at the individual level at various stages. Concerning marketing leverage variables, which can explain the variation in sponsorship funnel constructs between sponsors, I tested (a) integrated advertisements with the team players and management, (b) the support of fan clubs and projects, and (c) the frequency of conducting marketing activities in the stadium.

Advertisements have a direct effect on the later part of the sponsorship funnel, specifically brand attitude and brand recommendation. The study's findings confirm current research of Gwinner and Eaton (1999). Hence, if a brand is already well known within a target market, activated sponsorship by means of integrated advertisement helps improve a brand's image and fosters purchase intention. This means, however, that, by using team players or team personnel, the sponsor is unable to improve brand awareness levels. Integrated sponsorship advertisements with team members and football players also increase the effect (slope) of brand attitude on brand recommendation. This study finds a positive effect of sponsorship-related endorsers on the brand recommendation construct of a brand, similar to the effect brand endorsers have on brand image, by affecting the dimensions of 'credibility' and 'attractiveness' (McCracken 1989, p. 319, Gwinner and Eaton 1999).

Interestingly and contrary to expectations, the frequency of promotional activities within the home stadium decreases the two variables brand attitude and brand recommendation from a fan's perspective. These counterintuitive findings may have different reasons. The very strong negative effect of the frequency of promotional activities within the home stadium may be due to the fact that highly identified fans assume the commercial interest of the sponsor to be greater than the purely altruistic motive of supporting the sport, especially their home football club. Hence, the more often a sponsor uses its prominent positioning by trying to sell its products too intensively, the more negatively

such action affects its brand attitude and brand recommendation. In particular, since the construct of supporting fan clubs and projects tested positively regarding the two variables, this reasoning becomes even more pertinent. It can be shown that sponsors who support fan clubs and projects can increase their brand attitude and brand recommendation evaluations, whereas at the same time the frequency of promotional activities in the home stadium decreases these evaluations. It seems that this perceived commercial interest may be of great importance for highly identified fans, since the league control variable has a negative effect on the latter part of the sponsorship funnel. This result means that sponsors of the second Bundesliga gain higher ratings in brand attitude and brand recommendation than first league sponsors per se.

Comparable to the aforementioned, being sponsor of the first Bundesliga also increases the *relationship* of brand attitude to brand recommendation. A possible explanation is that the additional security this fact provides for a respondent leads him or her to recommend this brand to friends and family. The fact that the sponsors are able to sponsor the first league compared to the second league, whose sponsoring fees are significantly lower, shows that there is plenty of financial support. This information has a spillover effect on the sponsor's products. The same applies for integrated advertisements.

Although it can be shown that a sponsors' support of fan projects and clubs has a positive effect on brand attitude and brand recommendation, it does not have a direct effect on sponsor or brand awareness. However, fan support negatively moderates the effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness. Similarly, function-based sponsorship fit has a negative effect on this relationship. These counterintuitive findings can be traced back to the fact that sponsorship does not transport any information (Cornwell et al. 2005). Hence, although sponsor awareness may be greater for companies with a high product fit to football, this does not mean that the brand is correspondingly better known.

This study finds that a sponsor's visibility affects only the primary part of the sponsorship funnel directly. The more visible a sponsor is, the greater its recall and recognition. Thus, the results confirm the findings of Stipp (1998).

The duration of the sponsorship engagement is not found to have any significant influence on any of the sponsorship funnel variables. Even though Chadwick and Thwaites (2005) theoretically argue in favour of a long-term relationship between a sponsor and a sponsoree, data provided by sponsorship managers interviewed in the United Kingdom do not show a linear relationship between longer engagement and higher returns in the present field study. As denoted by the interviewees, an inverted U-shaped curve that peaks after just a few years can better explain this relation.

Managerial Implications

The existence of a sponsorship funnel can be used by sponsorship managers as a benchmark. The constructs introduced can be replicated by other sponsor brands and directly compared to the outcomes presented here. Since the sponsorship funnel relationships were built for fans as well as non-fans and over all industries, a strengthening of all relationships indicates a good result. Additionally, the sponsorship funnel can be used to compare customers aware of the sponsorship with customers unaware of it. The connection is successful if the same results and relationships are stronger for customers aware of the sponsorship.

The findings confirm that it is more important to choose a sponsorship with a good product fit than one with a good image fit. Additionally, sponsoring brands should stress the close relationship of their product categories with the sponsored object or sport event to avoid the danger of being perceived as too commercially interested by die-hard fans. Hence, sponsors should concentrate on subtler ways of influencing sport fans than overstressing their commercial interests with their sponsorship. Since this research shows that brand attitude directly affects brand recommendation at the individual level (fan level), sponsors could invest more into establishing a higher brand attitude, which will automatically lead to higher brand recommendation (purchase intention). In the case of promotional activities within a stadium, this means that sponsors should refrain from marketing activities with die-hard fans (in the home-fan areas of football stadia) and alternatively investigate the structures of fan clubs to support them directly. Since die-hard fans are aware that they spend considerable amounts of money on their teams, they do not want to be put into the

same group as 'sympathisers' (Forster 2012) to receive the equivalent in kind, such as a training session with a few team players or strategic debates with the team's management. Sponsors can use their ensured allocation of team members to make this happen and thus stress their non-commercial and supportive interest with such sponsorship.

Nevertheless, the frequency of conducting promotional activities increases the effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness. This means that sponsors who engage in promotional activities within the stadium can boost their brand awareness. Sponsors can thus overcome the limited ability to transfer information via pure sponsorship by directly approaching sport fans within the stadium where the fans are expecting to be entertained (at least by the football match) and are therefore more open to be approached by sponsors.

Highly visible sponsorships, such as title sponsorships, rather than premium sponsorships, should only be chosen if the sponsor's aim is to generate high awareness. Brand variables such as brand attitude or brand recommendation cannot be affected directly, only indirectly via the sponsorship funnel, for example, by means of the mere exposure effect.

Table 4-10 gives an overview of the national study's results and corresponding managerial implications.

L	Variable(s)	Dependent Variable	Dir.	Managerial Implication
L1	Sponsor Awareness	Brand awareness	+	Use of marketing communication to load sponsor brand with information
	Sponsor Awareness, Brand Awareness, Brand Attitude, Brand Recommendation	Sponsorship funnel	+	Use of sponsorship funnel as benchmark, conversion rate analysis, target group comparison
	Image-Based Sponsorship Fit	Brand attitude	+	Emphasis of fit through marketing communication
	Team Fandom	Sponsorship funnel (intercepts)	+	Target groups of sponsor and sponsoree should be congruent
L2	Function-Based Sponsorship Fit	Sponsorship funnel (intercepts)	+	Choose function-based fit over image fit, emphasize high fit
		Slope effect of sponsor awareness on brand awareness	-	n/a
		Slope effect of brand awareness on brand attitude	+	Emphasis of fit through marketing communication
	Below-the-Line Communication	Sponsorship funnel	x	n/a
	Integrated Advertising	Brand attitude & brand recommendation	+	Use of team players and management in communication
	Frequency of Promotions in Home Stadium	Brand attitude & brand recommendation	-	Avoidance of marketing activities with die-hard fans in stadia
	Support of Fan Projects & Clubs		+	E.g. training sessions with fan clubs, strategic debates with team management
	League		-	Depending on the objective, a lower league could be of interest
	Duration of Sponsorship	Sponsorship funnel	x	Cancelation of engagement if no more improvements in effectiveness
	Visibility (Level of Sponsorship)	Sponsor awareness	+	Leverage of sponsorship to additionally improve brand attitude
(+) significant positive effect, (-) significant negative effect, (x) no significant effect, (L1) individual level, (L2) group (sponsor) level.				

Table 4-10: National study results and managerial implications

Source: Author's own illustration.

4.7   Limitations and Further Research

Given the above discussion, an obvious limitation is that although sponsorship fit is the most extensively discussed predictor in the sponsorship context, this

research focuses only on function-based sponsorship fit and does not inten-
sively analyse image-based sponsorship fit at the individual level. In this re-
gard, this study does not control for the potential sponsorship portfolios some
analysed brands may have. In particular, the title sponsors of the top five Bun-
desliga teams (e.g. Telekom, Evonik Industries, Gazprom, Volkswagen, Emir-
ates) have various other sponsorships even outside of the sports context that
also influence public perception.

The aforementioned leads to limitations concerning the context analysed. Only
the sport sponsorship context is analysed; however, further research should
be conducted on the other sponsorship types, such as cultural sponsorships,
art sponsorships, and even testimonial sponsorships. The present study's fo-
cus on football is reasonable, since football is the most watched sport not only
in Germany but worldwide. However, further research should investigate ef-
fects in divergent sports such as rugby, cricket, or American football. In the
United Kingdom and France, for example, rugby is a very popular spectator
sport. This leads to the study's limitation in national focus, since it concen-
trates solely on the German market and German football fans. It might be in-
teresting to see whether these results hold in other countries as well. Hence,
further research should try to replicate these findings in different countries. Not
only might interest in the sport in question diverge, but so may general ac-
ceptance of a sponsorship per se. Section 5 covers these questions of differ-
ing sponsorship effectiveness on a national basis and analyses them in the
context of motorsport sponsorship.

The study can also be criticized for its concentration on only die-hard fans. As
Forster (2012) finds, 'maniac fans' (i.e. die-hard fans) form opinions and spend
significantly more money on their team than others, but nevertheless the group
of 'sympathizers' and 'affine' is also very large in the aggregate and therefore
an economically important target group of sports teams as well. Further re-
search should include all people who watch football.

Finally, since the scope of this field study is to find and analyse predictors of
sponsorship effectiveness in sponsorship leverage, more dimensions/forms of
sponsorship leverage should be investigated (e.g. amount spent on leverage
activities or the like) (Quester and Thompson 2001).

In the next section an international field study concentrates on finding country-specific predictors of sponsorship effectiveness. This study complements the present national field study by demonstrating the international generalizability of the predictors found and explaining international variability.

5 International Sponsorship: Effects of Sponsorship on Brand Image – A Cross-National Analysis

5.1 Introduction

Despite the recent economic downturn, especially in Europe, the role of sponsorship as a marketing communication instrument is still expanding (IEG 2013). For global players in particular, such as LG, Banco Santander, Mercedes-Benz, and AT&T, there are not many alternative sponsorship opportunities that aim for a worldwide audience. Although the Olympic Games as well as the Football World Cup are truly global events with a large global audience, these events only take place every four years. In contrast, F1 offered 18 races, cumulating in 1.8 million race day attendees in 2006 (*Black Book* 2007). According to a *Financial Times* special report, 597 million people are estimated to have watched the 17 F1 races of 2007 (Sylt and Reid 2008). The *Black Book* (2007) states that, in 2007, 222 sponsors of the F1 contributed 2.719 billion USD in sponsorship money, nearly 10% of all worldwide sport sponsorship spending.

Measurement of sponsorship effectiveness is a relatively new academic research topic (see the literature review in Section 3.1). It began to evolve broadly in the 1980s and has concentrated so far mainly on individual factors. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of global sponsorship is believed to depend, at least to some extent, on specific factors at the country level, meaning that sponsorship may work differently from country to country. Ruth and Simonin (2003), for instance, show differences in the perceptions of foreign and domestic sponsors. Such variations in sponsorship effects would be unintentional from the sponsor's perspective. From a management perspective, it is highly relevant to assess whether (1) differences in sponsorship effects between countries can be observed and (2) if such differences can be explained by potentially manageable variables at the country level.

However, prior research has predominantly focused on variations in sponsorship outcomes resulting from individual factors (see Section 3.1). No study so far has examined group-level differences in sponsorship effectiveness, such

as country-specific sponsorship effects and their determinants. People in countries with a long history of motorsport events and many personal experiences with motorsports are expected to have a different event image than people in countries with less experience in motorsport events. In Spain, for example, where both MotoGP races and F1 races are run, interest in F1 and its image may be much stronger than in countries such as India, where there are no such races. The presence of a race in a country gives its inhabitants the chance to personally attend an event; therefore, their involvement is expected to be increased. Moreover, broadcast times differ from country to country; hence, consumers may have more or less time to learn sponsor names and to attribute the image of F1 to these sponsors. Sponsorship outcomes and the effectiveness of sponsorships may differ depending on country-related variables. The few sponsorship studies that consider country variables, such as sponsor nationality, are conducted in a single country (e.g. Ruth and Simonin 2003) and do not consider variations at the country level.

Against this background, the present article contributes to the literature by conceptualizing and empirically identifying individual-specific and country-specific factors that explain differences in brand image, an important sponsorship outcome for marketing management. The conceptual model is tested using market research data obtained by a major automotive company in a multinational field survey in 2007. The data cover 14 countries and five different automotive sponsors in F1. Additionally, objective data from secondary sources are integrated.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, I briefly acknowledge existing research on individual-level and country-level factors that determine the effectiveness of sponsorship in brand image. Building on previous work, a theoretical framework is developed for the proposed individual- and country-level effects on brand image, the role of potential moderators is defined, and the model empirically tested. Finally, implications and directions for future research are discussed.

5.2 Theoretical Background

Based on a literature review of sponsorship research (Walliser 2003), several sponsorship objectives can be identified that are typically targeted by marketers. Increasing brand awareness (Hansen and Scotwin 1995, Lardinoit and Derbaix 2001, Tripoldi et al. 2003) and enhancing brand image (Rajaretnam 1994, Stipp and Schiavone 1996, Cornwell et al. 2005) are the most frequently mentioned sponsorship objectives. Purchase intention (Pope and Voges 2000, Chebat and Daoud 2003, Irwin et al. 2003) and employee motivation (Grimes and Meenaghan 1998) are also considered important outcome variables, but most companies focus on brand-related objectives such as brand image (Cornwell and Maignan 1998, Anderson and Whittam 2008). Hence, this paper also focuses on explaining brand image variations. I follow Keller's (1993, p. 3) definition of brand image as 'perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory.'

The study's review of the literature on the effects of sponsorship on brands reveals that no broadly accepted model has emerged so far. In total, 112 studies have been identified that consider 18 different factors reflecting sponsorship effects on brands (see Table 3-1). Two types of factors, individual- and group-level factors, can be distinguished. Individual factors are perceived differently by every consumer, while group-level factors are the same for an entire group (i.e. a country or team sponsor) and do not vary between individual members of the same group.

One of the most important antecedents of sponsorship success and certainly the most frequent factor considered in sponsorship research is sponsorship fit. Studies assess the consequences of low versus high fit conditions (Becker-Olsen and Simmons 2002, Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006), as well as function-versus image-based similarities (Gwinner and Eaton 1999, Poon and Prendergast 2006). Other individual factors frequently considered in sponsorship research include the interest/involvement of consumers in the sport (d'Astous and Bitz 1995, Roy and Cornwell 2004, Close et al. 2006) and event image. For instance, Grohs et al. (2004) find event image to have positive effects on the image of sponsoring brands.

Group-level factors, which are the same for all individuals within a group (e.g. an event audience in a specific country), include the nationality of the sponsor (Ruth and Simonin 2003), the success of a sports team (Donahay and Rosenberger 2007), as well as marketing spending (Cornwell et al. 2001b, Harcey et al. 2006). Sponsorship studies that consider group-level factors usually compare different brands at the perceptual level (e.g. the role of marketing spending; see Cornwell et al. 2001b). To the best of my knowledge, no study exists that analyses country-specific group-level differences. From a sponsorship management perspective, it is important to know if sponsorship works equally across countries. If differences exist, managers will be interested in finding explanations and suitable management levers. In the next section, a conceptual model is developed that considers individual-level effects of sponsorship on brand image, as well as country-specific group-level factors.

5.3   Hypothesis Development

5.3.1 Individual-Level Model

One of the key objectives of sponsorship is to evoke positive feelings and attitudes towards the sponsor. At the level of individual consumers, this study attempts to replicate previous findings. To satisfy the requirement of a parsimonious model and considering that this paper concentrates on finding country-specific group-level predictors for brand image, I focus on explaining only the most common and accepted individual-level variables (see Table 3-1). More precisely, the effects of event image (e.g. Grohs et al. 2004), F1 product consumption (e.g. Lacey et al. 2007), sponsorship recognition (Smith 2004), and fandom (Gwinner and Swanson 2003) on brand image are assessed. Since this article is devoted to assessing differences across countries in sponsorship effects within a single sponsorship setting characterized by a high sponsorship fit (automotive sponsors in an F1 context), sponsorship fit is not considered a potential influencing variable.

Consumption of F1
Consumption of F1 consists of the amount of time consumers are exposed to the event. Some consumers are very interested in F1 and try to attend races personally or watch the races live on TV. Others are somewhat interested and

only follow F1 by watching the highlights on TV, while others are not interested at all. Madrigal (2001) interprets this difference as passion and effectively argues that passion is an important factor impacting sponsorship effectiveness. Passion, in this sense, means constant involvement and interest. Customers who are more involved with the sponsored event are more likely to spend more time and energy with the event and more likely to actively watch the event and closely follow the results. Learning theory suggests that message learning increases with additional exposure (Grohs et al. 2004). Grohs and Reisinger (2005) find that repeated simultaneous presentations of sponsors and sponsored events result in an increased level of knowledge of the sponsor–event connection. The mere exposure effect states that repeated presentation of a connection (in this case the sponsor–event connection) can positively influence a consumer's attitude towards this connection (Zajonc 1968, Fang et al. 2007). Individuals who show a high level of interest and involvement with F1 races and consume more event-related information through various media channels are more strongly exposed to sponsorship-related information. Thus, higher sponsorship exposure is positively related to brand image. The following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: The consumption of F1 races has a positive effect on brand image.

Event Image
A consumer's repeated exposure to a sponsor stimulus can influence a change in the consumer's awareness of the brand and assessment of the brand's image. However, whether or not a change in brand awareness and image also occur depends on the consumer's existing attitudes, such as the perceived image of the sponsored event. If the event image is perceived as more positive, consumers will experience incongruence (Heider 1958). Such incongruence causes psychological tensions in the consumer's mind. As a consequence, consumers will strive to re-establish congruence (Osgood and Tannenbaum 1955). If the attitude towards the event is more positive than the attitude towards the sponsored brand, the event image can influence the perception of the brand (Dean 2002). Hence, it can be concluded that the event image must be perceived as favourable to result in a positive evaluation of brand image. This is reflected in the following hypothesis.

H2: An event's image has a positive effect on brand image.

Sponsor Awareness (Sponsorship Recognition)
Although prior research finds that recall and recognition values can be biased by sponsor prominence (Pham and Johar 2001, Wakefield et al. 2007) and are subject to causality issues, recall and recognition measures are widely used to demonstrate relatedness in marketing practice. Keller (1993) speaks in this regard of brand awareness and states there are two distinct ways to measure brand awareness: recall and recognition. Recall 'tests the ability of consumers to accurately retrieve information from long-term memory' (Wakefield et al. 2007, p. 62) and brand recognition 'relates to consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue.' (Keller 1993, p. 3). When the consumer sees the brand, sponsorship recognition tests whether the consumer knows that this brand is a sponsor of a particular event. Only if that condition is true can event image be transferred onto brand A. Classical conditioning states that when two stimuli, an unconditioned stimulus (the sports event) and a new conditioned stimulus (the sponsor), constantly appear paired, the conditioned stimulus 'ultimately comes to elicit some of the response characteristics previously produced only by the unconditioned stimulus' (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, p. 22). Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H3: Sponsor awareness (sponsorship recognition) is positively related to brand image.

H4: Brand awareness (brand familiarity) is positively related to brand image.

Team Fandom
Team identification can be defined as the spectators' perceived connectedness to a team and the experience of the team's failings and achievements as their own (Ashforth and Mael 1989). The question is whether a sports team fan will have similarly positive attitudes not only towards the team itself but also toward the name sponsor (e.g. Red Bull and the New York Red Bulls) or, in the case of F1, the automotive company/sponsor. Cornwell et al. (2005) claim that this may be true for teams that are named after their sponsors, which is only established through sponsorship (e.g. Honda Racing F1 Team), in com-

parison to the Dallas Cowboys, for example, which can have many sponsors. As a theoretical explanation, I draw on Abrams and Hogg's (1990) interpretation of social identity theory (Taifel and Turner 1979). Consumers often classify others as well as themselves in groups. If consumers associate themselves with a certain group (in-group), they compare this group with other groups (out-groups) and have a favourable bias towards the group to which they belong. To bolster their self-esteem, group members desire to be both distinct from and positively compared with other groups. In conjunction with the fact that the sports team could not exist without the sponsor, it is likely that fans include the sponsor in their in-group (Madrigal 2001). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H5: Team fandom is positively related to brand image.

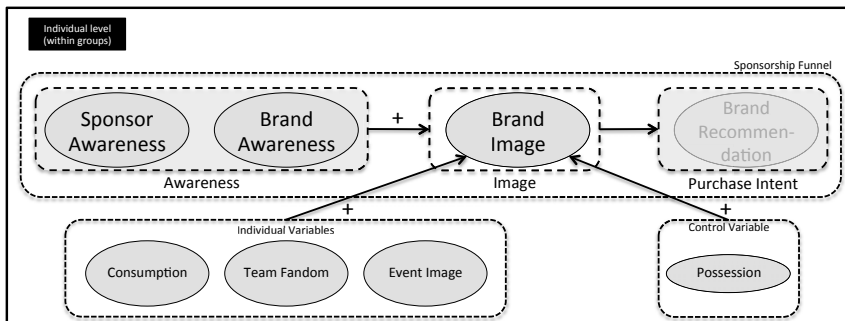Figure 5-1 graphically summarizes the proposed hypotheses.

Fig. 5-1:   Individual-level model
Source: Author's own illustration.

5.3.2 Country-Specific Group-Level Effects

Prior research has predominantly focused on variation in sponsorship outcomes that result from individual factors and has largely ignored variations in group-level factors on a national basis. However, since these variations in sponsorship effects are typically unintentional from the sponsor's perspective, it is highly relevant for sponsors to learn (a) about the existence of international differences in sponsorship effects and (b) how to manage these effects. Ef-

fects that vary from country to country can be grouped into the following three categories: (1) sponsorship-related efforts that are directly influenceable (e.g. existence of a national driver or race), (2) sponsorship-related efforts that are only indirectly manipulable (e.g. degree of national interest in motorsports), and (3) the sponsor's general marketing mix-related efforts (e.g. advertising spending in each country or distribution density). These are acknowledged as control variables in the conceptual model.

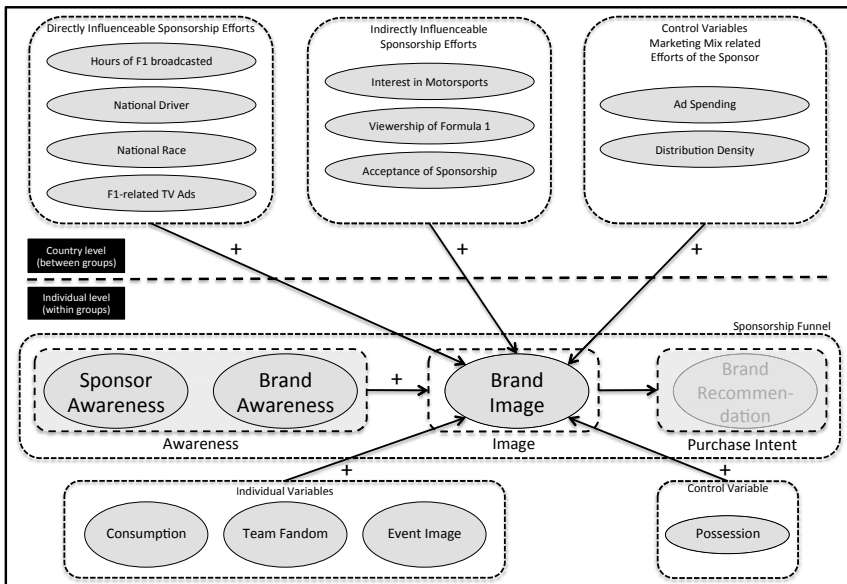Figure 5-2 gives an overview of the proposed multilevel model.

Fig. 5-2:   Multi-level sponsorship model: Intercept effects of country-specific variables on brand image

Source: Author's own illustration.

Event-Related Advertising

The fact that advertising is an important contributor to brand image can be extended to sponsorship. However, since sponsorships generally differ from advertising in terms of their limited ability to transport information, sponsorship itself needs to be activated/leveraged (Cornwell et al. 2001b). Sponsorship-

linked communication (e.g. sponsorship-related advertising or client entertainment at the event) are important in improving the sponsor's brand image. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H6: F1-related TV ads have a positive effect on brand image.

National Events and Event Participants
Using the mere exposure effect (Zajonc 1968, Fang et al. 2007) as a theoretical foundation for a more positive brand image through higher consumption rates, hosting an event and providing a national contestant can be supposed to strengthen that country's interest and involvement in the sport in question, resulting in a more positive brand image for the participating sponsors. The recent past has shown that extended marketing activities typically support domestic F1 Grands Prix (e.g. BMW Group PressClub Sport 2008). National TV stations and newspapers have cover stories about local celebrities attending the Grand Prix. The *Black Book* (2007) clearly shows that TV audience figures in Italy for the Italian Grand Prix surpass those for all other races. Repeated exposure, in the sense of non-intentional broadcasts of a brand–event connection (Zajonc 1968), affects consumers' attitudes towards the F1 series and all participating sponsors. Furthermore, it can also be assumed that the presence of a national driver positively affects the brand image of sponsors. The nationality of teams or athletes is known to have social identity effects. Fans are likely to consider drivers of their own nationality in-group members (Taifel and Turner 1979) and show positive affective reactions towards them, the team, and the sponsor (Madrigal 2001). Hence, not only does the driver belong to the group, but also the team and its sponsors. The following hypotheses are stated.

H7: The existence of a national race contributes positively to the brand image of event sponsors.

H8: A national driver positively influences the brand image of event sponsors.

Broadcast Intensity
Broadcasts of an event or series of events (such as F1 races) may differ from country to country. In one country broadcasting times may be longer than in another. Additionally, the amount of broadcasted events may vary due to dif-

ferent time zones or general national interest levels. Gwinner (1997) argues that the frequency of an event will have an impact on the image transfer process. The author suggests that an ongoing event should have the benefit of more firmly establishing a link between the event and the brand due to repeated exposures (Gwinner 1997, MacInnis et al. 1991). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H9: The amount of broadcasted hours of F1 racing is positively related to sponsors' brand images.

National Interest in a Sport
The opportunity to communicate with a person through sponsorship increases with that person's level of interest in the sponsored activity (Parker 1991). If an individual is not interested in F1 motorsports at all, reaching this person through an F1 sponsorship will be difficult. Scholars often characterize personal interest in a sport or event as involvement (Pham 1992, McDaniel and Kinney 1999). Grohs and Reisinger (2005, p. 43) define event involvement as a 'kind of genuine excitement caused by a strong and solid interest in a specific activity'. It is argued that more highly involved fans of a sponsored activity are better able to recognize the sponsor, judge the congruence of the sponsor–sponsoree relationship, and better associate the image values of the sponsored activity with the sponsor's brand (Quester and Farrelly 1998, Meenaghan 2001b, Cornwell et al. 2005, Sirgy et al. 2007). It remains disputable whether a very exciting game can distract a highly involved person from anything but the game and decrease the mental capacity available for processing information concerning the sponsor (Hansen and Scotwin 1995, McDaniel and Kinney 1999). Since greater interest in a sponsored event leads to stronger demand for viewing the telecast of the sponsored activity, the amount of TV broadcast hours offered in a certain country increases proportionally. This leads to a higher chance of other people learning about the sponsored activity and its sponsors. I conceptualize interest in an event at both the individual and country levels of the analysis, because interest can vary among individuals as well as systematically differ across countries. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H10: A higher national interest in motorsports is positively related to sponsors' brand images.

H11: A higher national viewership of F1 broadcasts is positively related to sponsors' brand images.

Acceptance of Sponsorship

Consumers perceive sponsorship and advertising differently (Stipp and Schiavone 1996). In comparison to advertising, as a generic form of marketing communications, sponsorship is seen as involving a benefit to society. Even though consumers are able to say that, in effect, all advertising is meant to advance business goals, sponsorship has additional, pro-social functions (Stipp and Schiavone 1996). In contrast to advertising, sponsorship messages are not perceived as dominant in trying to influence consumers and make them buy the advertiser's products. Meenaghan (2001b, p. 99) argues that 'consumers appear to receive sponsorship communications in a halo of goodwill' and thus have a lowered defence mechanism while perceiving sponsorships. This halo of goodwill is believed to be generated by factors such as the perception of benefit, the subtlety of the message, and the disguised commercial intent of the communication (McDonald 1991, Meenaghan 1991). Three levels of aggregation of the goodwill factor are distinguished in the literature. One can differentiate the generic level (i.e. sponsorship as an activity) from the category level (sponsorship of sports, arts, etc.) and the individual activity level (i.e. sponsorship of a specific F1 team) (Meenaghan 2001b). In accordance with previous findings (Stipp and Schiavone 1996, Stipp 1998), I propose the hypothesis that acceptance of sponsorship is a crucial predictor of a sponsor's brand image.

H12: The national acceptance of sponsorship is positively related to sponsors' brand images.

5.3.3 Control Variables

Additionally, I control for advertising expenditure and the distribution density of the five analysed brands to separate and differentiate between the sponsorship-related effects and other marketing mix-related effects.

5.4   Methodology

5.4.1 Data

The hypotheses are tested using data collected from a survey conducted by an international research agency for a major multinational automotive company. The sponsored event is the F1 Series of 2007. Data were collected in 14 different countries simultaneously in August of 2007 via telephone interviews. The countries were selected according to their economic relevance to the manufacturer and to capture the most relevant automobile markets in the world (Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Five major automobile brands that sponsor F1 teams are analysed. Due to target market restrictions, only respondents aged between 18 and 60 years old who held a driver's license and lived in a household that owned at least one car were interviewed. A further restriction was that the informant did not work in the automotive, media, or PR industry. The sample size for each country was in the range of 622 to 677, with only Germany (870) and India (939) differing, for a total of 9520 respondents who answered the survey for all brands. Of the respondents, 4710 (49.5%) were male and 4,810 (50.5%) were female. In terms of age, about 33.6% of the respondents were aged between 18 and 30, 38.1% of the respondents were aged 31 to 45, and 28.4% were aged 46 to 60. The final sample size was further randomly reduced to 100 informants per brand in every country. This was done to do not overestimate significances. Hence, the total numbers of cases is 7000 (five brands multiplied by 14 countries, with 100 informants per country).

5.4.2 Measures

The study comprises two levels of analysis: the individual brand level and the country level. At the first level (individual brand level), the dependent variable, brand image, is measured for 'offers cars that are fun to drive', 'sets the quality standards in its class', 'is technically advanced', 'its cars are among the safest in its class', and 'builds cars you can rely on', respectively, on a five-point Likert-type scales with anchors of '1 = totally disagree' and '5 = totally agree'. Following Gerbing and Anderson (1988), a CFA was conducted to assess the scale's reliability and validity. The coefficient alpha exceeded .7 for the survey-

based construct (Nunnally 1978, Hair et al. 2006). In addition, the composite reliability exceeded .6 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988).

Moreover, I tested for measurement invariance across the 14 countries, since an important goal of the study is to investigate differences across countries using the latent construct mean. For such a comparison to be meaningful, the scale used to measure the construct has to exhibit adequate cross-national equivalence. Specifically, a multiple-group CFA was employed to assess cross-national configural, metric, and scalar invariance (for an overview, see Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1998, He et al. 2008). Full metric and scalar invariance is rarely evident in cross-national research, but partial invariance is desired (Steenkamp and Geyskens 2006, Fischer et al. 2010). According to Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998), at least one item besides the marker item must have invariant factor loadings and intercepts in order to be meaningful. The present study finds that all factor loadings are statistically significant in the 14 countries' samples and exhibit similar patterns, indicating that the measure of brand image used exhibits configural invariance. A comparison of common information criteria and fit indices that take into account model parsimony indicates that they are virtually identical or even improve when invariance restrictions are imposed. Specifically, information criteria decrease, that is, they improve (ΔBIC[15] = -174.410; Δsample size-adjusted BIC = -60.028), when invariance restrictions are imposed. Furthermore, the fit indices at least do not deteriorate fundamentally ($RMSEA_{free}$ = .053, $RMSEA_{restricted}$ = .062; $SRMR_{free}$ = .014, $SRMR_{restricted}$ = .074, TLI_{free} = .984, $TLI_{restricted}$ = .979, CFI_{free} = .994, $CFI_{restricted}$ = .981). Thus, metric invariance and partial scalar invariance are established for the data used in this study.

The majority of the items, however, are measured dichotomously (e.g. '0 = no', '1 = yes') or by scales (e.g. '1 = not familiar/interested at all', '2 = somewhat familiar/interested', '3 = very familiar/interested'). Recognition of the sponsor/sports team and team fandom are coded dichotomously. Brand awareness is coded with an ordinal scale ('not at all familiar', 'somewhat familiar', and 'very familiar'). For event image (with image attributes such as 'exciting', 'glamorous', and 'energetic') and consumption (with consumption behaviour

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[15] Delta of Bayesian Information Criterion

such as 'attending races', 'viewing on TV', 'reading articles in newspapers', 'reading websites' etc.), composite indexes were constructed. Single-item measures are usually less reliable than multi-item scales because they are prone to random error. Nunnally (1978, p. 67) observes, 'This unreliability averages out when scores on numerous items are summed to obtain a total score, which then frequently is highly reliable'.

Most of the country-level variables are external data. For the ad spending variable, for example, Nielsen provided the data. In accordance with Low and Mohr (2000), ad spending was not defined as total amount spent but, rather, as the amount per capita in each country and compared to all other F1 sponsoring automobile manufacturers. Distribution density is a computed value based on the number of cars sold by country and by make (data from POLK), scaled by the dealer count per country. The variable is set in relation to the number of sold cars per inhabitant to make sure that more populated countries, such as India, are not biased against smaller countries such as the United Kingdom. Xtreme gave us TV ad figures to calculate the influence of F1-related ads on brand image. Considering that a change in brand image values through sponsoring requires a long-term relationship between the sponsor and the event (Lacey et al. 2007) and that F1-related advertising in the year before the field study was rather scarce, I concentrated on testing whether the F1-related ads of the last four years (2004–2007) are a predictor of brand image. All five tested automobile brands were competing in F1 during the entire period. National interest in motorsports is represented by the mean value of the answer to a question concerning the interest in F1. Viewership of F1 broadcasts is represented by the Top2Box value ('always' + 'often') of a four-point Likert scale question asked in Sport+Markt's yearly international study S21+. Sport+Markt also contributed the data for the Top2Box values for national acceptance of sponsorship by asking representative samples via computer-aided phone interviews in various countries whether they agreed with the statement, 'Companies that engage in sponsorship show that they are socially responsible', on a five-point Likert-scale. The number and distribution of hours of F1 broadcast per country were analysed and the data contributed by a London-based sports research company. The two remaining variables national race and national driver were measured with data from an F1 history database,

where national race is simply dichotomously coded. The variable for national driver is a factor score calculated from the two measures of whether a national driver exists (0='no', 1='yes') and the number of all national drivers. The correlation between these two measures is .665 and the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (Brown 2006) is .500.

Whether an interviewee owns a car belonging to the analysed brand and brand awareness are included as control variables in the analysis.

5.5   Analysis Overview and Results

To investigate the set of determinants' effects on brand image, one has to differentiate between two levels of analysis, that is, the consumer-level (i.e. individual level) and the country level. At the consumer level, the impact of individual-level variables such as event image is analysed. However, it can be assumed that brand image is not only influenced by individual-level variables, since a certain amount of variance in brand image is determined by variables at the country level (n = 14) for each brand (n = 5). Thus, the consumer-level data (n = 7000) are nested in the data at the brand–country level (n = 70), with each consumer belonging to one particular country and having rated one specific brand. If this is the case, a certain amount of homogeneity should be observed in brand image evaluations among the consumers of a specific country who rated the same brand, while there should be heterogeneity between the countries and brands. To exclude variations caused by the different brands analysed, brand dummy variables are included. Consequently, the second goal of the analysis is to assess the direct and moderating impacts of country-level variables on brand image.

To statistically separate and investigate such levels-of-analysis effects, HLM is employed (for an overview of the method, see Snijders and Bosker 1999, Raudenbush and Bryk 2002, Raudenbush et al. 2004). The appropriateness of multilevel modelling depends on the existence of substantial variance at the country level. To measure the degree of homogeneity within sponsorships and the degree of heterogeneity between sponsorships, intraclass correlations (ICC) are calculated (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). With σ_B^2 as the between-

class correlation and σ_W^2 as the within-class correlation, ICC can be computed as

$$ICC = \sigma_B^2 / (\sigma_B^2 + \sigma_W^2)$$.

Following Muthen and Satorra (1995), ICC should be adjusted for the average class size *c* to estimate the need for multilevel analysis. The design effect (DEFF) provides a measure of deviation from the assumption of independent observations across all classes:

$$DEFF = 1 + (c - 1) \times ICC$$

where *c* is the average size of the class and ICC the intraclass correlation. Muthen and Satorra (1995) suggest that whenever DEFF is larger than two, severe violation of the assumption of independent observations across all classes is likely; in such a case, multilevel analysis should be employed. In this case, a design effect of 19.0264 (1 + (75.00 - 1) x 0.24)[16] could be calculated, which is substantially larger than two, the suggested critical value of Muthen and Satorra (1995).

Next, whether the variation between the classes is a result of variation in the intercepts and/or variation in the slopes has to be analysed. To do so, the variance components have to be calculated (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002).

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[16] The average class size is reduced to 75, since 25% of all respondents in this sample did not know the brand.

	Variance Component	Significance
Intercept	0.28207	.015
Slope Event Image	0.00213	.044
Slope Consumption	0.00383	.134
Slope Sponsor Awareness	0.00294	>.500
Slope Brand Awareness	0.02686	.069
Slope Team Fandom	0.09065	.017
Slope Possession	0.01727	.034
Slope Sponsor Awareness*Consumption	0.00479	.238
Slope Possession*Consumption	0.00036	.422
Slope Possession*Team Fandom	0.06852	.364
Level 1 R	0.66420	---

Table 5-1: Final estimation of variance components

Source: Author's own illustration.

As Table 5-1 shows, by far the largest part of the variance between the re-maining 57 groups (.282 over .946) can be traced back to the variation of the intercepts between the 57 groups, while a smaller part (.110 over .946) of the variations can be explained by the slopes of the 57 groups.[17] Therefore, the model aims to explain both intercept and slope variance. Because slope vari-ance is insignificant for most determinants, I focus on explaining the effects of the variance of the intercept and the slopes of event image, team fandom, and possession on brand image, which show a noteworthy amount of variation (9.1% for team fandom, 1.7% for possession, and 0.2% for event image). Ad-ditionally, level differences in brand image are controlled for by including brand dummy variables.

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[17] The number of groups was reduced from 70 to 57 due to missing values at the individual level.

Based on these results, the final two-level random intercept HLM calculation is as follows.

Individual-level model:

(21)
$$BIMG = \beta_0 + \beta_1(EVIMG) + \beta_2(CONSUMP) + \beta_3(RECOG) + \beta_4(AWARE)$$
$$+ \beta_5(TEAMFAN) + \beta_6(POSSES) + \beta_7(RECOG * CONSUMP)$$
$$+ \beta_8(POSSES * CONSUMP) + \beta_9(POSSES * TEAMFAN)$$
$$+ \beta_{10}(BDUMMY1) + \beta_{11}(BDUMMY2) + \beta_{12}(BDUMMY3) + \beta_{13}(BDUMMY4) + r$$

Group-level model:

(22)
$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(RACE) + \gamma_{02}(INTEREST) + \gamma_{03}(VIEWERS)$$
$$+ \gamma_{04}(ACCEPT) + \gamma_{05}(HOURS) + \gamma_{06}(ADS) + \gamma_{07}(DISTRIB)$$
$$+ \gamma_{08}(F1ADS) + \gamma_{09}(DRIVER) + u_0$$

$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}(RACE) + u_1$$

$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50} + \gamma_{51}(DRIVER) + u_5$$

$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60} + \gamma_{61}(ADS) + \gamma_{62}(F1ADS) + u_6$$

where β_i = individual-level coefficients,
BIMG = brand image, EVIMG= event image, CONSUMP = consumption of F1, RECOG = sponsor awareness (sponsorship recognition), AWARE = brand awareness, TEAMFAN = fandom for the F1 team (of Brand X), POSSES = possession of car from Brand X, BDUM-MY1-4 = brand dummy variables 1 to 4, r = individual-level random effect.
γ_{ij} = group-level coefficients,
RACE = race in the respondent's country, INTEREST = national interest in motorsports, VIEWERS = national viewership of F1, ACCEPT = acceptance of sponsorship, HOURS = total hours of F1 broadcast, ADS = Nielsen ad spending of the brand in 2007, DISTRIB = distribution density of Brand X in the country, F1ADS = quantity of F1-related TV ads, DRIV-ER = national driver, and u = group-level random effect.

The results shown in Table 5-2 indicate that at the individual consumer level, brand image is influenced by event image, brand awareness, team fandom, and possession, lending strong support to H2, H4, and H5. Contrary to expectations, consumption of F1 races and recognition of the sponsor brand (sponsor awareness) do not influence brand image. Hence, H1 and H3 are rejected.

At the group level, the results show that the intercept of the regression is significantly higher if there is national interest in motorsports and subsequently the national viewership of F1 broadcasts is stronger. The country-specific general acceptance of marketing communications instrument sponsorship also positively influences sponsors' brand image. These findings support H10 to H12. On the contrary, hosting a national race or having a national driver leads to a significantly lower brand image of the sponsor. These counterintuitive findings have to be interpreted with caution. Although hosting a national race or having a domestic race-driver may influence F1 viewership, interest in F1, or the event image of F1, the longer and indirect negative relation to brand image can only be interpreted as accidental. Still, since these findings are confounding, I checked whether a national driver would have a significant influence on his or her personal team sponsor (e.g. an English driver's influence on his or her personal team sponsor's brand image in England) but find no supporting evidence. Contradicting H6 and H9, F1-related ads and the total amount of hours of F1 broadcasts do not have a significant impact on brand image.

Hence, all directly influenceable national variables of sponsorship tested in this study do not have a positive direct effect on a sponsor's brand image. Nevertheless, a positive effect of a national race on the relationship between event image and a sponsor's brand image is found. Ad spending, as opposed to F1-related ad spending, positively influences the relationship of possession on brand image. Only indirectly influenceable variables such as national interest in motorsports, the F1 viewership, and the acceptance of sponsorship have a positive effect on brand image.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient	t-Ratio
Individual-level		
(dependent variable is Brand Image)		
Event Image	**.050**	**5.274**
Consumption of F1	.022	1.223
Sponsor Awareness	.002	0.052
Brand Awareness	**.312**	**8.821**
Team Fandom	**.305**	**4.129**
Possession	**.266**	**5.410**
Sponsor Awareness * Consumption	-.025	-1.364
Possession * Consumption	**-.041**	**-3.187**
Possession * Team Fandom	-.066	-0.610
Group-level		
(dependent variable is the intercept β_0)		
National Race	**-.549**	**-3.496**
National Interest in Motorsports	**.732**	**4.947**
National Viewership of F1	**.007**	**2.072**
Acceptance of Sponsorships	**.016**	**6.407**
Hours of F1 Broadcasts	-.000	-0.575
Ad Spending of Sponsor	-.142	-0.699
Distribution Density of Sponsor	**-.169**	**-3.281**
F1-Related TV Ads	.002	0.384
National Driver	**-.103**	**-2.649**
(dependent variable is the slope β_1)		
National Race	**.027**	**2.040**
(dependent variable is the slope β_5)		
National Driver	.070	1.399
(dependent variable is the slope β_6)		
Ad Spending of Sponsor	**.450**	**3.408**
F1-Related TV Ads	.007	1.251

Significant effects (p < .05 or lower) are shown in bold.

Table 5-2: Brand image results (estimates of the two-level model)

Source: Author's own illustration.

Based on these results, brand image (*BIMG*) can be calculated as follows:

(23)
$$BIMG = \beta_0 + .050 \times (EVIMG) + .312 \times (AWARE) + .305 \times (TEAMFAN) \\ + .266 \times (POSSES) - .041 \times (POSSES * CONSUMP) + u$$

with

(24)
$$\beta_0 = -1.484 - .549 * (RACE) + .732 * (INTEREST) + .007 * (VIEWERS) \\ + .016 * (ACCEPT) - .169 * (DISTRIB) - .103 * (DRIVER) + u_0$$

and

(25)
$$EVIMG = .051 + .027 * (RACE) + u_1$$

(26)
$$POSSES = .246 + .450 * (ADS) + u_6$$

The final estimation shows that by including the six significant predictors for the intercept, the variance component of the intercept is reduced from 0.282 to 0.186. Interestingly, a huge part of the slope variance in the link possession → brand image (β_6) between the 57 groups (specifically, (0.017 - 0.013)/0.017, which is about 24%) can be explained by the advertising spending of a specific automotive company in the respondent's country.

5.6   Discussion and Managerial Implications

The findings presented here extend current research by controlling for hetero-geneity between countries using HLM and offer unique results from which managerial implications can be derived. At the individual level, it can be shown that event image, brand awareness, and team fandom positively affect spon-sors' brand images. These results confirm previous findings that report effects of fan identification (e.g. Madrigal 2001) and image transfer in sport sponsor-ship contexts (e.g. Grohs et al. 2004). The effect of brand awareness (e.g. Roy and Cornwell 2004) is found to be stable across countries. The influence of sponsor awareness (recognition in this study) on brand awareness, as tested in Section 4, is not analysed, for two reasons: (1) the lower involvement of the respondents compared to the highly identified fans of the first study and (2) the overall high brand awareness of the sponsors investigated.

The results show that the influence of event image and fan identification is found to differ significantly between countries. The significant slope effect of event image on brand image can be partially explained by the presence of a national race, although I was unable to find variables that explain why the influence of fan identification differs across countries. Cultural variations in the perception of events and/or fan identification may be responsible and need to be addressed in further research.

Moreover, it is found that the intercept of the dependent individual-level variable brand image varies between countries, despite the fact that brands are controlled for by the inclusion of four dummy variables. The study's second contribution to the literature is to determine and analyse country-specific group-level variables that explain variations in brand image. It can be found that sponsors' brand images are higher in countries in which there is a general high interest in motorsports, the national viewership of F1 is high (many people have seen the sponsor in the context of the sporting event), and the acceptance of sponsorship is high. Although Harcey et al. (2006) previously show that the acceptance of commercialization influences perception of a sponsor's brand image, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating the same effect internationally, using data from two separate sources.

Contrary to expectations, hosting a national race and having a national driver influence brand image negatively. These counterintuitive findings may have different reasons. The strong negative effect of hosting a national race on the intercept of brand image may be due to the fact that only about 15% of the countries analysed (i.e. two) were not hosting a race, which may have resulted in a strong bias. The significant negative influence a national driver has on sponsors' brand images is likewise confusing. Here one has to keep in mind that five heterogeneous brands were considered simultaneously. This implies it might be possible that the hypothesis is true for one brand (e.g. the respondents favourite brand) but not for the others.

Managerial implications
Managerial implications for the individual-level variables (i.e. event image, fandom, and brand awareness) are widely discussed in the literature (e.g. Gwinner 1997, Grohs et al. 2004, Ferrand et al. 2007). The findings presented here

can guide sponsorship managers in choosing sports and events with positive image associations and with high congruence of their target group with the sponsored event's fans and followers. For country-specific group-level variables in particular, managerial implications regarding national interest in motorsports, the national viewership of F1, and acceptance of sponsorships is provided. Additionally, implications of the effect of a national race and advertising spending on the slopes of country-specific group-level variables are also discussed.

The significant positive impact that national interest has on brand image can and should be used by F1 managers and sponsors alike. Promoting the action, thrill, and fun of the sport may help to increase interest in that sport and positively affect sponsors' brand images. Sponsors should concentrate their advertising and promotional expenditures on countries with high interest in motorsports. On the other hand, F1 management should also choose new countries for F1 races in relation to their inhabitants' respective interests. Extensions of F1 broadcasts should focus on countries with high interest in motorsports.

National viewership of F1, as opposed to hours of F1 broadcasts, has a positive effect. In conclusion, management should try to attract a larger viewing audience instead of simply extending broadcast times. This can be achieved through different approaches, such as the extended use of different start times for F1 races relative to their locations. The midnight race in Singapore and the twilight race in Abu Dhabi are good examples, since the broadcasting times in Central Europe change from 8:00 to 14:00 and from 11:00 to 14:00, respectively. Not only is this a long-established and unrivalled broadcasting time in Europe, but it also adds to the excitement of F1 and subsequently attracts more spectators through word of mouth.

Knowledge of the encouraging influence of the acceptance of sponsorship on brand image leads to the implication that, in resistant countries – that is, countries with low acceptance of sponsorships – marketing should first try to establish a solid foundation for sponsorships: Brand building should concentrate on showing that the sponsor supports the sport with money and knowledge, rather than focusing on saying how the brand gains from the sponsorship connection (in money and knowledge by technical transfer). In countries with a

relatively high acceptance of sponsorships, marketing should continue to establish and build the brand.

Although a national race does not have a direct proven influence on brand image, it does have an indirect influence on brand image via event image. Hence, the positive effect of event image on brand image is improved when a national race takes place. Consequently, F1 management should select countries for new races relative to their sponsors' interests in a specific country. For an automobile sponsor, a country such as the United States is of great strategic importance; emerging countries such as China, India, and Russia should also be and are already being considered (GlobalAutoIndustry.com 2010, Sayer 2011).

Table 5-3 gives an overview of the international study's results and corresponding managerial implications.

L	Variable(s)	Dependent Variable	Dir.	Managerial Implication
L1	Sponsor Awareness	Brand Image	x	Use of marketing communications to load sponsor brand with information
	Brand Awareness		+	
	Event Image		+	Promotion of the unique selling propositions of the event within marketing communications
	Team Fandom		+	Spectators should be made team fans
L2	National Event	Brand Image	-	n/a
	National Event Interest		+	Promotion of the event relative to national interests, expansion into event-affine countries first
	National Event Viewership		+	Alignment of national broadcast times, promotion of the event
	National Event Broadcast Intensity		x	n/a
	National Event Participant		-	n/a
	National Sponsorship Acceptance		+	Emphasis of the supportive function of sponsorship rather than image building, depending on acceptance
	Integrated Sponsorship Ads		x	n/a
(+) significant positive effect, (-) significant negative effect, (x) no significant effect, (L1) individual level, (L2) group (country) level.				

Table 5-3: International study results and managerial implications

Source: Author's own illustration.

5.7   Limitations and Further Research

Since this field study only analyses automotive brands, one of the most im-
portant predictors for brand image transfer in sponsorship, namely, sponsor-
ship fit, could not be observed or tested. High fit conditions are believed to re-
sult in better brand image transfer (Cornwell et al. 2005, Coppetti et al. 2009).
Automobile brands all have a high fit with motorsports and F1 in particular.
From the study data, it was not possible to differentiate between high- and low-
fit conditions. Hence, future research should concentrate on replicating these
effects for other sponsors and differentiate between high- and low-fit sponsors.
To further generalize the results, this study should be replicated with more
countries. Only 14 countries were included in the analysis and only two of the-
se, India and Russia, did not host an F1 Grand Prix in 2007. Moreover, to gain
additional insight, collaboration with sponsors should be improved. Since most
of the data are from third parties, the relationship between various predictors
and brand image has only been barely touched.

Moreover, it would be interesting to see whether these results also hold in
countries where sponsors do not yet have their own organizations, since this
study only considers strategically important countries, nearly all of which al-
ready had sponsors present.

This study also neglects to take into account cultural variables such as the six
Hofstede (2010) dimensions, namely, power distance, individualism versus
collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, pragmatic
versus normative, and indulgence versus restraint. Future research should
control for these variables.

Finally, one must also mention that the data already existed and I did not have
a chance to influence the questionnaire development process. Hence, in future
research especially, the scales should be improved.

The following section summarizes the present study and its implications. It
closes with concluding remarks and provides avenues for future research.

6 Implications and Concluding Remarks

6.1 Implications

The present dissertation addresses the objectives and predictors of sports sponsorship effectiveness in national and international contexts. Implications are derived, courses of action recommended, and future research avenues proposed.

The worldwide importance of sponsorship has grown steadily during the last three decades. Especially in saturated markets, sponsorship has become a way for market-oriented multinational companies to grasp the much-desired attention of clients and consumers. Companies such as the BMW Group consider sponsorship more than just a simple donation of sponsorship money. They want to physically reach people and establish a certain image (Wannieck 2013). Especially if one considers the monetary investment in a typical sponsorship – with a title sponsorship in Formula 1 for example, costing between 20 million and 40 million EUR (*Black Book* 2007) – it becomes clear that it is economically highly relevance for a corporation to investigate the benefit of the engagement. Hence, it becomes more important to understand sponsorships in greater detail, including which marketing activities pay off, what die-hard fans think of the sponsorship, whether country-specific differences need to be considered, and so on.

Section 1 of this dissertation gives a brief introduction into the field of sports sponsorship and derives, based on the prevailing questions and needs of sponsorship practitioners, the following two research questions:

- How does sponsorship leverage affect sport/team fans and what effects does it have on brand-related variables such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and purchase intention?

- Does sponsorship differ in its effectiveness between countries and which variables are responsible for such variations?

Building on these questions, this dissertation has three aims. First, this study provides an overview of research in the field of sponsorship, with a focus on

the measurement of sponsorship effects. Second, it investigates and analyses whether and how various forms of sponsorship leverage affect sponsorship effectiveness for die-hard fans. Third, it explores and confirms country-specific predictors of sponsor brand image.

Section 2 shows that sponsorship is a fast-growing marketing communication instrument that is able to attain various corporate objectives. Among others is sport sponsorship, the most prominent property type, inter alia, in terms of budget invested and one that offers manifold sport types (e.g. ball sports, athletics, motorsports) and dimensions (i.e. intensity, frequency, scope, performance level, and organizational unit) to reach specific objectives. This section more closely analyses consumer-based brand objectives based on fundamental work by Keller (1993). Brand awareness, brand image, and purchase intention qualify for adaptation to the sponsorship context and are introduced in greater detail.

Section 3 provides a literature review on sponsorship effectiveness by analysing journal articles regarding the predictors identified and various theoretical explanations. The analysis reveals that 18 predictors can be identified with differing frequencies. Sponsorship fit is the most prominent predictor, with 54% of all papers (60 out of 112) investigating this measure; the level of sponsorship is the least prominent predictor in this regard, with only four papers analysing its influence. Overall, two groups of factors are identified: individual factors (i.e. factors that vary between respondents, such as specific interests and involvement with a sport) and group-level factors (i.e. factors that are the same for an entire group of people) at the national and sponsor levels. Group-level factors are especially neglected in current sponsorship research. Based on various theories of consumer behaviour, an SOR model of consumer-focused sponsorship-linked marketing communications is proposed and assessed in two field studies in Sections 4 and 5, respectively.

The field study presented in Section 4 concentrates on sponsorship leverage variables and their influence on sponsorship effectiveness at the national level. Based on studies noted in Section 3 and various theories of consumer behaviour, hypotheses are derived and tested in a hierarchical linear model. The individual level data are comprised of roughly 13,300 different sponsor evalua-

tions and are tested against the statements of 37 sponsorship managers of the respective sponsors contacted through a separate business-to-business study. The results show that including a second level in the analysis reveals that sponsor-specific marketing leverage predictors significantly influence the proposed sponsorship funnel at various steps. Hence, this study opens up a new area for sponsorship research activity. On the practical side, various implications are derived that impose, inter alia, recommended courses of action for practitioners (see Table 6-1).

Main Results	Example of Recommended Courses of Action	
Significant positive effect of supporting fan clubs and projects on the sponsorship funnel variables brand attitude and brand recommendation	Training sessions with fan clubs or strategic debates with team management	
Significant positive effect of integrated advertising with team players and management on the sponsorship funnel variables brand attitude and brand recommendation	Use of team players and management in marketing communications	
Significant negative effect of the frequency of fan promotions in the home stadium on the sponsorship funnel variables brand attitude and brand recommendation	Avoidance of marketing activities with die-hard fans in home stadia	

Table 6-1: Examples of recommended courses of action (national study)
Source: Author's own illustration (photos courtesy of Beiersdorf, Bitburger, WAZ).

A closer investigation of these predictors at the national level in an international context is recommended and carried out in Section 5. Based on psychological theory, a single study analyses the field survey data of five different auto-

mobile brands, all sponsoring F1, gathered in 14 different countries. Nine country-level variables are tested, out of which six significant predictors, partly new to sponsorship research, are discovered. Table 6-2 shows the most relevant results and the recommended courses of practical action.

Main Result	Example of Recommended Courses of Action	
Sponsor's brand image varies between countries	Country-specific sponsorships (e.g. via virtual advertising insertion) or competition-specific sponsorship (i.e. different sponsor for the European cup than for the national league)	
Significant positive effect of national sponsorship acceptance on brand image	Emphasis on the supportive function of sponsorship rather than image building, depending on national acceptance of sponsorship (e.g. Paralympics sponsorship)	
Significant positive effect of national event interest on brand image	Promotion of the event, alignment of national broadcast times	

Table 6-2: Examples of recommended courses of action (international study)

Source: Author's own illustration (photos courtesy of ictvictor, Coca-Cola & Paralympics, and Getty Images).

In conclusion, the main results of the present study are as follows:

- Die-hard fans perceive sponsorship leverage differently than previously assumed from investigating student samples and previous experiments. This leads to the conclusion that various fan types have to be ap-

proached individually by sponsors to explore the full potential of a sponsorship engagement.

- National differences with regards to sponsorship effectiveness exist and must be observed. Hence, sponsors should assist and influence a sponsoree's internationalization strategy. Additionally, sponsorship leverage and activation should fit the respective market and its characteristics.

- Individual- as well as group-level moderating variables explain variance components and should be further investigated.

This dissertation was motivated by the search for previously unknown predictors of sponsorship effectiveness. In this search, it concentrated on group-level factors that were found to be underrepresented in a comprehensive literature review. The study tried to replicate individual factors such as interest and involvement, sponsorship fit, and event image to guarantee a comparable point of departure. The results confirm that these individual-level factors are effective in the predicted direction. Hence, the findings confirm previous research on the effectiveness and direction of sponsorship fit (e.g. Crimmins and Horn 1996, Speed and Thompson 2000, Smith 2004, Coppetti et al. 2009, Prendergast et al. 2010), brand awareness (e.g. Rajaretnam 1994, Lardinoit and Quester 2001, Pruitt et al. 2004, Michaelis et al. 2008), brand image (e.g. Ferrand and Pagés 1996, Dean 2002, Chang 2012), event image (e.g. Quester and Thompson 2001, Hansen et al. 2006, Bergkvist 2012), and interest and involvement (e.g. Fisher and Wakefield 1998, Madrigal 2000, Ngan et al. 2011). Current research is extended by following Cornwell's (2008, p. 51) recommendation to focus further on researching the 'integrative effects of sponsorship in combination with leverage' and providing the first insight into 'how each possible element in the sponsorship arsenal communicates, and […] how they communicate in combination'. Thus, this research determines how various means of sponsorship leverage affect the sponsorship funnel and demonstrates their effectiveness at the sponsor level for diverse brands and industries. Nevertheless and contrary to expectations, the duration of sponsorship is not found to be significant in the proposed and expected manner (e.g. McAlister et al. 2012). This may be due to a subsequently hypothesized inverted U-

curve of the variable in question and needs further investigation (see the comments in Section 4.7).

The international study (see Section 5) proves the existence of significant heterogeneity in brand image values between countries and tests several country-level variables (e.g. the influence of a national event or race on a sponsor's brand image) that are partly new to sponsorship research and thus extend current knowledge. At the individual level, it can be shown that the expected positive effects of brand awareness (e.g. Roy and Cornwell 2004), fan identification (e.g. Madrigal 2001), and event image (e.g. Hansen et al. 2006) on brand image are stable across countries. Hence, the findings of this dissertation contribute to the sponsorship literature with regards to theory as well as methodology.

These results make it clear that (a) sponsorship leverage influences sponsorship effectiveness, (b) it does so differently at various steps of a proposed sponsorship funnel, and (c) it does so using manifold elements (i.e. instruments) of marketing communication. This dissertation also (d) shows the existence of heterogeneity in sponsorship variables (a sponsor's brand image) between countries and (e) finds possible predictors to explain these variations.

6.2   Outlook

The results show that sponsorship can be an effective marketing communication instrument in reaching corporate goals. For sponsorship to do so, various antecedents need to be in place, such as, first, determination of the objective to be reached in conjunction with the target group and country of interest. The target group especially requires more research attention, since this study's findings imply that die-hard fans differ significantly in their perception of sponsors and reactions to sponsorship-related marketing activities, compared to normal fans (i.e. sympathizers). In close relation to the target group, is it important to consider in which country the respective goal is to be achieved. The findings suggest that, based on the specific market situation, divergent goals need to be set. Hence, a sponsor with a lower awareness level in one country should choose a different goal and strategy than in another country where the sponsor exhibits a higher awareness level. Even if awareness levels are the

same in two countries, a communication strategy based on promoting the supportive function of the sponsorship engagement can obtain greater sponsorship effectiveness compared to the case in which the image transfer of sportive attributes is the ultimate goal and strategy. With regards to the sponsorship objective (e.g. awareness building), one sport type (e.g. football) might, furthermore, be the right choice for one country (e.g. Germany) but a different type of sport (e.g. table tennis) would be a better choice in another country (e.g. China).

One can easily see that a comprehensive sponsorship strategy needs a predefined, differentiated, and sophisticated network of interacting sub-goals and activities. The interaction of the respective activities needs to be the focus of future research in this field (see also Cornwell 2008).

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Index of Appendices

Appendix 1:   National Sponsorship Study

Factor/Indicator	Source	Scale
Sponsor Awareness Which brands or companies do you recall being a sponsor of Team Y?	Percy and Rossiter (1992)	Open question
Brand Awareness How familiar are you with Brand X? not at all familiar – very familiar never heard of – often heard of	Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006)	5-point semantic differential
Brand Attitude Brand X is very pleasant Brand X is a very good brand Brand X is a very attractive brand I evaluate Brand X very positively in total	Gwinner and Swanson (2003)	5-point Likert-type scale ('1=totally disagree' and '5=totally agree')
Brand Recommendation How likely is it that you will recommend Brand X to a friend or colleague?	Hutton (1997) and del Rio (2001)	10-point Likert-type scale ('1=not likely at all' and '10=very likely')
Image-Based Sponsorship Fit How do you evaluate the connection between Team Y and Brand X? dissimilar – similar not complementary – complementary inconsistent – consistent	Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006)	5-point semantic differential
Team Fandom For which of the listed team do you keep your fingers crossed?		0/1 code

Table A-1: Factors and indicators of individual-level constructs of national sponsorship study

Source: Author's own illustration.

Factor/Indicator Which actions does your sponsorship engagement comprise?	Scale
Integrated Sponsorship Ads	
Brand and product advertisements with players of the football club	0/1 code (if min 1 fulfilled)
Brand and product advertisements with the management of the football club (coach etc.)	
Licensing & Merchandising	
Specially branded products (SparCard, etc.) (licensing)	0/1 code (if min 1 fulfilled)
Specially branded products (jerseys, key-rings, etc.) (merchandising)	
Fan Support	
Support of fan projects (initiated through the football club)	0/1 code (if min 1 fulfilled)
Support of fan clubs	
Frequency of Fan Promotions Promotions with fans in the home stadium	6-point ordinal-scale (never, once a full season, once a half season, once every month, every home game)
Duration of Sponsorship Please tell me for how long you are sponsoring Team Y	8-point ordinal-scale ('1=one season' to '7=seven seasons' & '8=more than that')
Visibility Are you the title sponsor?	0/1 code
League Does your sponsored team play in the 1st or 2nd league?	0/1 code ('0=2nd league' and '1=1st league')
Function-based Sponsorship Fit Products and services of the sponsor fit with football?	Mean of individual-level variable 5-point Likert-type scale ('1=totally disagree' and '5=totally agree')

Table A-2: Factors and indicators of group-level constructs of national sponsorship study

Source: Author's own illustration.

Appendix 2:   International Sponsorship Study

Factor/Indicator	Scale
Sponsor Awareness (Recognition) Do you know if the following teams currently participate in Formula One?	0/1 code
Brand Awareness How familiar are you with Brand X?	3-point ordinal-scale ('1=not familiar at all', '2=somewhat familiar', and '3=very familiar')
Brand Image Brand X offers cars that are fun to drive Brand X sets the quality standards in its class Brand X is technically advanced Brand X its cars are among that safest in its class Brand X builds cars you can rely on	5-point Likert-type scale ('1=totally disagree' and '5=totally agree')
Event Image Formula One is exciting Formula One is glamorous Formula One is cool Formula One is energetic	Composite index 0/1 code
Team Fandom What is your favorite Formula One team?	Open question
Consumption Through which media do you watch the races and check for the results or information of the Formula One? - I actually go to see the Formula One - Live TV broadcast of the Formula One - TV highlights of the Formula One - TV sport news - Articles from the newspapers - Articles from Formula One magazines - Official website of the Formula One racing teams - Motor sports news from the online portals such as Yahoo etc. - Fan club website of the Formula One	Composite index 0/1 code

Table A-3: Factors and indicators of individual-level constructs of int. sponsorship study

Source: Author's own illustration.

Factor/Indicator	Source	Scale
Broadcast Intensity Hours of F1 broadcast per country	2007 FOR-MULA ONE Global Broadcast Report	Ratio scale
National Driver Existence of a national F1 driver (0/1 code) Amount of national F1 drivers (ratio scale)	Historical F1 database	Factor score
National Race Existence of a national F1 race	Historical F1 database	0/1 code
F1 related TV Ads How many F1 related TV ads did Brand X air in the respective country between 2004 and 2007?	Xtreme	Ratio scale
Interest in Motorsport Which of the following sports are you interested in? - Formula One racing - Other motor sports (excluding F1)	Same survey	Mean of composite index of individual-level variables
Viewership of Formula One How frequently do you follow Formula One broadcasts?	Sport+Markt AG	Top2Box value ('always' + 'often') of 4-point Likert-type scale
Acceptance of Sponsorship Do you agree to the following statement? 'Companies that engage in sponsorship show that they are socially responsible'	Sport+Markt AG	Top2Box value ('totally agree' + 'agree') of 5-point Likert-type scale
Ad Spending Amount spent by Brand X per capita in each country, compared to all other F1 sponsoring automobile manufacturers	The Nielsen Company	Ratio scale

Table A-4: Factors and indicators of group-level constructs of international sponsorship study

Source: Author's own illustration.