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The relationship between team identity and sports media consumption

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Abstract –

With the emergence of new media platforms one wonders about the impact new media is having on sports fans' media consumption patterns. Are traditional media platforms still having the same impact on the sports fan relationship, or has there been a shift across to new platforms? Looking through the lens of the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) framework, we analyse the impact of team identification and sports fans' media consumption patterns.

Trying to gain an understanding across various sports and to reach as many fans as possible, the snowballing technique was deployed. Using quantitative data allowed us to establish emerging patterns through categorical data. This study used cross-sectional data, which allowed us to take a snapshot in time of what the current trend in fans' sports media consumption was. 235 sports fans media consumption patterns were analysed using the PCM staging algorithm and a sports media consumption instrument.

The results throughout this study reflect that new media is having an impact on team identity and sports fan media consumption. The findings suggests that fans that display higher levels of team identification on the PCM framework, i.e. attachment and allegiance to teams, are more likely to engage regularly on social media, especially Twitter. As such, marketers, sports teams and associations need to look at how they engage with social media broadly and Twitter in particular. Various constructs impact sports fans' media consumption patterns and, as such, marketers, sports teams and organisations need to ensure that they maintain relevance with their targeted demographic to ensure the continued engagement with sports fans.

Keywords – Sports media consumption, social media usage, psychological continuum model.

Declaration:

I declare this research is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Signature

Date

Scott Robins

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1. Introduction

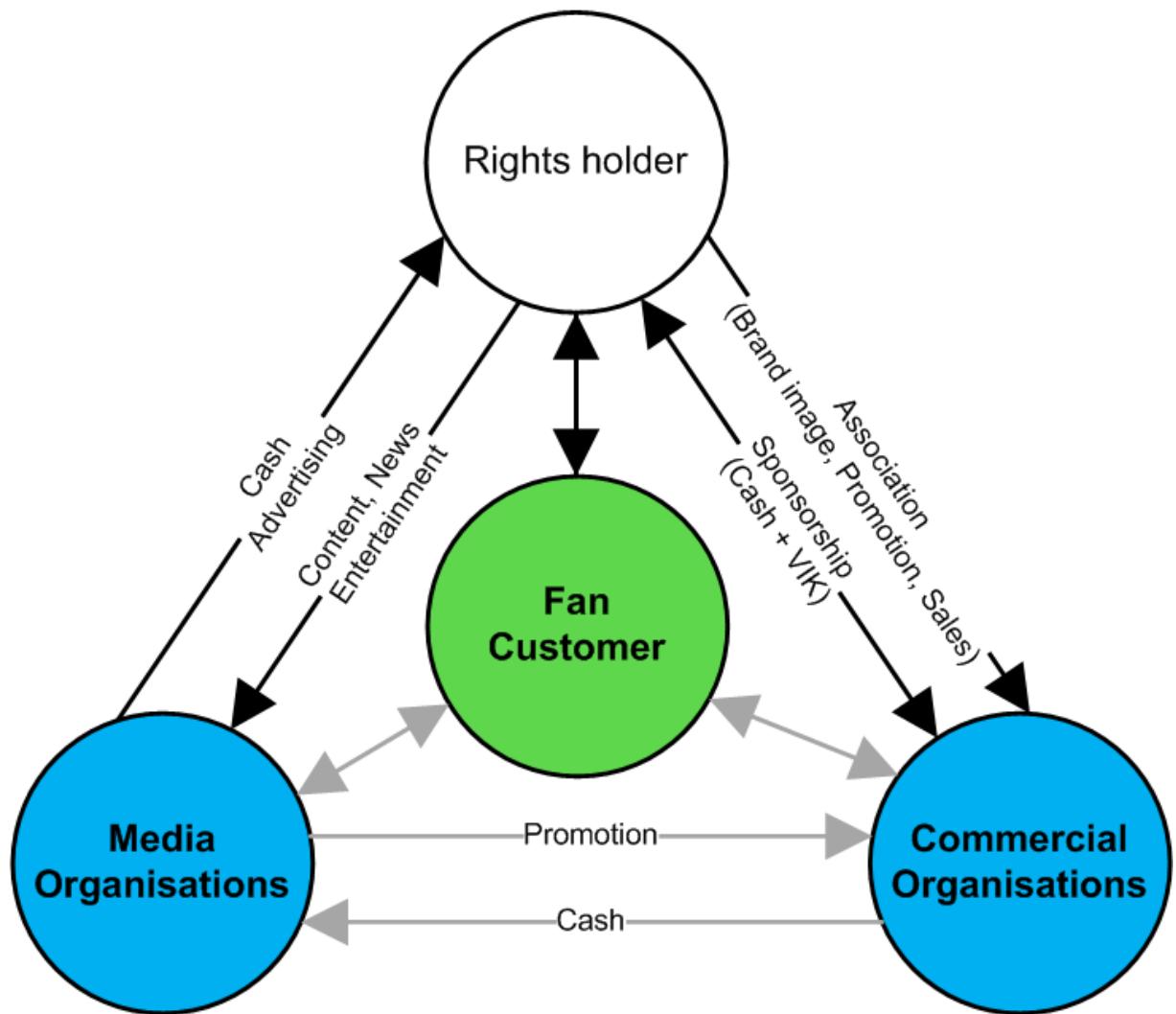
Sports teams and sporting professionals seem to have a mesmerising hold over fan's heart-strings and wallets (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Being able to understand a fan's affiliation and their psychological attachment is an interesting proposition. Unlocking that understanding brings numerous benefits to rights holders, commercial interests and media organisations (E. De La Fuente, personal communication, April, 2012). Sports fan behaviour may include purchasing season memberships, buying club paraphernalia, interaction with media on various platforms, commenting on sports blogs and spruiking about one's team (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003), as well as interacting with fellow fans through social media (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). Literature suggests that fans that exhibit stronger psychological ties to their teams spend larger amounts of time and money on them (Wann & Banscombe, 1993; Capella, 2001; Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008; Fink, Parker, Brett & Higgins, 2009). Fans develop bonds with their team or sportspeople over time or through great feats and, as such start, a psychological connection. This bond could start at any time although most fans are introduced to team associations through family ties and friends (Chiweshe, 2011).

1.1 Media interaction

One of the most popular and engrossing genres across the world is that of sports content and it is 'well positioned to thrive in an increasingly fragmented media marketplace and rapidly evolving multi-screen world' (Master, 2012, p.1). New media is evolving which may have had an impact on the way fans interact and engage with the teams they support. New digital platforms have allowed sports organisations greater interaction with their fan base (Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). Figure 1 below shows the interactions between the rights holder, commercial and media organisations, as well as the fans.

Figure 1 – Interaction of various partners in deciding media content and distribution.

Note: Adapted from De La Fuente, E. (personal communication, April, 2012).
Media distribution. *Sports Thought Dinner.*



The model displayed in figure 1.1 shows that, traditionally, media organisations and commercial organisations have been the only stakeholders engaging with the fan / customer. However, rights holders also need to understand the content they potentially hold and strategise about the best way to engage with fans. This will increase the revenue of the rights they hold. New digital media platforms are one means through which rights holders can increase content which, in turn, will increase their brand awareness, allowing new revenues to flow through in the form of sponsorship and advertising. Engrossed fans seek a thirst for closer interaction and greater content to keep them absorbed (Kassing &

Sanderson, 2010; Wallace, Wilson & Miloch, 2011). The key to a successful platform and increased media consumption is through understanding sports fans and their habits (Zhang & Won, 2010; Blaszka, 2011). From understanding the interactions of the various players and the potential new relationships that will develop through the above model, various opportunities for greater fan engagement will arise.

Sport continues to be a social institution to the masses; yet, sport is under-investigated by empirical research (Melnick & Wann, 2010). ‘The move of the sport industry into mainstream culture and the increased spending ... has led to an increased need for related research’ (Pegoraro, Ayer & O'Reilly, 2010, p.1454). In the USA alone, in 2011 sports events on national broadcast increased by 5% compared to 2010 and in October, 463,664,000 video streams took place on sports websites viewed by 35 million consumers (Masters, 2012). New media and the impact on fan consumption are constantly evolving as new platforms to interact become available (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).

The below figure has been adopted from Nielsen’s 2012 year in sports summary. It highlights the growth in online users who visit sports sites.

Figure 2 – From Master, S. (2012). Year in Sports: Summary. Nielsen, p.11.

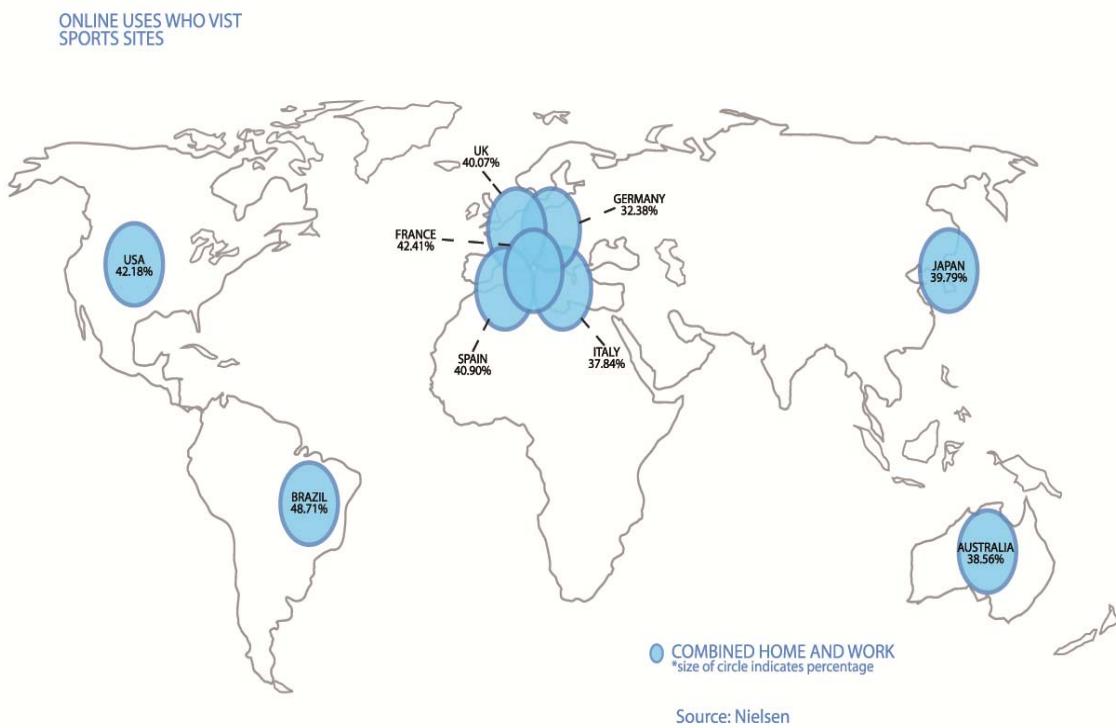


Figure 2 indicates that online usage globally is increasing significantly. Due to the increase in various social media platforms available, fans will continue to surge to new media platforms to display their social identity with a team (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). Due to the phenomenon taking place and being witnessed in the sports media consumption industry, greater empirical research is required to better understand fans' consumption patterns.

1.2 Focus of this study

From studying the sports industry in depth and the relationship teams have with fans one can gain an understanding of what factors ignite the passion of the fans. ‘The “game” remains incredibly strong and sports proved how incredibly resilient it is as Americans

flocked to TV, computers, tablets and mobile screens to follow their favourite players and teams in record numbers' (Master, 2011, p.1). If industries are able to understand and unlock the psychological relationship that fans have while supporting their teams, they might understand how to engage at a higher level with their constituents, employees and their consumers. The implications of this study can apply to a number of different fields such as sociology, psychology, marketing, management and consumer behaviour. However, the main focus of this thesis is in the field of marketing theory and consumer behaviour relevance in a study of fan / team identity and behaviour.

This study will assist media and broadcasting organisations in understanding their target market and which medium they should consider when marketing to specific segments (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). The study results will also assist clubs and national sporting associations in understanding the best way to communicate with their target audience through a stronger understanding of fan behaviour and the impact of their brands. Through identification of a fans' psychological continuum profile we aim to identify patterns of sports media consumption behaviour. Using target market identification, organisations will be able to ensure their messages are delivered to their intended audiences (Heere and James, 2007; Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011). It will also assist broadcasters and new media providers to understand whether increased resources spent on new products are reaching the target market. Organisations need to view fans as consumers and recognise that they will consume the most convenient up-to-date media sources available, also known as maximisation (Pegoraro, Ayer & O'Reilly, 2010). Also, by understanding which variables impact on sports media consumption, marketers will be able to target specific variables to improve on the relationship teams have with fans (Bennett, Sagas & Dees, 2006; Heere and James, 2007; Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011).

Little empirical research to date has looked at a multidimensional sports view to see if fans form similar psychological bonds or patterns with their teams (Wann and Branscombe, 1993; Trail and James, 2001; Bristow and Schneider, 2003; Wann and Pierce, 2003; Funk and James, 2006; Bennett, Sagas & Dees, 2006; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Kassing and Sanderson, 2010; Wallace *et al.*, 2011; Lock, Taylor, Funk and Darcy, 2012). A multidimensional sports view is a view of fans from more than one sport, for instance rugby, cricket and soccer. There is a gap in the evidence base about whether or not the

psychological connection a fan makes with their team differs between cricket, rugby and soccer. Through understanding a fan's profile and how they connect with sports teams, marketers will be able to engage with them to develop their commitment to the team.

Until now the amount of empirical research conducted in the sports field predominately comes from the Western world (Chiweshe, 2011) and is predominately a single-focused sport view of how fans connect or interact with their team (Wann and Branscombe, 1993; Trail and James, 2001; Bristow and Schneider, 2003; Wann and Pierce, 2003; Funk and James, 2006; Bennett *et al.*, 2006; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Kassing and Sanderson, 2010; Wallace *et al.*, 2011; Lock *et al.*, 2012). According to Chiweshe (2011), the way fans engage in the Western world differs from fan engagement in Africa. With over a billion people represented in this market, we need to take this into consideration in order to tap into the market's potential.

1.3 Development of new media

Traditionally, the only media platforms available to fans may have been television, radio, magazines and newspapers. However, the growth of new media solutions and various platforms where fans can engage, namely through the internet, has changed the way sport is watched and consumed. The internet has evolved from Web 1.0, where organisations would broadcast information through a website to their followers, to Web 2.0 (Özsoy, 2011; Blaszka, 2011). Web 2.0 allows greater interaction as it allows users to create their own content, which they are able to share in real time with other users (Özsoy, 2011). Fans now interact with each other online in the global community and can share opinions in real time. They are able to get in-depth information on their team during the game and are more informed about the game and their teams than ever before. Digital and social media is changing the way in which we consume sport and 'has become the epicentre of one of the biggest debates in sport in the last few years' (Anonymous, 2012). This subject is at the front of all interaction in the industry from marketers to academics as they try to understand the influence it has on the industry. However, to date, little empirical research has been conducted on the impact of new media on the sports industry. Bennett, Sargas and Dees (2006) state differences in sports media consumption will depend on the age of the market and the sport being consumed.

Josh Robinson, director of consultancy of Sports Revolution & SMG Sport, ‘compares digital media to glue that sews together a campaign and avoids “dead-end” media’ (Upton, 2012). Without the correct focus on digital media, marketers will keep pushing campaigns and not reach intended target audiences (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). Marketers need to understand the impact digital marketing is having on their industry and whether or not the benefits are flowing through. Academics are able to study this phenomenon in order to advise marketers on the real impact, if any, that new media platforms are having on the marketing industry. While it is understood that ‘social media is dominating how key demographic groups communicate and organise their lives’ (Anonymous, 2012), this study allowed us to understand the impact across all demographic groups. Simon Banoub, director of marketing at Opta, states that ‘... brands need to work out what part (of) social media has to play in the overall marketing mix, and whether it has a role or not’ (SportsBusiness.com, 2012). The digital revolution has resulted in rapid changes for the industry and sports marketers need to understand how to engage fans at all levels to meet their needs.

1.4 Fan interaction and connection to team association

Using new media platforms to reach out and engage with fans is crucial to the long-term survival and the success of the team (Upton, 2012). With new forms of media being introduced to meet fans’ needs, engagement and relevance to the team’s fan base is crucial (Özsoy, 2011). As such, ‘sports marketers can focus on how different attributes and benefits ... help satisfy consumer functional, emotional and symbolic interests and desires’ (Funk & James, 2006, p.208; Wu, Tsai and Hung, 2012) and tailor-make solutions to satisfy these needs. Globalisation has impacted on a team’s fan base and, as such, marketers need to adjust strategies on how to engage target markets and maintain relevance across a broad spectrum of fans with various needs. Charlie Witjeratna, executive director of Tottenham Football Club, acknowledges that Spurs have ‘three million fans in the UK and 16 million fans globally, yet realise no revenue outside the UK’ (SportsBusiness.com, 2012). If marketers can tap into the fans’ psychological connection to a team, they can deploy various tactics to increase the connection a fan has with their team and help move them from a state of low engagement to high engagement. Bhattacharya & Elsbach (2002, p.27) indicate that ‘knowledge of how to convert people from an apathetic state to a stronger positive or negative relationship with the team and

thereby galvanize desired behavioural change would be helpful for social marketers'. In understanding fan characteristics, academics might understand consumer behaviour and increased engagement with the team's fans' support.

While it was previously thought that those fans who only engaged with online media instead of actively going to games were seen as 'off line' fans (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010, p.599), new media is now seen as an extension of the fandom practice. Empirical research has yet to understand the impact new media has on fandom (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010). The way fans have previously engaged with their teams is rapidly changing due to emerging technologies and, as such, academics need to determine the impact these technologies play on fan interaction. The use of new technologies has allowed fans to connect with each other no matter where they are located in the world. This has led to teams having a more global appeal, especially those teams using various platforms to engage with fans. The influence of media has the ability to sway fans in their support of a team (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011). Filo, Funk and Hornby (2009) suggest those fans who engage with new forms of media have a closer affinity with their team. Thus indicating these fans will fall on the upper levels of the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM). The framework aims to explain the psychological connection between a fan and a sport and the differences between each stage. Under the framework there are four stages – awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance (Funk & James, 2001).

1.5 Research objectives

1. To identify patterns in fans' psychological commitment to a team and their various forms of media consumption behaviour.
2. Identify and describe a relationship between demographic variables and the choice of media consumption.
3. To identify whether the sport followed by fans has an impact on sports media consumption.
4. To identify if fans of different sporting codes have a different method of supporting their teams.
5. To understand the effect media plays on consumer motivation, attitudes and behavioural intent towards team fandom.

6. To understand if there is a social media platform of choice for sports organisations.

1.6 Definition of terms

Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) – a framework to explain the differing connections fans have with a team. The framework tries to understand the psychological connection between a fan and a sport and the differences between each stage. Under the framework there are four stages – awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance (Funk & James, 2001). This model is discussed in greater detail in the literature review. See section 2.1.

Web 1.0 – A tool which allowed users to visit websites and peruse content, yet the only form of interaction was through a message board or an email (Özsoy, 2011).

Web 2.0 – A tool which offers all the same functionality of Web 1.0. However, also allows user-generated content that enables individuals to interact and generate their own content in real time (Pegoraro, 2010; Özsoy, 2011).

Social Media – The tools, platforms and applications that enable consumers to connect, communicate and collaborate with others to share information, knowledge and opinions (Williams & Chinn, 2010).

Facebook – An interactive real time messaging platform that allows users to interact through blogging and sending messages, uploading pictures, video games and apps to profiles, as well as embed videos and post-calendar events (Özsoy, 2011).

Twitter – An interactive real time messaging platform that allows users to engage with each other by disseminating a message to a group of followers through text messages (Özsoy, 2011).

Tweet – A message similar to that of a short message service (SMS), which is also limited to 140 characters and can only be viewed on the Twitter platform.

New media – Refers to the ability to access on-demand content, anytime, anywhere on any digital device, as well as interactive response, creative involvement and community

establishment around media content. Content is generally unregulated and, as such, provides real emotional insight (Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).

Traditional media – Refers to traditional mass media tools such as newspapers, television, radio and magazines (Özsoy, 2011).

Parasocial interaction (PSI) – Refers to the relationships that a media user establishes with a media figure (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010).

Fans – Those who actively follow a sport or team (Dietz–Uhler & Lanter, 2008, p.103).

Allegiance – A commitment to a specific team that is persistent, resistant to change and influences cognitive thoughts and behaviour (Funk & James, 2006, p.190). This is one of the levels found in the PCM framework.

2. Literature summary

Fans are described as ‘those who actively follow a sport or team, while sports spectators are those who physically witness a sporting event’ (Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008, p.103). The main difference between the two is that a fan will continue to devote time to finding out more about their team, whereas a spectator will forget about it not long after the event has occurred (Chiweshe, 2011). Fans form attachment to teams and, as such, exhibit different levels of connection to a team. Various theories and frameworks have been developed to try and explain the role that sport plays in people’s lives.

The review of literature to follow has been prepared into the following sections. First, Tajfel & Turner’s (1985) Social Identity Theory will be discussed, including a review of recent literature on various variables impacting one’s social identity, as well as the limitations of the theory. Second, the literature review will discuss Funk and James’ (2001) Psychological Continuum Model and the way a fan progresses through the four stages of the framework, as well as assess and evaluate other frameworks and why they were not considered for this study. Thirdly, the role of sports marketing and the impact it has on forming a fans’ identity is taken into account. Lastly, changing media consumption is discussed and the role new media is having on a fans’ psychological connectedness to a team.

2.1 Social Identity Theory, the Psychological Continuum Model (Framework) and other theories considered.

2.1.1 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) tries to understand fans and explain the needs of fans’ association and identification with teams. Social identity looks at the associations people make to feel as though they belong to a greater part of society (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Groups play an important part in an individual’s psychological development. Fans look to associate with teams because of the ‘positive consequences of association’ (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003, p.7) and reflect positively on the way they view themselves (Lock *et al.*, 2012). This is impacted by family and peers who are influential in developing an early

awareness of a team and in some instances turning it into a family tradition, as can be seen by those families who have supported teams for generations (Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012).

'Sports teams are becoming more and more popular as a source for a community of which people become a part' (Heere & James, 2007, p.324). To explain the connection one has to a team or sports person, various theories have been proposed. One of the most common is that of SIT. 'Social identity theory suggests that individuals have both a personal and social identity' (Fink *et al.*, 2009, p.143). When one associates with a team or sportsperson there are many social benefits to belonging and when the team or individual does well it can be seen as an extension of oneself (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Heere & James, 2007; Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008; Fink *et al.*, 2009; Melnick & Wann, 2010). While social identification theory explains why people associate with teams as those who 'identify with an organisation may take up membership' (Battacharya & Elsbach, 2002, p.26), it does not explain different levels of dedication to a team. When viewed together, the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) and SIT work quite well in tandem (Lock *et al.*, 2012). SIT explains why one looks to associate with a team and the benefits associated with membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), whereas the PCM looks to explain the differing connections fans have with a team (Funk & James, 2001).

Social identity is only assumed when an individual 'attaches emotional significance' (Heere & James, 2007) to the group which they aim to belong to. If no emotional attachment is involved then it does not form part of an individual's social identity as they place no significance on the relationship. Holt (1995, p.15) indicates fans' consumption is 'rife with interpersonal interaction, especially consumption that occurs in groups'. As people's needs change with an ever-changing environment, their socialisation expectations will also change, something that is beyond the scope of this study. Fans may belong to several social groups; however, some hold more significance to the individual than others (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Heere & James, 2007).

Sport will continue to play a role in an individual's process of 'identity construction and maintenance' (Chiweshe, 2011, p.174). While there are various ways people can express themselves as a social identity, sport remains the primary outlet for many (Battacharya & Sen, 2003; Chiweshe, 2011). Battacharya & Sen (2003) go as far to say that association

with a team can be a source of self-definition. Through understanding what meaning sport plays in the lives of individuals, marketers will be able to use various demographical information to connect with their target market on a more personal level (Bennett, Sargas and Dees, 2006).

2.1.1.2 Evolving state of a fans' identity

Fans' identity will change with time and will depend on the context as to how they feel in regards to their association with the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). These needs will differ depending on the persons 'self-concept, knowledge, value of group membership and emotional attachment to the group' (Heere & James, 2007). One's association can change and what was important as part of their social identity can change with age, or it could be as simple as a change in geography. How one defines one's social identity may be altered with a change in geography, depending on the fan's connectedness to the team. If the fan is trying to fit into the group structure in their new location it could see them switch their identity or allegiance (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). An 'individual's identification will be influenced by relationships that individual has with larger social networks surrounding the team, such as the city in which it operates, the ethnic demographic of the city, or the economic status of other members' (Heere & James, 2007, p.324). Heere & James (2007) indicate that as people grow up and move on, their identity evolves and can lead them to place emphasis on different priorities as such, growing apart from their original social identity or adapting to new social identities. However, Funk & James (2006) allude to the fact that SIT will depend on the individuals' psychological connection to the team and the value they place on membership. If no value is given on belonging to the group by the fan, it serves no role in a fan's social identity.

2.1.1.3 Gender influence on social identity

Gender will also have an impact on one's social identity, as men attach different bonds to the social identity in which they associate than women, especially when it comes to sports fandom (Schell & Rodriguez, 2000; Heere & James, 2007; Chiweshe, 2011). This is imparted in men at a young age and, as such, they become fans at a younger age due to bonding with a male family member, such as father, brother, or male relative (Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012). This may be due to society stereotyping

the roles of men and women and the social identities which we undertake (Rodriguez, 2005). ‘It appears that the sport fan socialisation process is more complex and nuanced for females than males, and probably influenced to a greater extent by the complex interactions of several factors including access and opportunity, family structure, gender dynamics and the sociocultural context’ (Melnick & Wann, 2010, p.463). While it might be expected and quite an obvious association for males to be sports fans, understanding the role it plays for female identity is more convoluted. Madrigal (2006) indicates female sport consumption is also impacted by the physical attractiveness of the athlete.

2.1.1.4 Complexity in understanding identity

Heere & James (2007) indicate that one has many different identities, all of which will have an impact on our social identity. The factors that influence our identification are our geographic identity, ethnic identity, sexual identity, social class identity, vocational identity, religious identity or political identity, which all impact on our social identity. If one associates with their geographic identity, then a fan will have an affinity with their local team, for instance living in East London and supporting Tottenham. When one associates with an ethnic identity they associate with their national team, for instance supporting the Springboks, Bafana Bafana or the Proteas. Some teams can allow members to express their sexual identity and have affiliations with teams although it is not widely accepted, for instance the English women’s football team.

Social class identity impacts a fan’s association through identification with the team and whether it is seen as upper or lower class, for instance Chelsea who are seen as big spenders compared to their neighbours Fulham and Queens Park Rangers or Millwall, who are viewed as the representative of London’s lowest classes. Vocational identity also affects our association; if fans belong to a vocation then they are likely to have an affinity with their vocational team for instance the University of Pretoria’s Tukkies rugby team. Some people also obtain their identity from politics or religion, which can be viewed through teams like FC Barcelona, Glasgow Rangers and Glasgow Celtic. ‘Attitudes towards an organisation are differentially related to a set of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours’ (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002, p.30). Chiweshe (2011) indicates that your identity will mainly be influenced by the continent on which you grew up, as supporters’ social identity differs depending on the context.

2.1.1.4 Reason for social identity

Social identity serves different fans in different ways and it will depend on how an organisation is perceived as to the benefits associated with being part of the group (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). The more attractive an association is seen with that particular organisation, the closer an individual's affinity will be with it (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). As an organisation becomes more attractive to an individual, the social identity the "in-group" provides to the individual becomes desirable (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The more the individual desires to be a part of the social group, the more dynamic consumption will be (Holt, 1995). However, people strive for optimal distinctiveness and try to maximise their needs (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010) by being similar to others when it suits and being an individual when it suits them (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003).

2.1.1.5 Impacts of new media on social identity

New media will also affect an individual's social identity as it allows for new ways of interacting between groups that were previously not available (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010; Özsoy, 2011). Social identity is about communication and developing relationships, and through new media people are constantly connected and being updated in real time. Using new media can help fulfil 'social-psychological needs' (Filo, Funk & Hornby, 2009, p.35) that were previously unmet. 'The wide variety of celebrity-worshipping activities found in society can be interpreted as practices in which fans seek to establish relationships with those at the core of a valued social world' (Holt, 1995, p.8), thus impacting or influencing our social identity.

New media allows fans to further develop relationships through sharing similar experiences, knowledge and memories of their favourite teams and events (Hur, Ko & Valacich, 2007). Media consumption allows individuals to satisfy their desires, allowing them to gain greater insight into their favourite teams providing them with more knowledge to socialise with their inner groups (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010). In the future 'sophisticated technological options' ... will allow for groups to interact instantaneously, no matter the geographical dispersion of fans (Smith & Westerbeek, 2010, p.349). Virtual interaction will also play an impact on a fan's social identity in being able to obtain an experience that

satisfies their needs that previous social interaction could not achieve. New media has also allowed fans that were also previously unable to interact with the inner group to become actively involved.

2.1.1.6 Limitations of Social Identity Theory (SIT)

While Social Identity Theory (SIT) provides an understanding of why individuals seek out associations with various social groups, it fails to explain why some fans have a different level of psychological connectedness to a team. However, Dietz-Uhler & Lanter (2008) iterate that some fans have a greater degree of connection to the team due to their degree of social identification with the team. They indicate that there are various levels of social identification; however, one is either in the inner sanctum or in the outer group. Social identity theory does not try to examine the differences some fans exhibit, rather it explains why they want to be identified and that is for being socially accepted among a group where they can freely express themselves and feel safe knowing that they have the support of others (Tajfel & Turner, 1985).

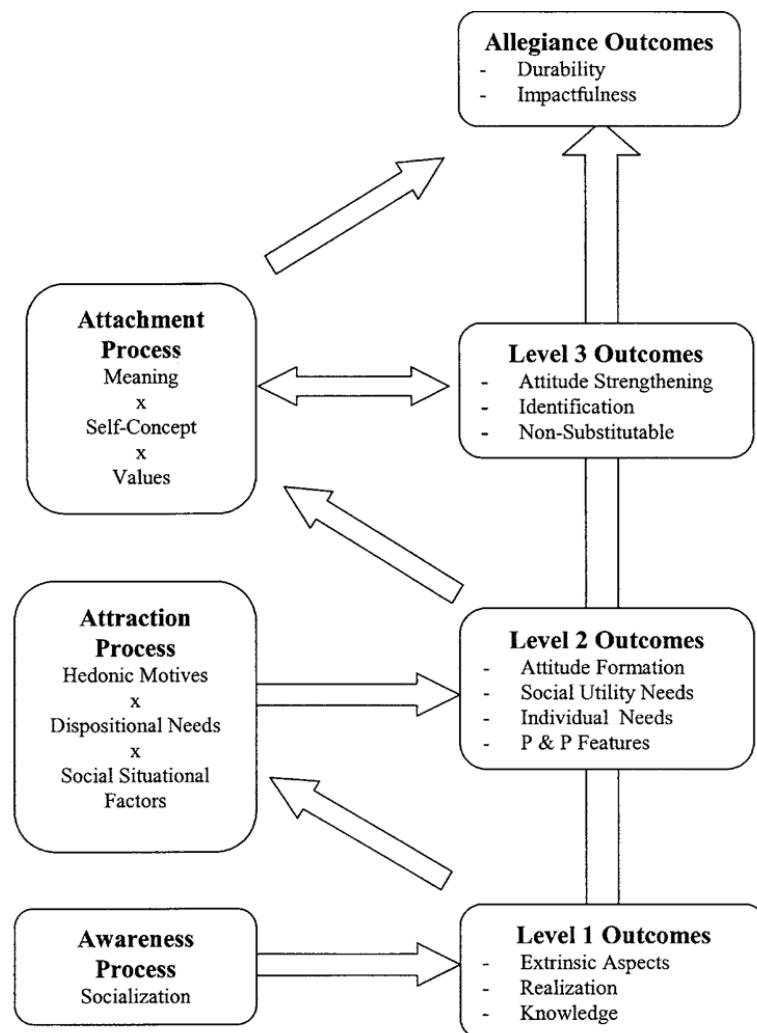
2.1.2 Psychological Continuum Model (PCM)

Fans form strong connections to the team they support and the theory which best tries to make sense of these forms of attachments is that of the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM). The PCM looks to explain the differing connections fans have with a team. The framework tries to understand the psychological connection between a fan and a sport, and the differences between each stage. Under the PCM framework there are four stages – awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance (Funk & James, 2001). ‘This framework has been assessed against five other theoretical frameworks of leisure participation and found to be the best performing framework in terms of relevant criteria’ (Beaton & Funk, 2008). It is expected that those fans who demonstrate high levels of attachment or allegiance are high consumers of media. As it has previously been stated in other studies, those most dedicated are the ones who are prepared to invest greater amounts of time and money (Wann & Branscombe, 1993) supporting their team (Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008; Fink *et al.*, 2009). Fans’ consumption patterns at the higher end of the scale will also differ as their expectations will differ (Holt, 1995).

The original framework of PCM developed by Funk and James (2001) only took into account four stages – awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance. However, Funk and James (2006, p.191) realised the shortcoming of their original model and proposed a revised framework that had ‘three processes labelled Awareness, Attraction and Attachment which operate between four outcomes: Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Allegiance’. The reasoning behind the proposed changes was due to the fact the original model did not make a connection on how one moves between each stage.

Figure 3 –The revised Psychological Continuum Model

Note: Adapted from Funk, D.C. & James, J.D. (2006). Consumer Loyalty: the Meaning of Attachment in the Development of Sport Team. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(2), p.193.



2.1.2.1 The awareness process and level one outcomes

'This process mainly occurs through socialisation' (Funk & James, 2006, p.191). Through interaction with others and the media, one becomes aware of the team / game and the events taking place. While they are aware, they have not formed a bond and fans at this stage would go to games just to socialise. Beaton & Funk (2008) suggest the fan is coerced into attending but does not understand too much about the game, the history or traditions of the team or star players. After experiencing the level one outcomes, the fan becomes a little more knowledgeable about the team and the game and the realisation of the sport. They understand the extrinsic aspects of socialisation and some of the euphoria of fandom. Awareness at this stage is introduced through formal and informal channels, such as parents, friends, school and media (Funk, 2002). However, at this early stage the fan can still distance themselves from the team.

2.1.2.2 The attraction process and level two outcomes

Once level one outcomes are reached, the fan starts displaying hedonistic motives, dispositional needs and certain social situational factors (Funk & James, 2006). When a fan reaches this stage they are more involved with the team and have a 'desire to meet a need or seek a benefit from participation' (Beaton & Funk, 2008). The fan understands the social benefits of belonging to the group and experiences a positive association with mixing with like-minded individuals. When a fan reaches level two outcomes they start forming their own beliefs on the team. Level two outcomes allow them to express being part of the inner group while still maintaining their own individualism (Funk & James, 2006). By connecting with a team or sports individual, the fan is able to express themselves to meet previously unfulfilled needs. By belonging, the fan only recognises the positive effects by engaging in consumption.

2.1.2.3 The attachment process and level three outcomes

As the fan moves through the process and levels, they develop a greater psychological connection. When a fan reaches this process one notices a change in their attitude and their support. ‘The attachment process occurs when attraction outcomes become collectively integrated with an individual’s core values and self-concept to form the basis of emotional, functional and symbolic meaning of a specific activity’ (Beaton and Funk, 2008, p.63). Instead of being coerced they are the ones doing the coercing of others and have a closer affinity with the team. The attitude changes from ‘I like the Pirates’, to ‘I am a Pirates’ fan’ (Funk & James, 2006). Fans attend or feel connected due to the internal process they associate with the activity. They are more in tune of what is expected from them as a fan of a specific sport. They are entrenched with the sports rituals and culture, as can be seen with a throw back in baseball, which allows fans a ‘public forum to demonstrate one’s attachment with and distinction from other fans at various levels’ (Holt, 1995, p.12).

2.1.2.4 Allegiance outcome

Funk & James (2006, p.192) explain that allegiance is ‘a multi-dimensional construct including behavioural and attitudinal components’. This outcome is reached when the fan possesses a higher psychological commitment to the team. When a fan reaches this outcome they are more likely to engage in basking in reflected glory (BIRGing); that is when the team wins they feel they contributed to the win. Holt (1995) indicates consumption at this level is impacted as the fan feels their interaction with the team has the ability to influence on field outcomes. Once this outcome is reached, fans possess stronger relations to the team ‘no matter how tenuous or even fictional’ (Holt, 1995, p.7) and are not likely to care if the team is winning or losing as they feel they are a “die-hard fan”. Fans in the allegiance stage always find time to follow their sport regardless of any other commitments. Fans in this state can cite sport, club or player’s history and achievements as if an extension of their own record (Holt, 1995).

2.1.3 Other theories considered

One may question why the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) was chosen for this study over other potential models of evaluation. Models considered include those put forward by: Rosenstock, Strecher & Becker, 1988; Ajzen, 1991; Kendzierski, 1994; Wann, 1995; Prochaska & Velicer, 1997; Trail & James, 2001. Over the last two decades the PCM model has stood up when thoroughly tested against other models and continually seems the model of choice in explaining sports fans association (Beaton & Funk, 2008). While it cannot explain the relationships between fans and media consumption, it can provide an insight into what the fans' consumption pattern might be like. When assessing other models none of them were able to establish a relationship. Since the PCM, other models have been developed; however, they seem to be the same rhetoric hashed out with a different acronym (Stewart, Smith & Nicholson, 2003; Kim & Trail, 2011). The list considered is not an exhaustive list by any means; however, they were given due consideration for this study. Other models considered for this research are discussed briefly below.

2.1.3.1 Health Belief Model (HBM)

This was a model developed in the 1950s by Rosenstock (Rosenstock, *et al.*, 1988). The model was used from a preventative medicine perspective that looked at participation on the recommendation from doctors. If the person participated in a leisure activity then it could help with various medical conditions or ailments the person was suffering with or help in the prevention of these diseases. 'Individuals would adopt or cease a given behaviour dictated on the threat of a disease or perceived outcome of the behavior of the disease' (Beaton & Funk, 2008, p.58). While this theory may explain a person's involvement or non-involvement in a particular activity, for the purposes of this study it would not be able to explain why fans show evidence of following teams like religion.

2.1.3.2 Trans Theoretical Model (TTM)

The Trans Theoretical Model or TTM is another preventative medicine approach. The model studies patterns of exercise behaviour (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). TTM's main

focus is on 'extinguishing negative behaviours' (Beaton & Funk, 2008, p.59). The theory's aim is to change or understand people's behaviour over a period of time. While the theory might help in explaining the extinguishing of negative behaviours, in the context of media consumption it holds little practical significance. It does not help explain consumption or non-consumption of media as it cannot be viewed in the light of improving one's health. 'The framework's focus is on the extinction of sedentary behaviour rather than adoption of a specific behavior' (Beaton & Funk, 2008, p.59) such as consumption. Therefore, this model holds little relevance for this study.

2.1.3.3 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour states that any given behaviour can be explained by an individual's belief system. 'Intentions to perform behaviours of different kinds can be predicted with high accuracy from attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control; and these intentions, together with perceptions of behavioural control, account for considerable variance in actual behaviour' (Ajzen, 1991, p,179). These beliefs are categorised into three areas of behavioural, normative and control beliefs that interact with the individual's context given a specific environment (Beaton & Funk, 2008). Given the context and environment, it goes some way to explaining an individual's expected or intended behaviour. This theory takes in the individual's beliefs and compares them to the targeted behaviour and then the individual subconsciously evaluates if they will assimilate with the given behaviour. While this theory could be used for this study its complexity makes it difficult to evaluate. It also fails Beaton & Funk's (2008) assessment of a theoretical framework, in that it is incongruent with conventional wisdom, as well as being unable to provide a holistic account of the phenomenon.

2.1.3.4 Schema Theory

Schema Theory looks at whether the person is interested in participating. Then they must decide on whether to participate or not. Finally they will choose to continue in participation, switch or cease in the activity (Beaton & Funk, 2008). The theory mainly focuses on participation in exercise (Kendzierski, 1994) and could have been potentially used for this study to explain sports fans media consumption patterns. However, there are major

difficulties in testing this theory and when Kendzierski originally designed the theory there was 'no expectation it would be widely applied in practice' (Beaton & Funk, 2008, p.61). As such, Schema Theory was not given consideration for this study.

2.1.3.5 Sport Fan Motivational Scale (SFMS)

Wann's Sports Fan Motivational Scale (SFMS) was originally considered for understanding the motives of sports fans (Wann, 1995). The scale had various factors that tried to understand the motivation of sports fans. However, 'no indication was given on how the scale was generated or if a panel of experts were used' (Trail & James, 2001, p.110). The model was inconsistent in the terms it used and, as such, questions the validity of the results. Further testing of the model would be needed to ensure its validity and this is something which is beyond the scope of this study.

2.1.3.6 Motivation of the Sport Consumer (MSC)

Milne and McDonald (Trail & James, 2001) developed a model that suggested sports consumers were motivated by 12 constructs. The problem with the model is that part of it looks at participation (competition, achievement and skill mastery) that would not be applicable to a fan who did not partake in sport. The validity of the scale was also focused on one group of spectators and had not been tested across a spectrum of fans (Trail & James, 2001). As this study only focuses on an individual's sports team's identity and their media consumption patterns the MSC was viewed as a less than practical fit.

2.1.3.7 Motivation Scale for Sports Consumption

The scale developed by Trail & James (2001) provides a tool that looks to understand the 'psychological motivations that influence sport consumption' (p.123). While this model seemed a good fit for this study, due to the minimal use of this study by other researchers its impact in the academic world can be considered somewhat lacking. Furthermore, the study was limited in scope, being restricted only to certain fans.

2.2 Sports marketing and identity

Teams and professional athletes play various roles in people's lives. Understanding how they contribute to an individual's identity is the key to increasing allegiance (Heere & James, 2007). Lock *et al.*, (2012, p.289) state 'the zenith of the PCM model is allegiance, whereby consumers (fans) have reached a stage of attitude persistence and are highly involved'. This group of fans is engaged in support as a form of 'serious leisure, which they devote significant time, thought, money and emotion toward' (Lock *et al.*, 2012). If marketers are able to understand where fans fall on the PCM scale, they are then able to align specific target strategies to meet their needs. However, Stewart, Smith & Nicholson (2003) argue too much time is spent on the psychological and social aspects of sports fan behaviour and not enough time on the environment and context. Consumption happens in a variety of ways and one needs to understand the environment and context of the consumer (fan) (Holt, 1995). Sports fans are complex individuals that have a plethora of influences impacting their decisions. As such, while fans can be categorised into various segments for a generalisation to be made (Stewart *et al.*, 2003), fans will express themselves in their own way and want to feel as though they are unique and receiving their own customised experience.

Through targeting specific sections on the PCM model and through segmentation of the fan base, marketers should be able to adapt better target strategies to help fans identify with their team or sportsperson they associate with (Bennett *et al.*, 2006). Heere and James (2007) imply that team identity is based on multiple complex constructs and the psychological bond that holds a spell over the fans. If marketers are able to develop their fan base along the PCM, *ceteris parabis* (all things being held equal) they should see greater allegiance and higher spending towards the team (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Developing fan bases not only assist in attracting larger crowds (Heere & James, 2007), but also increases the 'monetisation through gaining holds on the culture of consumption' (Wenner, 2010, p.1452). Monetisation leads to teams' long-term survival and being able to implement different strategies to engage fans. Through understanding the consumption needs of the fans, marketers can try to ensure their experience meets their expectations (Holt, 1995).

Marketers need to understand the way in which fans interact with teams and facilitate the avenues that provide greater access to their team or sports heroes. This is exceptionally important for a new team entering the market (Lock *et al.*, 2012). Through new media developments, fans are enabled to engage with players at a more intimate level than ever before (Hutchins, 2011; Özsoy, 2011). As new media accelerates the interaction fans have with professional athletes and their teams, one wonders if this interaction is impacted by demographics or by sport. Does the PCM profile of a fan that follows a professional athlete or team differ through sex, age, location, different sports or any other variables? Bennett, *et al.*, (2006) study indicates that age and sport preference play an impact on consumption and that difference exists among variables. Pritchard, Stinson and Patton (2010) allude to teams needing to do more than just their role on the court or field to engage with fans in the community. Heere & James (2007) indicate that constructs can play a role on the behaviour of a sports fan and the impact it has on their identity. This is not only impacted by the ‘team or the coaches but also the city or state in which they operate, the university to which they are linked, or other groups (for instance ethnical, racial, gender, political, religious’ (Heere & James, 2007, p.321). If marketers are able to understand the difference these constructs have on fans, if any, they would be able to develop a fan’s allegiance to a team.

Literature suggests there is a difference in team support and psychological allegiance between the sexes (Heere & James, 2007; Melnick & Wann, 2010). This is apparently embedded in humans from a young age due to the nuances sport plays in the socialisation process. If there are differences between males’ and females’ support, one would expect it to differ not only between the sexes but a number of other demographics as well, depending on the influence sport plays in the individual’s life (Bennett *et al.*, 2006). Stewart, Smith & Nicholson (2003) imply authentic fans grow up in the sports fan culture and environment, so there should not be a difference between the sexes as long as the culture and environment is the same, although there are a myriad of variables that will impact the relationship for each individual. Melnick and Wann (2010, p.464) indicate the difference between the sexes is as much as ‘20% higher for males in their identification with the sports fan role’. As such, we would expect to see males rate higher on the PCM, as they seem to be more passionate about their sports teams (Heere & James, 2007).

Understanding the differences between demographics, marketers would then need to adapt and tailor their strategies to suit the targeted audience. Melnick and Wann (2010) also imply there is a difference in fans' support to a team based on location. Their study looked at differences in location based on international borders and indicated some cultures have a stronger allegiance to teams even among the same sex. Marketers need to take cognisance of the differences and who they are marketing to, thus ensuring they reach key markets as sport consumption is multifaceted (Stewart *et al.*, 2003).

2.2.1 New media platforms and the marketing experience

New media platforms are enabling marketers to reach fans in ways never before experienced and, as such, future developments will continue to push the boundaries of fan expectation moving forward (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Özsoy, 2011). These platforms will intensify and proliferate 'media sports content and information available in the public sphere, forcing new ways to think about interaction' (Hutchins, 2011, p.239). With such developments happening in the sports consumption segment, one would expect a closer affinity than ever before. Marketers need, more than ever, to understand how to tap into these unique interactions and use them in a way to meet the expectation of their fan bases. With real time interaction fans no longer have to wait to consume the information they seek, on top of that they are also able to communicate with others and express their own opinions (Özsoy, 2011). With sports information flows changing rapidly, fans consumption is also developing as should be their psychological commitment to a team. However, sports fans are emotional and irrational beings.

Through the evolution of media platforms and changing engagement with fans, marketers need to understand if specific media still has relevance to the audience they are trying to engage with. Fan segments will relate to various forms of media in different ways (Hutchins, 2011). Marketers seek to maximise their commitment from fans and, as such, need to ensure their relevance to the demographic they are targeting (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). The relationship developed between fans and their teams is reliant on media interaction. Understanding the demographics which impact this is critical to the ongoing survival of teams (Lock *et al.*, 2012).

One also needs to understand the experience the fans are looking to obtain in order to remain relevant to the target market (Holt, 1995; Melnick & Wann, 2010). From understanding the unique bonds teams have with their fan base, marketers can work on 'strengthening the points of attachment' (Heere & James, 2007, p.332). Also, teams and sports professionals need to work on building the psychological connection fans have to ensure they receive the continued support of their fans into the future. If fans can no longer identify with the team through the various strategies deployed, then a team's long-term survival could be in jeopardy (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002). Sports marketers need to focus on these various contexts and what the relevance to their fan base is, to enable them too effectively 'package and deliver the sports product' (Funk & James, 2006, p.189).

2.3 Changing media consumption

Media plays an important role in developing a fan's psychological connection to a team. New media may be regarded as 'aiding in the articulation and perhaps even the maintenance of social identities' (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010, p.599). As technology continues to evolve it allows fans to express themselves in different ways and also allows them to interact on a global platform. As media is undergoing rapid changes across various platforms, such as the internet, blogs, social media, online newspapers and digital radio, the consumption of fans is evolving (Özsoy, 2011). The media evolution allows for active engagement of fans and, as such, they will use a plethora of platforms to maximise their particular wants (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). How fans interact with media and their choice to engage with players and teams will change depending on the level of psychological interaction and the maximisation strategy they choose. Maximisation strategy looks at consuming the most available and up-to-date media sources available across a variety of platforms (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). Understanding how fans engage with their teams will enable media to understand which platform they should engage their audience (Funk & James, 2006; Bennett *et al.*, 2006).

Developing a connection with a player or team, the fans start investing more and more time devoted to their association with and understanding of, that particular player or team (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). With the explosion of media coverage through various streams, interaction is starting to be able to cut out third-party interaction and to be able to get real time game updates (Hutchins, 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). Fans seem to live and

breathe for their favourite teams. They cannot get enough interaction and are left waiting for a titbit of information (Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008). From new media platforms fans are able to obtain a different insight into the game not previously experienced and are able to interact at another level (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).

'The growth in digital media communication systems is transforming sports production and consumption from a broadcast and print-centred activity to one where online platforms augment communication, viewing and interaction' (Hutchins, 2010, p.251). As fans look to maximise their interaction (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010) depending on their level of commitment, media consumption will increase. Fans believe they are able to influence their team or heroes in a match through their consumption and have a degree of input through the relationship they have with the team (Holt, 1995). The flux of technology progress and the burgeoning media sophistication has allowed fans to socially interact and exert influence in ways never seen before (Smith & Westerbeek, 2010). Fans are looking for new, unique experiences and, as such, are looking for new ways to engage with their teams (Wann & Pierce, 2003; Bennett, *et al.*, 2006). The demands on media will depend on the convenience offered and as the environment evolves so will the expectation on media platforms offered to maximise fans' expectations (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Smith & Westerbeek, 2010).

As technology continues to progress the interaction expectation of highly committed fans will evolve with more variety, more flexibility and richer information (Wann & Pierce, 2003; Smith & Westerbeek, 2010). Highly committed fans will continually look for ways to maximise their satisfactions (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010) through increased knowledge about their teams. Media consumption allows greater insight which will satisfy the desire of hardcore (more highly devoted) fans (Hur *et al.*, 2007; Smith & Westerbeek, 2010). Over time, as consumer interaction and demand changes, the consumption of media will continue to advance.

The speed with which media continues to develop offers fans a different level of interaction and greater insights into their team never before experienced (Smith & Westerbeek, 2010; Özsoy, 2011). Those fans that exhibit highly committed tendencies become so entwined with their team that it dominates every part of their day (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Highly committed fans will seek the most convenient way in which to be able to engage

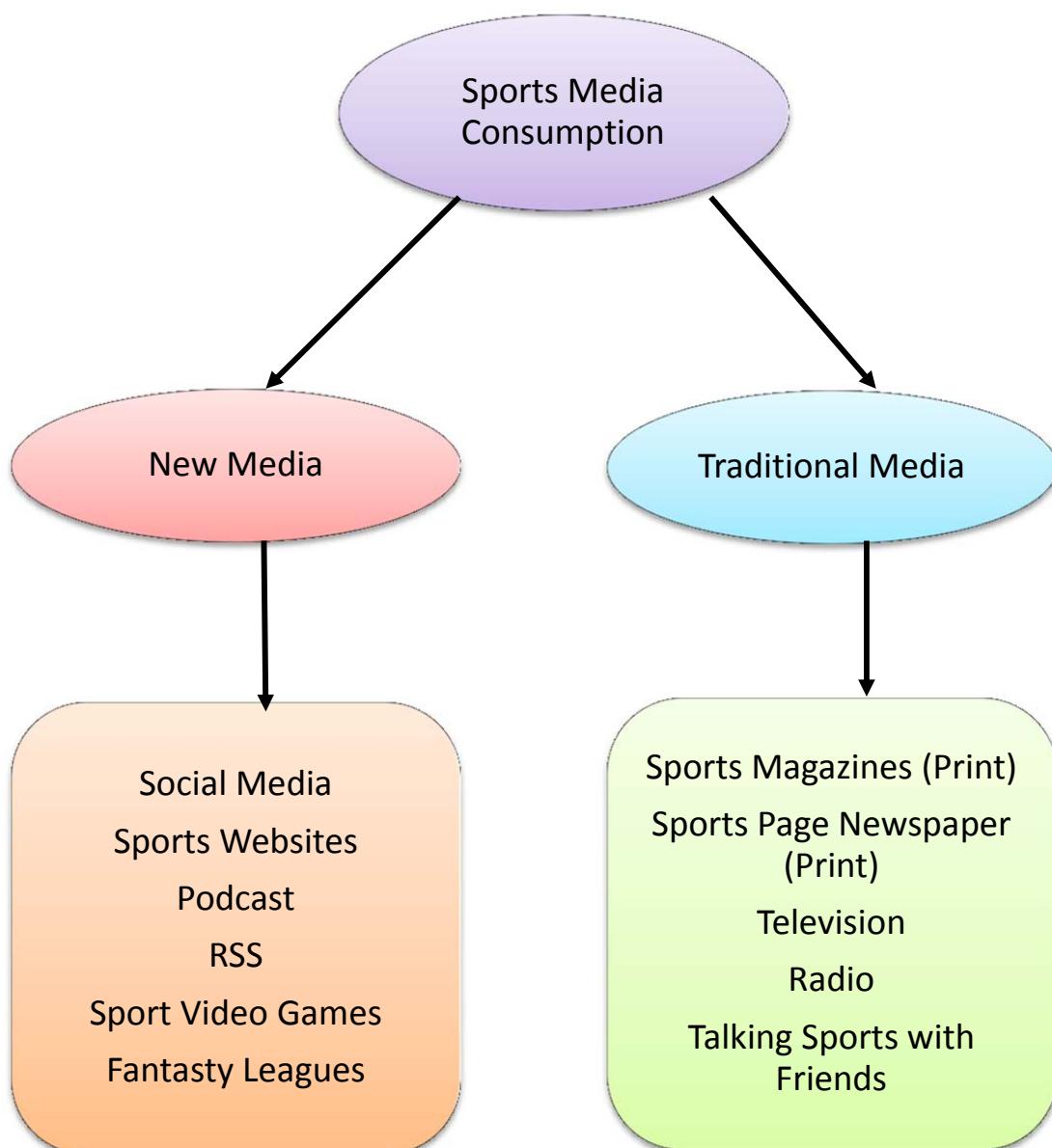
with their team, which will drive new media advances (Smith & Westerbeek, 2010). Previously, only fans who attended matches were seen as die-hard fans; however, new media has allowed fans to experience that overall feeling of allegiance (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010). 'The progress of media technology will encourage increased fan engagement and integration with sport' (Smith & Westerbeek, 2010, p.352). This progress will allow sports marketers to engage with fans on a personal level and help them develop fans to have a greater level of attachment to the team. New media allows greater insight, which satisfies the desires of those who are either attached or alleged on the PCM scale (Hur *et al.*, 2007), as new media allows 'mechanisms for manipulating consumer demand and consumption' (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010, p.1457).

Sports media consumption will flourish while records continue to be broken and sports personalities achieve amazing feats, allowing fans to take great delight in the witnessing of the unbelievable. With various platforms offered, consumers are able to lap up these feats at the 'speed of light' (McQuire 1999; Hutchins, 2011, p.243). However, sports organisations should not take it for granted that fans will stay committed consumers especially if bonds of trust are broken. Due to changes in technology fans have 'multiple identities and loyalties and seamlessly shift their allegiances between sports and teams' (Kim & Trail, 2011; Melnick & Wann, 2010, p468). Wu *et al.*, (2012) disagree and state while fans will have multiple group attachments they will remain highly aligned as long as the trust between fan and team is not broken. While those supporters who are attached will remain loyal, those at the lower end of the psychological continuum scale will switch (Funk & James, 2001). Sports marketers need to understand that new media provides an effective way of reaching new and old supporters and build on the brand they represent. Fans continually look for new ways to identify with the team and new media offers this possibility (Bhattacharya & Elsbach, 2002). If marketers can build on the psychological connection fans exhibit through rituals and insight into the team, fan allegiance will continue to increase. New media provides the platform for marketers to be able to engage with these fans (Heere & James, 2007).

The below figure divides sports media consumption along two paradigms, new media and traditional media.

Figure 4 – Sports media consumption and types of media

Note: Adapted from Blaszka, M. (2011). An examination of sport consumers' Twitter usage. *Kinesiology Theses*. Paper 1, p.26 Retrieved from http://digitalarchive.gsu.edu/kin_health_theses/1



2.4 New media platforms

New platforms of interaction in the form of social media have become the latest fad for engagement with fans, which has provided unprecedented levels of access to professional athletes (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). With the potential these platforms harness, teams and athletes must develop strategies to engage fans that develop their current psychological connection with the team (Aaker, 2010; Ioakimidis, 2010). Two of the more popular social media platforms are those of Facebook and Twitter, although many others exist. Özsoy (2011) argues that social media networks are becoming a popular alternative medium of choice over traditional media. Social media allows organisations to build brand presence through the cultivation of closer relationships with their fan base (Wallace, Wilson & Miloch, 2011). Both of these platforms have millions of followers and allow for organisations to 'disseminate unfiltered messages to mass audiences and specific target markets' (Wallace, *et al.*, p.422, 2011). This presents many benefits to sport organisations who seek to maximise various marketing strategies to engage with fans (Coyle 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). However, these platforms need to be policed as there is the potential for these new mediums to be abused and allow corruption to sneak into the game (Blaszka, 2011).

'Sport and media have had a long-term symbiotic relationship' (Wallace *et al.*, p.423, 2011) which has relied on the media providing fans with insight to sustain fans interest in the game. Previously, this would mean fans would have to wait until after the game to obtain insight if they were not in attendance themselves through traditional forms of media, which could take hours or days. However, social media has changed that playing field and the context in which fans engage with following their team (Özsoy, 2011). Unfortunately, stadia can only accommodate a certain percentage of a team's fans, which was evident in this year's Champions League final when one million Bayern Munich supporters applied for tickets yet they could only accommodate 17,500 (Fox Sports.com, 2012; SuperSport.com, 2012; The Star, 2012). Social media provided those fans an opportunity to be engaged at all times and stay in touch with what was happening in real time and that went beyond the traditional media formats (Özsoy, 2011). If sports consumers are unable to attend an event for some reason they turn to new media for consumption (Blaszka, 2011), as fans believe that through new media consumption they can have an impact on the game (Holt, 1995).

Organisations and sportspeople are able to use their influence and knowledge to increase consumption to the masses by using social media platforms.

Social media allows for real time unfiltered messages to be disseminated to fans, which allows fans to respond immediately and feel as though they are a part of what is going on even if they are not in attendance. Through these new platforms organisations are able to build stronger relationships and brand / team identification with fans. This can be seen through the rate of acceptance of new media platforms, ‘radio reached 50 million users after 38 years, TV just 13; however, Facebook accrued 100 million users in the first nine months’ (Özsoy, 2011, p.166). The rate of acceptance, however, may have been impacted by the rate of technology acceptance as compared to traditional media formats.

One of the main advantages of social media, other than being an unfiltered insight into sporting organisations and sportspeople, is that it allows the growth of relationships (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). If fans exhibit certain traits on the PCM scale, organisations will be able to relate to that level of fan and build on the relationship. It also allows fans to share unique experiences no matter where they are located globally, which allows them to develop their own social identity (Holt, 1995). The use of social media ‘presents a competitive advantage in cultivating favourable relationships that encourages the repeat consumption of the sports product’ (Wallace *et al.*, p.423, 2011). This helps sporting organisations build their brand to far wider audiences to which they would have reached previously, thus increasing sports consumption. Building on fans’ psychological connections and helping them move along the PCM from awareness to allegiance will provide sporting organisations with consistent and predictable revenue streams. The use of social media provides rights holders, media organisations and commercial organisations an ability to engage fan relationships at another level previously not experienced through traditional forms of media (De La Fuente, 2012).

While social media provides fans with a closer affinity with sporting organisations and sportspeople, one needs to wonder what the content of the messages will be. Sporting organisations have a specific marketing strategy in mind (Kassing & Anderson 2010; Wallace *et al.*, 2011; Özsoy, 2011); sportspeople on the other hand are unfiltered and can message whatever happens to be on their mind at the time. This has the potential to offer fans unique insights of raw emotions which helps build on relationships and media

consumption of their sports heroes; however, it also has the potential to damage brands and sponsorship associations. This has been highlighted lately by Kevin Pietersen (from the English Cricket team), whose opulent tweet commenting on Sky's commentary team landed him with a three thousand pound fine by the English Cricket Board who took offence (Wilson, 2012) and later saw him dismissed from the team. Another advantage for sportspeople who have been misquoted or attacked in traditional media formats, is that social media allows them to respond immediately to give the real insight while protecting self-image (Özsoy, 2011). With social media being something of a new phenomenon, the boundaries of engaging with fans will constantly be pushed until associations and organisations set social media guidelines. There is a fine line to what should be discussed in the public domain and understanding that line is a difficult proposition, as can be seen in the article top ten sporting blunders on Twitter (Telegraph, 2011).

2.4.1 Facebook

Since the emergence of Web 2.0, Facebook is one of the social media platforms which has capitalised on the interactivity of its followers. This interactivity has allowed users to express likes, engage with other users, discuss ideologies possessed and share knowledge as well as experiences (Bulmer & DiMauro, 2010). The direct contact organisations and individuals can have with one another presents a unique opportunity of engagement. Facebook has allowed fans to develop and build on their social identity. The content delivered to a user is developed from their preferences, location, age and a number of other demographics depending on the information provided by the user (Facebook.com, 2012). With Facebook being translated into 70 global languages, Özsoy (2011) argues it is the social media platform of choice.

'Facebook is one of the most popular social-networking platforms and as a social media tool it can be used to enhance brand image and communication' (Wallace *et al.*, 2011, p.424). As of 2011, Facebook had a user base of approximately 750 million worldwide and approximately 4.8 million in Africa (Vermeulen, 2012). As a base to get your message out there, it is an extremely powerful tool for organisations to engage their fan bases. Since 2008, Facebook has built-in extra features that allow organisations and businesses to customise their offerings that allow interaction with users on the internet (Wallace, *et al.*, 2011). A feature of Facebook that gives it an advantage over other platforms is that it

allows interaction to remain confidential. This social media platform allows administrators to investigate ‘not only how users are interacting with content in real time but also demographic characteristics of the most frequent users’ (Wallace *et al.*, 2011, p.425). This information allows organisations to tailor their marketing efforts to meet the needs of their users. From understanding the demographics of their fan bases, sporting organisations are able to hone in on target markets. This can ensure successful promotion tours of teams when they venture beyond their own borders.

2.4.2 Twitter

The other popular social media platform is Twitter. While Facebook is the more popular of the social media platforms, Twitter’s increased immediacy has helped provide a greater social relationship between athletes and fans (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). From 2008 to 2009, Twitter’s acceptance among the social media community increased 1,298% (Özsoy, 2011). Currently in South Africa there are approximately 1.1 million registered users (Vermeulen, 2012). Kassing & Sanderson (2010) argue that Twitter seems to be the medium of choice between professional athletes and fans, as it allows for interpersonal relationships. However, Özsoy (2011) disagrees and advises that in Turkey Facebook is the medium of choice due to the fact that it is multilingual, whereas at this time Twitter is only available in English, which severely limits its ability to reach larger markets. In spite of that, Özsoy (2011, p.170) contradicts himself by stating ‘Facebook gives you friends, while Twitter gives you followers’, which in itself is the essence of fandom. According to social identity theory, depending on the attachment fans place on teams and sportspeople, it will influence who they choose to follow on Twitter (Blaszka, 2011).

Previously, traditional media provided a filtered view of what content holders wanted you to see, hear and experience. Social media has managed to break new ground through the experiences it provides and has carved a niche for itself in that it allows raw emotions to be experienced first-hand and unfiltered (Kassing & Sanderson, 2011). Due to the technology fans are able to have greater direct interaction with professional athletes who, while responding to a plethora of fans, may tweet directly to an individual. ‘Team identification can be a factor into why Twitter users follow certain players, teams ...’ (Blaszka, 2011, p.7). Technological advancements have allowed fans to keep up with

teams and athletes in the same way they would keep in contact with the families and friends on the move.

Twitter's advantage over other platforms is that it keeps messages short and simple, similar to that of receiving an SMS. However, that could also be seen as a limitation to the platform, in that it only allows for text (Özsoy, 2011). This is overcome by the ability of being able to post a link to be able to obtain more in-depth knowledge to access greater information or photographs on other sites. With the interaction Twitter allows, professional athletes can give an idea of the emotions they are going through which helps fans understand what it takes, or the sacrifices required to have the life of a professional athlete (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). Fans can engage and offer advice, which athletes can choose to accept or ignore, yet the engagement allows fans insight and interaction never before experienced. This, in turn, helps develop the relationship between a fan and their team, thus building on the fan's PCM level. Having personal contact with a professional athlete will influence a fan's PCM level and may help develop them from an awareness to an allegiance. Twitter usage by professional athletes also helps develop sports that do not receive as much traditional media attention as main stream sports (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Özsoy, 2011).

Use of Twitter for athletes and organisations allows for a greater parasocial interaction (PSI) with fans. Continual interaction helps develop bonds of intimacy (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010) with fans, which helps develop a fan's attachment and allegiance with the individual or organisation. This also builds on one's social identity by allowing other users to understand who an individual identifies with. PSI allows fans to think they have personal relationships with media personalities that may not have existed otherwise (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). Being able to engage on a personal level and see another side of a sportsperson's personality, one starts to develop an affinity with them and seeks more information as they become addicted. While we may never know the professional athlete, Twitter allows us to think we have a social relationship. These new media platforms have allowed for enhanced content and interaction that traditional media platforms were unable to provide (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010).

Various professional athletes have turned to Twitter to express themselves. For example, as of this writing, English Premiership League (EPL) South African star Steven Pienaar

has 201,349 followers, yet, on Facebook has approximately 35,000 likes. Premier Soccer League convert Benni McCarthy has 20,368 followers, yet, on Facebook only 6,000 likes (Facebook.com, 2012; Twitter.com, 2012). South Africa's favourite cricket son, Protea's captain A.B. de Villiers has 218,192 followers, yet, on Facebook only 160,000 likes and 320 friends (Facebook.com, 2012; Twitter.com, 2012). John Smit, the Springboks outgoing captain, has 81,063 followers, yet only 4,500 likes on Facebook (Facebook.com, 2012; Twitter.com, 2012). On this evidence alone Twitter seems to be the tool of interaction for sportspeople to interact with their fans, whereas Facebook is more inclined to close friends. Sport stars are not the only ones using Twitter in great volumes; leagues, agents and journalists employ Twitter to keep fans constantly updated (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). Twitter's simplicity allows for breaking sports news to occur before it even has a chance to hit traditional media platforms. In today's technology-driven society it is hard for traditional forms of media to out-scoop digital platforms. This platform used in the right way can help build on the fan's experience and understanding of sports that may not be reaching mainstream broadcast. The excitement this level of medium has with fans is down to the level of details a sportsperson allows their followers to experience (Blaszka, 2011).

2.6 Conclusion

Previous studies have explored the relationship between sports media consumption and the psychological attachment fans exhibit. However, little empirical evidence exists on the variables that impact on this relationship. Also, to date most work in the field emanates out of the West. Where research exists in the area the focus is one-dimensional in that it does not give a holistic view of sports fans. Using a multi-dimensional view of sports media consumption is unique in the information it presents. Most research conducted to date has also been a convenient sample (normally professors' students). This research plans to provide a holistic view of sports fans from a variety of backgrounds, by using snowballing sampling.

How fans' interact in the context of their environment is an interesting proposition to try and understand. Social Identity Theory (SIT) advises that fans want to feel as though they belong to something and explains the relationship (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), yet it fails to understand the connection. The Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) takes it a step

further by focusing on the connection fans have with teams and their differing levels of support (Funk & James, 2001). PCM suggests that a fans' connectedness to a team increases their attitude and support changes from someone who was looking for a social identity to that being entrenched in their identity. When people are trying to define who they are, associations with sports teams play a central role in most people's lives, as it has for centuries and will continue to do so. Fans are complex individuals who are looking for unique experiences to engage with the team.

Media has played its role in helping develop a fan's psychological connection to the team or sport they support. The emergence of new technologies has allowed fans to express themselves in new ways which will continue to evolve (Özsoy, 2011). Fans who previously may have lived on the other side of the world are able to engage in sports media consumption now in real time. As such, new relationships are developing between fan bases, while the interaction between teams and fans has evolved. Fans' consumption of sports media will evolve while they believe they have the ability to influence their team's performance on or off the field (Wallace *et al.*, 2011). The social media platforms currently available to fans to show their support has changed the way fans consume sports media (Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011) and, as such, marketers need to understand the impact this has on their target markets.

3. Research propositions

1. The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater number of sports media sources consumed no matter which platform it is delivered on (Smith & Westerbek, 2010; Lock *et al.*, 2012).
2. The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the engagement with social media platforms (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Hutchins, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).
3. The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the interaction will be with Twitter, relative to all other social media platforms. (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Hutchins, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).
4. The psychological commitment of fans is independent of the sports they follow. (Heere and James, 2007).
5. Males exhibit higher levels of psychological commitment in regards to following a team (Stewart *et al.*, 2003; Heere and James, 2007; Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011).
6. Sports media consumption differs depending on the sport consumed and the age of the fan (Bennett, Sagas & Dees, 2006).

4. Research methodology and design

The research will be conducted in a single phase (see table 4) and will be adopting a quantitative approach.

Table 1 – Research methodology adopted

Phase	Sampling	Data Collection	Data Analysis	Output
One	Snowballing	Survey instrument	PCM staging algorithm and analysis	Sport fan psychological profiles and sports media consumption patterns

4.1 Quantitative approach

This study is quantitative and categorical in nature where the supporters were surveyed and the various variables were evaluated to see individual responses on sports media consumption behaviours using a hybrid sports instrument. With trying to gain an understanding across various sports and to reach as many fans as possible, the best approach was quantitative. Using quantitative data allows us to establish emerging patterns through categorical data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Quantitative research also allows us to conduct a correlational study. ‘A correlational study examines the extent to which differences in one characteristic or variable are related to differences in one or more other characteristics or variable’ (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p.191).

The quantitative descriptive approach also allows us to examine and explore the relationship in the data discovered. Babbie and Mouton (2001, p.79) state that an ‘exploratory study provides basic knowledge or further understanding within a field of study’. Through analysing the data in a quantitative approach, less interviewer bias or deciphering will come into question. A quantitative approach will also allow us to present the findings in a graph which will highlight aspects of the data which stand out. Another benefit of using a quantitative approach is that it aims to ascribe numerical values to a

number of variables which reveals associations, correlations, differences, explanations and predictions that may exist (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Kelly, 2008). A quantitative approach allows us to ‘investigate the phenomena, give an overview of the domain under study and describe its heterogeneity at a macro level’ (Kelly, 2008, p.310). This allows us to try and make sense of the world around us and the phenomena taking place (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

The study does not lend itself to a qualitative approach as it would not give a fair indication of the population. Qualitative approaches are best suited when you want to dig beneath the surface to discover more at a micro level (Kelly, 2008). The number of interviews that would need to be carried out to gain an insightful generalisation would have been too time consuming for this study. Also, not gaining a sample large enough would limit the research in understanding the variables that impact the fans PCM level and media consumption patterns. Using a qualitative approach to this study would limit the overall impact this study could make.

4.2 Method

This study used cross-sectional data, which allowed us to take a snapshot in time of what the current trend in fans’ sports media consumption was. To capture the cross section of fans a questionnaire was administered electronically. The study was distributed through email, newspapers, Facebook and Twitter. The latter two may have biased the response in favour of new media over traditional forms of media consumption. The researcher posted the survey on various popular South African sports Facebook and Twitter sites, as well as popular sports fan base sites in South Africa, such as Cricket South Africa, South African Rugby Union, South African Football Association, the Premier Soccer League and various clubs and players sites. The researcher, also working in the sports industry, used some sportspeople’s contacts to help increase the breadth of people reached on the survey, due to the followers they have either through Facebook or Twitter. The link took survey respondents through to the questionnaire on the online survey website freeonlinesurveys.com. To get the survey out to as many respondents in the applicable sample the researcher relied on the snowball effect.

4.3 Instrument

As the study is looking at the fans' psychological connection to a team and the consumption of media, the study will use the nine-item PCM measurement instrument to measure PCM levels (Funk, D, 2008). In using the PCM model it allowed us to profile sports fans according to their level of commitment to the team. To measure fans' media consumption the study will adapt elements from Blaska's 2011 study on Twitter and sports consumption. The whole questionnaire will not be used as Leedy & Ormrod (2001) indicate you should only use the questions that relate to the subject matter to find out the relevant information needed for the study. Both scales will use a seven-scale Likert-type scale (Beaton *et al.*, 2009) to assess people's attitudes and behaviours (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This instrument allowed us to investigate the current relevant media forms and the fans various usage of media to support their team.

The instruments used were a self-complete questionnaire that did not allow interviewer bias to affect the response by the fans'. The questionnaire was set out in a structured style that allowed the research to focus on the questions posed. As these instruments have been used in other studies (Beaton *et al.*, 2009; Blaszka, 2011), the validity has already been tested through conducting Cronbach alpha testing and clearing ethics committee panels.

4.4 Ethical consideration

When fans accessed the questionnaire online they had to consent to partake in the survey, as set out in appendix one. They had the right to refuse and, as such, would have left the questionnaire. As such it was informed consent. The link stated 'Help Tuks researcher understand your use of various media forms and sports consumption, make your opinion count'. Freeonlinesurveys.com is an online survey / data collecting website. The way the questionnaire was set out, as set out in appendix two, ensured the fan's anonymity as no identifying questions were asked. The questionnaire was also submitted to GIBS' ethical board who approved the questionnaire to be used for the study.

4.5 Scope

The scope of this study was limited to fans that support various sporting organisations and individuals throughout South Africa. Looking at data across different teams and different sports will allow us to make a greater contribution to the body of knowledge to date, which up until now has been limited to a targeted sport instead of a multisport approach.

After examining various literature in the field of sports relationships, the psychological awareness of fans and media consumption, the majority of studies conducted have revolved around:

- The level of psychological attachment and commitment fans have to teams (Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Capella 2001; Dietz-Uhler & Lanter, 2008; Fink *et al.*, 2009; Hu & Tang, 2010; Kim *et al.*, 2011).
- The impact various media platforms have on the sports fan relationship (Hur *et al.*, 2007; Smith & Westerbeek, 2010; Melnick & Wann, 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Hu *et al.*, 2010; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Hutchins, 2011; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).
- Is there an instrument capable of assessing fans psychology (Wann, 2002; Fink *et al.*, 2009; Beaton *et al.*, 2009)?

4.6 Population

The population of the study included all potential fans that follow various South African sporting teams and sports individuals. These teams or individuals came from a variety of backgrounds, for instance rugby, cricket, football (soccer), golf, tennis or any other sports fans associated with and who consumed media. The main focus was on team sports as this gave us a better understanding of why fans associate with certain teams and to be able to make a comparison across team sport. This might not be so obvious across individual sports like golf and tennis. The All Media Products Survey (AMPS) suggest the current sports population size of South Africa is approximately 38,872,754 people (this figure is made up of people who either attended or are interested in cricket, rugby and soccer).

4.7 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for this research was sport media consumption behaviours. The population is heterogeneous, thus each individual has the ability to influence or be influenced by their environmental and social surroundings, as well as their cultural upbringing and at a group level. The analysis allowed us to understand which variables had an impact on the study and how teams should interact with these segments.

4.8 Sampling method and size

While the researcher was aware of who the population was, due to the size of South Africa it was difficult to access the whole of the population as it was impractical and too expensive. To overcome this problem the snowball sampling technique was used to identify other potential participants. Saunders & Lewis (2012, p.139) describe this technique as ‘a type of non-probability sampling in which, after the first sample member, subsequent members are identified by earlier sample members’. By engaging with famous sportspeople and commentators the researcher identified the first respondent. With the commentators and sports stars participating in the questionnaire, the researcher hoped they would pass it onto their followers to also partake in the questionnaire.

The three biggest known fan bases in a South African context are attached to soccer (football), cricket and rugby (AMPS, 2011). As such, the sample frame included fans from rugby, cricket and soccer (football), as well as a few minor sports that influenced South African’s media consumption patterns. Fans were identified through Facebook and Twitter groups, as well as emails and newspapers.

While ‘sports fans like to talk about their pastime as a passion, religion, even a matter of life or death. For Afrikaners, ... rugby is far more important’ (Perry, 2008, p.56). Rugby union or rugby is a game that was introduced into South Africa by the English and is one of the world’s most followed sports. In shaping South Africa’s landscape, rugby has been firmly on the mantle ever since South Africa won the Rugby World Cup in 1996. While much debate continues in South Africa about rugby’s inability to transform to become a truly multicultural game (Perry, 2008), it continues to capture the hearts of South Africans.

Rugby fans are extremely passionate (Perry, 2008) and one of the reasons why they have been incorporated under this study.

With South Africa currently being rated number one in cricket across test, one-day international (although changing on a daily basis) and T20 format, cricket fans have come out of the woodwork to show their unabridged support for the game. While still being perceived as an elitist game and ‘associated with distinctive social classes in different places and times’ (Scalmer, 2007, p.432), it is a game that garners a lot of support from fans all over the world. With the introduction of T20 to cricket, the landscape of the game is changing and drawing in supporters in their droves. Being one of South Africa’s favourite past-times it was imperative that cricket fans were included in the study.

Soccer, or football as it is known globally, is a sport Africa views as belonging to the continent. In Africa, the game has long been associated with political statements (Perry, 2010). It dominated everything Africans did and helped prisoners unite on Robben Island with one demand, the right to play (Perry, 2010). Across Africa soccer was adopted quite quickly by the poor, as all you need is space and a round object, something Africa had plenty of (Perry, 2010). In Africa, soccer is the game people associate with as it has given them hope of upliftment and a chance to unite as one and also provides them with a sense of nationalism (Perry, 2010). South African president Jacob Zuma commented that ‘sport, particularly football, can be a catalyst for social change, peace and unity in the African continent’ (Anonymous, 2012). Due to the history of soccer in Africa, it is important the views of spectators are taken into consideration in this research.

By focusing on the three above-mentioned sports, which covers the majority of sport followed in Africa, it is expected that we are able to generalise the findings across other sport genres.

To reach the sample the study used an online survey across popular social media groups such as Facebook and Twitter. The study had hoped to be endorsed by South African Rugby Union (SARU), Cricket South Africa (CSA) and South African Football Association (SAFA). Through being endorsed by these associations they will be able to post it on their social media sites. Currently, on these sites combined, SARU has 522,568 followers although some of these followers would follow SARU on both Facebook (473,000

followers) and Twitter (49,568 followers). CSA currently has 270,172 followers with 217,020 Facebook followers and 53,152 followers on Twitter. SAFA and the national team Bafana Bafana have 27,037 followers with 16,173 on Facebook and 10,864 on Twitter. This already indicates a difference in consumption in media between the three associations. Unfortunately the main associations did not endorse the survey which limited the number of responses received.

The original message was sent out to 350 users across email, Facebook and Twitter. Some of these fans may have reposted the link to their followers; however, we are unable to estimate the sampling size reached with the link. Online sampling occurred for the period of six weeks from mid-July until the end of August 2012. Once responses came in the data were coded and sorted. Out of the original 350 potential respondents, 235 surveys were deemed suitable for data analysis, giving a response rate of only 67.14%. Those surveys that were removed were ones that were deemed repeats and could be deemed as much from the exact response given by the previous respondent. Table 4.2 below indicates the breadth of media used to reach respondents.

Table 2 - Media sources used to reach sample

Media Distribution Used	Numbers Reached
Facebook	222 people
Twitter	56 people
Email	72 people
Reposted or re-Tweeted	18 times

4.9 Data collection

A quantitative approach was used whereby fan's questionnaires were evaluated to predict the level of psychological commitment and media consumption. A pilot test of 30 respondents was originally conducted which checked the validity and the understanding of the questionnaire. After taking into account the feedback received on the pilot, the questionnaire was slightly amended before it was distributed more widely.

The use of social media allowed the researcher to obtain high-quality primary data quickly. This allowed the researcher sufficient time to reach quality conclusions.

To collect the relevant data to draw these conclusions the research not only looked at various sports followed, but also took into account various general demographic variables, such as age, sex, social class, team supported and the province in which they live. Through the collection of demographic data, the researcher was able to get a fair reflection on a fan's PCM level and their interaction with various media formats and whether it differed between sports or not.

After a comprehensive review of the literature it was decided that to understand a fan's psychological attachment to a team, the PCM instrument introduced by Funk & James (2001) be used (see Figure 3). The instrument allowed us to understand the psychological connection a fan has with their team. These first nine items only focus on a fan's psychological profile to see if they exhibit any of the four states being: awareness, attraction, attachment or allegiance to team identity (Funk & James, 2001). Through understanding the importance fans place on the psychological connection they have with the team we should be able to identify where they fall on the model.

After a comprehensive review of the literature it was decided that to understand a fan's media consumption level, the questionnaire used by Blaszka's study (2011) used to understand Twitter and sport consumption be adapted. This allowed us to evaluate the various forms of new media interaction taking place in the general population. The instrument also allowed us to understand various forms of media consumption and the occurrence of sports fan consumption. Using Blaszka's (2011) study also gave us insight into which media is having an impact on fan consumption and if new media is having the effect that anecdotal commentary advises it is having in the marketplace.

General demographic questions were also asked to gain a better understanding of the population. The demographic questions used were adapted from Dugmore, K., Furness, P., Leventhal, B., & Moy, C. (2011). Beyond the 2011 census in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Market Research*, 53(5), 625-626.

4.10 Data analysis

Data was analysed using Stata version 12. To understand where people fall on the PCM model, the algorithm set out in Beaton, Funk & Alexandris (2009, p.185-188) was used. The algorithm allowed respondents to be classified into one of the four continuums of awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance outlined by Funk & James (2001). The model uses a staging mechanism which measures the facets of involvement, creates a ranked involvement profile and then applies the staging algorithm (Beaton *et al.*, 2009). The algorithm is divided into pleasure, centrality and sign and is staged as follows'.

Table 3 - The PCM staging algorithm as set out by Beaton et al., (2009, p.188)

<p>Using the involvement profile ratings, complete the actions below IN ORDER until stage is determined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Action 1: If Pleasure facet is rated low (L), stage = Awareness (non-participants), Attachment (participants); If condition not satisfied then ➤ Action 2: If Both Centrality and Sign facets are rated low (L), stage = Attraction; If condition not satisfied then ➤ Action 3: If Either Centrality and Sign facets are rated low (L), stage = Attachment; If condition not satisfied then ➤ Action 4: If Any Two facets are rated as high (H), stage = Allegiance; If condition not satisfied then ➤ Action 5: All remaining, stage = Attachment.
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As outlined in Table 3 above, respondents fell into one of 27 possible categories and from there their PCM level was determined into one of the four categories. Once respondents were classified into one of the four categories, the various demographical information collected allowed us to ascertain whether media consumption as defined in Blaszka's 2011

study on media sports consumer Twitter usage, follows similar patterns between groups and across sports.

During the analysis other statistical methods were used to analyse the data collected. This included chi-square test, which is one of most widely used statistical tests. It tests goodness of fit between variables (Plackett, 1983).

While we had 235 respondents, when breaking down the sample further, it resulted in small sample numbers. To be able to test the samples T-tests were used. T-test are used when the sample size is below 30 as ‘normal distribution may not be an appropriate approximation of the distribution of means for small samples’ (Triola & Franklin, 1994, p.260). Triola & Franklin (1994, p.260) indicate that T-tests are used when the following conditions are met:

1. The sample is small ($n < 30$); and
2. Standard deviation is unknown;
3. The parent population has a distribution that is essentially normal.

The above three conditions were present during the analysis of the data.

Ordered logistic regression was also used during the analysis. These statistics are used when you are trying to figure out which groups individuals fall into and estimates ‘the probability that an individual is in a particular group’ (Albright, Winston & Zappe, 2000, p.819). We used this test to try and understand if the psychological commitment of fans and sports followed differed between sports.

4.11 Data validity and reliability

To check the reliability and validity of the data, Trochim (2006) mentions there are four possible outcomes:

1. Reliable not valid.
2. Valid not reliable.
3. Neither reliable nor valid.
4. Both reliable and valid.

If the results are reliable but not valid, we are seeing the results on the scale, yet they are not what we are expecting to see. If they are valid but not reliable, the results are reflecting on the scale, however, there is no consistency and they are all over the place. Yet due to the inconsistency you get a valid result for the group. If neither reliable nor valid, the results are on the scale, yet spread across half of the scale not providing us with a valid result for the group. If they are both valid and reliable, you are consistently on target with the results. As per Trochim's (2006) framework, the results analysed have shown that they are both reliable and valid.

Reliability refers to the degree of similarity of results obtained when the measurement is repeated on the same group of respondents while validity refers to the extent to which the 'measurement instrument actually measure what it is meant to measure and the research findings are about what they profess to be about' (Saunders and Lewis, 2012, p.127).

4.11.1 Validity

A number of considerations were taken into account in order to improve the validity. In order to ensure face validity, or the extent to which the measure make sense to those knowledgeable about the subject matter, the questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher's supervisor and pre-tested among a test sample group of 30 fans. In order to ensure content validity, or that the measures account for all the elements of the concepts under investigation, a thorough literature review was undertaken and all potential construct elements included in the questionnaire as described in Beaton *et al.*, 2009 and Blaszka, 2011.

Criterion validity involves evaluating the results of the measurement instrument against the most valid measurement available. In this case it was the PCM framework that proved most suitable for measuring psychological commitment and Blaszka's (2011) study of sports media consumption to understand a fan's appetite for media consumption.

4.11.2 Reliability

This study attempted to employ data collection measures and analysis procedures which ensured consistent results. A standardised, self-complete questionnaire was used with all respondents. This ensured the same measurements were used with each respondent and no observer error was present (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). As the questionnaire was anonymous and confidentiality assured, there was a low likelihood that the subjects' responses were influenced by subject bias (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). As the respondents were free to undertake the survey in their own time, subject error did not influence the results (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Due to the amount of data being processed, the intended research is predisposed to administrative error in the form of data-processing errors. Zikmund (2003) defines data processing errors as an error that has occurred due to incorrect entry, incorrect programming, or other data analysis. While doing the research, the researcher has taken extreme care while cleaning the data to ensure no data entry errors occurred. The researcher also had a statistician clean the data to compare results to ensure they had the same responses. Where an error was located they referred back to the original response of the respondent for clarification. Thus a two-step process of cleansing occurred to ensure the validity of the results as well as the reliability of the research.

4.12 Research limitations

This study was impacted by various limitations which were identified as the following:

- Due to research time constraints the study will only be cross-sectional and not a longitudinal study which could produce different results. Being able to conduct pre- and post-testing questionnaires would have added an extra dimension to the study and would have allowed the researcher to triangulate information.
- We did not know how the teams were performing at the time of the study which may have impacted media consumption. It is a probability that teams who are performing well will have had more fans consuming media.

- Previous studies have commonly revolved around a convenience sample of university students (Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wann, 2002; Fink *et al.*, 2009). Looking at different demographics could have varying results compared to data of previous research. While this should be seen as an advantage of having real-world subjects, others may question the validity of the respondents.
- Limited room for discovery due to using a questionnaire and trying to reach a large sample. As specific questions are being asked it does not allow respondents to elaborate.
- Mainly using social media websites to post the questionnaire may be seen as a biased sample, especially where media consumption is being reviewed. This might not give a reasonable sample in regards to traditional forms of media.
- Not having similar sample sizes may cause the results to be skewed in favour of one sport over the other. Where possible we need to ensure that the sample sizes obtained are of similar size to make a reasonable conclusion.
- Engaging the questionnaire through social media and national sports associations may cause the response to be skewed as well. Those people who engage already with national associations and social media are likely inclined to spend more time using new media solutions as well as show high allegiance on the PCM scale.
- Using cross-sectional data does not take into account the different context those generations were raised in and as such will have an impact on the results.
- We are unsure whether PCM is a valid questionnaire or socio-culturally appropriate for South Africa.
- While a reasonable sample was obtained (235 respondents), breaking down the demographic information will result in having no meaning as the sample broken down too far has limited responses.

5. Results and interpretation

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data will be presented in terms of the research objectives as set in Chapter 3. Additional to the set objectives, the chapter starts off with demographic information obtained from the questionnaire.

5.2 Sample description

The study consisted of 235 respondents. Of these, 177 (75.3%) were male and 58 (24.7%) were female, where AMPS suggest (2012) the population is comprised of 51.8% females and 48.4% males. The sample was not a fair reflection of the South African population. The majority (55.7%) of respondents were aged 16 to 35 years. Of those aged 26 to 35, 66.4% were male and 33.66% were female. While the white population represented approximately 72% of the sample, AMPS (2012) indicates the white population only account for 12% of the South African population. As such, the sample obtained might not be a fair representation of South African sports fans.

Table 4 - Sample description: Number and percentage of respondents by socio-demographics

	N	%
Sex		
Male	177	75.32
Female	58	24.68
Age		
Below 18 years	30	12.77
18-25 years	13	5.53
26-35 years	131	55.74
36-45 years	39	16.60
46-55 years	6	2.55
Over 55 years	16	6.81
Race		
Black	36	15.32
Coloured	5	2.13
White	169	71.91
Indian	18	7.66

Other	7	2.98
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The majority of respondents were white males (n=122) and white females (n=47). While a reasonable sample was obtained (235 respondents), breaking down the demographic information will result in having no meaning as the sample broken down too far has limited responses. For instance, while there were 58 female respondents; drilling down further does not provide us with too much information. Other than white females (81%) aged 26 to 35 (76%), the other demographics don't elicit enough responses to be able to provide an overall generalisation. As such, they are grouped together as female respondents (25%). From other results conducted on the sample, 90.6% of the sample reported a high socio-economic status. This is in contrast to the national population where 34.7% reported a high socio-economic status (Reference: Third National Communication Survey, 2012. Personal correspondence with S. Magni, October 8, 2012).

Table 5 - Favourite sport followed

Favourite Sport	N	%
Rugby	159	67.66
Cricket	31	13.19
Soccer	34	14.47
Other	11	4.68
Total	235	100

From table 5 it is evident that most of the respondents, 68%, are rugby fans. Cricket fans accounted for 13% of the respondents and soccer fans 14.5% of the sample. Approximately 5% of fans followed a variety of other sports, which did not fall into the three most popular sports followed in South Africa. AMPS (2012) indicate this is not a true sample of South African sports fans. In their survey soccer fans accounted for 48% of the population, rugby fans 21% and cricket fans 19%.

5.3 Media consumption

Table 6 - Media consumption of fans

	Total	Sex		Age						Race			
		M	F	< 18 years	18-25 years	26-35 years	36-45 years	46-55 years	> 55 years	Black	Coloured	White	Indian
Facebook	168 (71.5)	120 (67.8)	48 (82.8)	23 (76.7)	10 (76.9)	103 (78.6)	23 (59.0)	6 (100)	3 (18.8)	22 (61.1)	4 (80.0)	124 (73.4)	14 (77.8)
Twitter	108 (46.0)	78 (44.1)	30 (51.7)	11 (36.7)	8 (61.5)	64 (48.9)	19 (48.7)	4 (66.7)	2 (12.5)	21 (58.3)	3 (60.0)	73 (43.2)	8 (44.4)
LinkedIn	92 (39.2)	66 (37.3)	26 (44.8)	1 (3.3)	4 (30.8)	64 (48.9)	19 (48.7)	2 (33.3)	2 (12.5)	7 (19.4)	3 (60.0)	72 (42.6)	9 (50.0)
MXiT	6 (2.6)	5 (2.8)	1 (1.7)	1 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (2.3)	1 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (6.3)	1 (2.8)	1 (20.0)	3 (1.8)	0 (0.0)
Messenger	14 (6.0)	14 (17.9)	0 (0.0)	10 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.5)	1 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (6.3)	1 (2.8)	1 (20.0)	11 (6.5)	1 (5.6)
Websites	38 (16.2)	30 (17.0)	8 (13.8)	2 (6.7)	4 (30.8)	23 (17.6)	9 (23.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	26 (15.4)	3 (16.7)
Television	190 (80.9)	145 (81.9)	45 (77.6)	18 (60.0)	12 (92.3)	106 (80.9)	32 (82.1)	6 (100)	16 (100)	29 (80.6)	4 (80.0)	140 (82.8)	12 (66.7)
Radio	161 (68.5)	112 (63.3)	49 (84.5)	15 (50.0)	9 (69.2)	91 (69.5)	32 (82.1)	4 (66.7)	10 (62.5)	22 (61.1)	4 (80.0)	119 (70.4)	13 (72.2)
Print newspaper	116 (49.4)	85 (48.0)	31 (53.5)	4 (13.3)	8 (61.5)	69 (52.7)	21 (53.9)	5 (83.3)	9 (56.3)	18 (50.0)	2 (40.0)	83 (49.1)	10 (55.6)
Print magazines	111 (47.2)	88 (49.7)	23 (39.7)	6 (20.0)	6 (46.2)	72 (55.0)	16 (41.0)	5 (83.3)	6 (37.5)	15 (41.7)	3 (60.0)	80 (47.3)	10 (55.6)

To analyse different forms of media consumption usage, descriptive statistics were calculated (Table 6). Of the new media solutions provided the vast majority use Facebook (71.5%), followed by Twitter (46%) then LinkedIn (39%), while MXiT was least accessed (2.6%). On the typical traditional forms of media, television was still the strongest form of media used (81%), followed by radio (68.5%), then print newspapers (49.5%), and print magazines (47%). However, this was influenced by age.

Breaking down the respondent information too far renders the information irrelevant and, as such, needs to be carefully considered when making generalisation on samples below 30 respondents. While it looks as though media consumption patterns are slowly changing through the age groups, the sample is not large enough to make those definite relationships. For instance this can be seen in television viewing habits; only 60% of respondents under 18 consumed television; however, 100% of respondents over 46

consumed television (however, the sample is quite small and this generalisation should not be made). Whereas website usage was non-existent (0%) with respondents over 46, although not extremely popular the medium saw more usage / consumption from younger users. What is evident from table 6 is that media consumption patterns are changing.

5.4 Research questions results

5.4.1 Research question one

The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater number of sports media sources consumed no matter which platform it is delivered on (Smith & Westerbek, 2010).

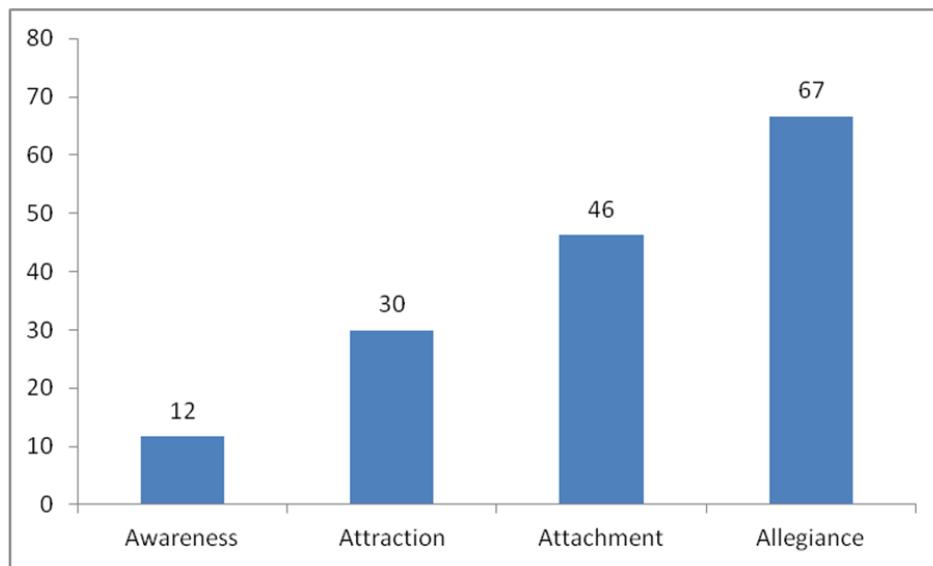
Table 7 - Fans who consumed television, sports radio, print newspaper, sports websites or social media

Media Consumed	N	%
0	9	3.83
1	8	3.40
2	7	2.98
3	49	20.85
4	83	35.32
5	79	33.62
Total	235	100

Table 7 shows the percentage of respondents consuming media. From the above results, taking into account sports radio, television, print newspaper, websites and social media, only 3.8% of fans don't consume any form of media, while 68.94% consume four or more media types.

Looking at the above results this has then been applied to the PCM scale for further understanding.

Table 8 - Chi-squared test used to test percentage of respondents accessing all five media platforms by PCM-scale



Pearson chi 2 (15) = 66.3736 Pr = 0.000

From Table 8 it can be seen that there is a significant relationship ($p<0.001$). The above table only takes into consideration those fans accessing all five media types. As we can see 66.7% of those in the allegiance category access all five sports media, as opposed to 11.7% in the awareness category. While we are aware the numbers are small, the results are suggestive. Table 8 shows a distinct relationship with those displaying a higher psychological connection consuming more media platforms. The sample breakdown for fans PCM levels used for the above table can be seen in table 47 in the appendix. Table 47 indicated that those fans that consume no media sources fall lower on the PCM framework, only showing an awareness or attraction to the team they support.

5.4.1.2 Research question one looking at new media platforms only

Table 9 - Facebook consumption and PCM-scale

Facebook	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
Does not use Facebook	16 26.67	27 35.06	21 26.25	3 16.67	67 28.51
Uses Facebook	44 73.33	50 64.94	59 73.75	15 83.33	168 71.49
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi2 (3) = 3.1624 Pr = 0.367

Table 9 indicates that there is no significant relationship between Facebook consumption and psychological commitment to the team ($p>0.05$).

Table 10 - Twitter consumption and PCM-scale

Twitter	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
Does not use Twitter	38 63.33	46 59.74	38 47.50	5 27.78	127 54.04
Uses Twitter	22 36.67	31 40.26	42 52.50	13 72.22	108 45.96
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi 2 (3) = 9.4700 Pr = 0.024

Table 10 indicates that there seems to be a relationship between Twitter consumption and psychological commitment to the team ($p<0.05$). Due to the limited numbers in the results we need to be careful of making this assumption. However, the results are suggestive.

Other forms of new media were also considered such as LinkedIn, Mxit, Messenger and online websites. However, the results showed that there was no significant relationship between any of these mediums and consumption, and PCM levels as all p values > 0.05.

5.4.2 Research question two

The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the engagement with social media platforms (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).

Table 11 - Number of sportspeople in a team followed on social media and PCM scale

No of team / Sportspeople	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
0	31 51.67	30 38.96	18 22.50	1 5.56	80 34.04
1-3	16 26.67	33 42.86	26 32.50	6 33.33	81 34.47
4-6	5 8.33	8 10.39	9 11.25	3 16.67	25 10.64
6+	8 13.33	6 7.79	27 33.75	8 44.44	49 20.85
Total	60 100	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi2 (9) = 36.2317 Pr = 0.000

From the above table it is apparent that there is a strong relationship between the number of sportspeople in a team followed on social media and where a fan falls on the PCM scale $p = *0.000$. This indicates the higher you fall on the PCM scale the more likely it is you will follow a higher number of sportspeople from the team you support. However, due to the

small numbers falling into each category we need to be wary of making such an assumption.

Table 12 - Posting on social media and PCM-scale

Social media posting	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
0	38 63.33	37 48.05	29 36.25	3 16.67	107 45.53
1-3	14 23.33	28 36.36	31 38.75	6 33.33	79 33.62
4-6	5 8.33	5 6.49	9 11.25	4 22.22	23 9.79
6+	3 5.00	7 9.09	11 13.75	5 27.78	26 11.06
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi 2 (9) = 23.1120

Pr = 0.006

Table 12 indicates that there is a strong relationship between the number of postings fans make on social media and where a fan falls on the PCM scale $p = *0.006$. This indicates the higher you fall on the PCM scale the more likely it is you will post on social media on a more regular basis. However, due to the small numbers falling into each category we need to be wary of making such an assumption and this should be investigated further.

Table 13 - Social media to pass comments and PCM

Pass Comments	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
Yes	16 26.67	29 37.66	53 66.25	16 88.89	114 48.51
No	44 73.33	48 62.34	27 33.75	2 11.11	121 51.49
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi2 (3) = 36.9181

Pr = 0.000

It can be seen in Table 13 that a relationship exists between those fans that pass comment during the game and where a fan falls on the PCM scale $p = *0.000$. This indicates the higher you fall on the PCM scale the more likely it is you will post on social media to make comment about what is happening during the game.

5.4.3 Research question three

The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the interaction will be with Twitter, relative to all other social media platforms (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011).

Table 14 - Twitter consumption and PCM scale

Twitter	Awareness	Attraction	Attachment	Allegiance	Total
Does not use Twitter	38 63.33	46 59.74	38 47.50	5 27.78	127 54.04
Uses Twitter	22 36.67	31 40.26	42 52.50	13 72.22	108 45.96
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi 2 (3) = 9.4700 Pr = 0.024

Looking at Table 14 compared to previous results for social media (Table 6) we can see Twitter is the second-most accessed social media platform. Facebook has the highest percentage of users followed by Twitter, but there is no association with Facebook and PCM, whereas you can see in the above table that the higher the psychological commitment, the more likely respondents were to report using Twitter e.g. 72% of those in allegiance category used Twitter as opposed to 37% of those in the awareness category. The results seem to indicate that there is a relationship between Twitter consumption and psychological commitment to the team ($p < 0.05$). Due to the limited numbers in the results we need to be careful of making this assumption; however, the results are suggestive.

5.4.4 Research question four

The psychological commitment of fans is independent of the sports they follow (Heere and James, 2007).

Table 15 - Psychological commitment and sports followed Chi-squared test

Used to test the null hypothesis of no association.

PCM	Rugby	Cricket	Soccer	Other	Total
Awareness	39	8	9	4	60
	24.53	25.81	26.47	36.36	25.53
Attraction	53	9	10	5	77
	33.33	29.03	29.41	45.45	32.77
Attachment	53	12	14	1	80
	33.33	38.71	41.18	9.09	34.04
Allegiance	14	2	1	1	18
	8.81	6.45	2.94	9.09	7.66
Total	159	31	34	11	235
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson chi2 (9) = 5.4766

Pr = 0.791

Table 15 shows the corresponding P value or probability associated with the chi-squared value for nine degrees of freedom. The results p=0.791 means that the probability of a chi-squared value this large (or larger), assuming the null hypothesis of no association is true, is high. There is no evidence to suggest an association between psychological commitment and sport followed. However, due to the small numbers of the sample further investigation might be needed to rule this out altogether.

Table 16 - Psychological commitment and sports followed ordered logistic regression

PCM and sport	Coef.	Std. Err.	Z	P>z	95% Conf. Interval	95% Conf. Interval
PCM	-.1225095	.1305723	-0.94	0.348	-.3784264	.1334075

This is used where the dependent variable (PCM) consists of more than two categories which can be ordered in a meaningful way. Using an ordered logistic regression as set out in Table 16, there is no evidence to suggest an association between psychological commitment and sport followed p = 0.348.

5.4.5 Research question five

Males exhibit higher levels of psychological commitment in regards to following a team (Heere and James, 2007; Melnick & Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011).

Table 17 - T-test on psychological commitment difference between the sexes

PCM – Sexes	Freq.	Mean (pcm)	sd (pcm)	med (pcm)
Male	177	2.33898306	.9159602	2
Female	58	1.93103445	.8758368	2

First we divided the data in Table 17 into two separate groups (males and females), description of sample means, standard deviations and medians by gender. It appears that the mean and median are reasonably similar within each gender. So we now need to test the hypothesis that the population mean PCM-score of all males and females are the same.

Table 18 - T-test comparing the mean values of a quantitative variable observed in two independent groups.

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev	95% Conf. Interval	95% Conf. Interval
Male	177	2.338983	.0688478	.9159602	2.20311	2.474857
Female	58	1.931034	.115003	.8758368	1.700745	2.161324
Combined	235	2.238298	.0601047	.9213872	2.119882	2.346713
Diff		.4079486	.1371227		.1377897	.6781074

$$\text{Diff} = \text{mean}(Male) - \text{mean}(Female)$$

$$t = 2.9751$$

$$H_0: \text{diff} = 0$$

$$\text{degrees of freedom} = 233$$

$$H_a: \text{diff} < 0$$

$$H_a: \text{diff} \neq 0$$

$$H_a: \text{diff} > 0$$

$$\Pr(T < t) = 0.9984$$

$$\Pr(T > t) = 0.0032$$

$$\Pr(T > t) = 0.0016$$

From table 18 the T- test suggests strong evidence for the alternate hypothesis in that there is a difference in psychological commitment between males and females $p = *0.0032$.

Table 19 – Chi-squared test used to test the null hypothesis of no association

PCM	Male	Female	Total
Awareness	37 20.90	23 39.66	60 25.53
Attraction	60 33.90	17 29.31	77 32.77
Attachment	63 35.59	17 29.31	80 34.04
Allegiance	17 9.60	1 1.72	18 7.66
Total	177 100.00	58 100.00	235 100.00

$$\text{Pearson chi2 (3)} = 10.3450 \quad \text{Pr} = 0.016$$

In table 19 the number in the brackets is the degrees of freedom. Pr is the corresponding P value or probability associated with the chi-squared value for three degrees of freedom. The result $p = *0.016$ means that the probability of a chi-squared value this large (or larger), assuming the null hypothesis of no association is true, is very small i.e. smaller than 0.05. The chi-squared value is the difference between the observed and expected numbers, and the higher it is the less likely it is to be due to chance (Berenson, Levine and Krehbiel, 2006). From table 19 we are able to conclude that there is evidence for the alternate hypothesis to suggest a real association between psychological commitment and gender.

5.4.6 Research question six

Sports media consumption differs depending on the sport consumed and the age of the fan (Bennett, Sargas & Dees, 2006).

Table 20 - Frequency of consuming sports radio by sport consumed

Radio Consumption	Rugby	Cricket	Soccer	Other	Total
Once a day	20 18.87	1 4.35	10 40.00	3 60.00	34 21.38
A few times per week	29 27.36	13 56.62	7 28.00	1 20.00	50 31.45
A few times per month	35 33.02	5 21.74	4 16.00	1 20.00	45 28.30
Never	22 20.75	4 17.39	4 16.00	0 0.00	30 18.87
Total	106 100.00	23 100.00	25 100.00	5 100.00	159 100.00

$$\text{Pearson chi2 (9)} = 20.3597 \quad \text{Pr} = 0.016$$

In Table 20 it can be seen that there is a relationship between radio consumption and sport consumed ($p<0.05$). We can conclude that radio consumption has an impact on fans across all sports. While we had a decent sample of rugby fans, sports radio consumption needs to be researched further for other sports, however, the results are suggestive in nature.

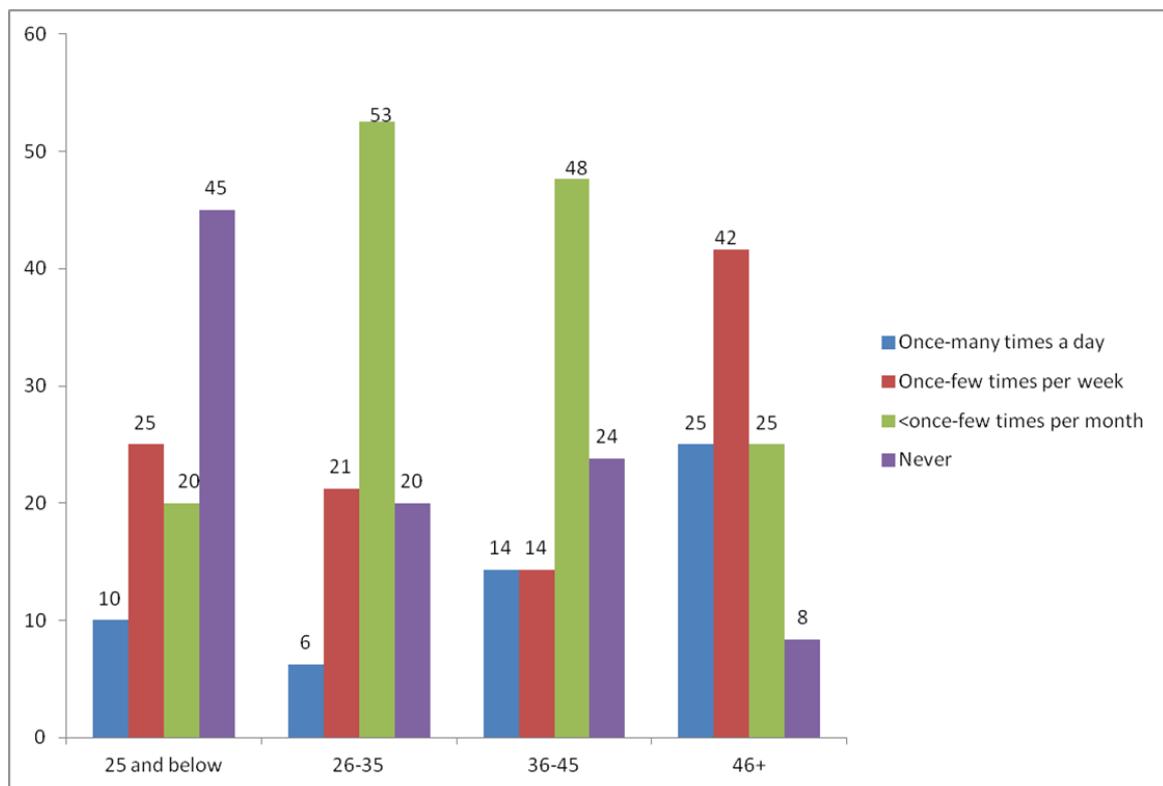
Table 21 - Frequency of consuming sports newspaper print by sport consumed

Newspaper Consumption	Rugby	Cricket	Soccer	Other	Total
Once a day	23 24.73	1 5.56	7 36.84	0 00.00	31 22.79
A few times per week	34 36.56	9 50.00	6 31.58	1 16.67	50 36.76
A few times per month	20 21.51	5 27.78	3 15.79	2 33.33	30 22.06
Never	16 17.20	3 16.67	3 15.79	3 50.00	25 18.38
Total	93 100.00	18 100.00	19 100.00	6 100.00	136 100.00

Pearson chi2 (9) = 11.5649 Pr = 0.239

Table 21 indicates that no relationship exists between sports consumed and consumption of sports print newspaper. No relationship was evident between sport consumed and other media platforms, i.e. social media, sports websites or sports magazines.

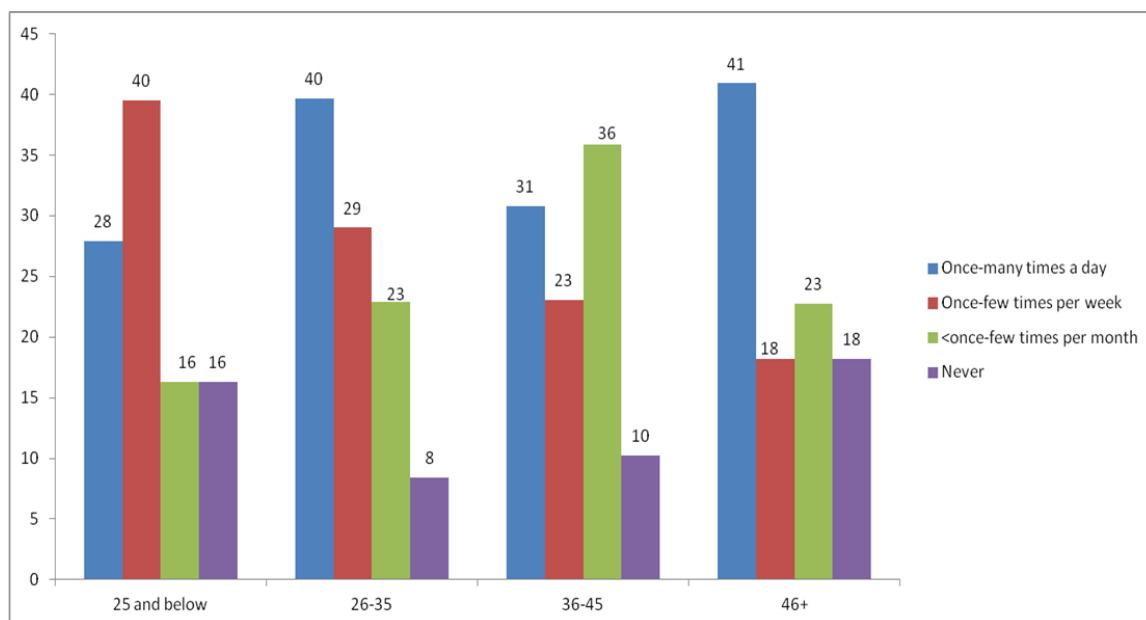
Table 22 – Frequency of consuming sports-related magazines (print) by age



Pearson chi2(9) = 17.4985 Pr = 0.041

Table 22 indicates that there is relationship between the sports-related magazine consumption and age ($p<0.05$). We can conclude that those aged 25 and below are rarely reading sports-related magazines, whereas those aged over 46+ read them a few times a week.

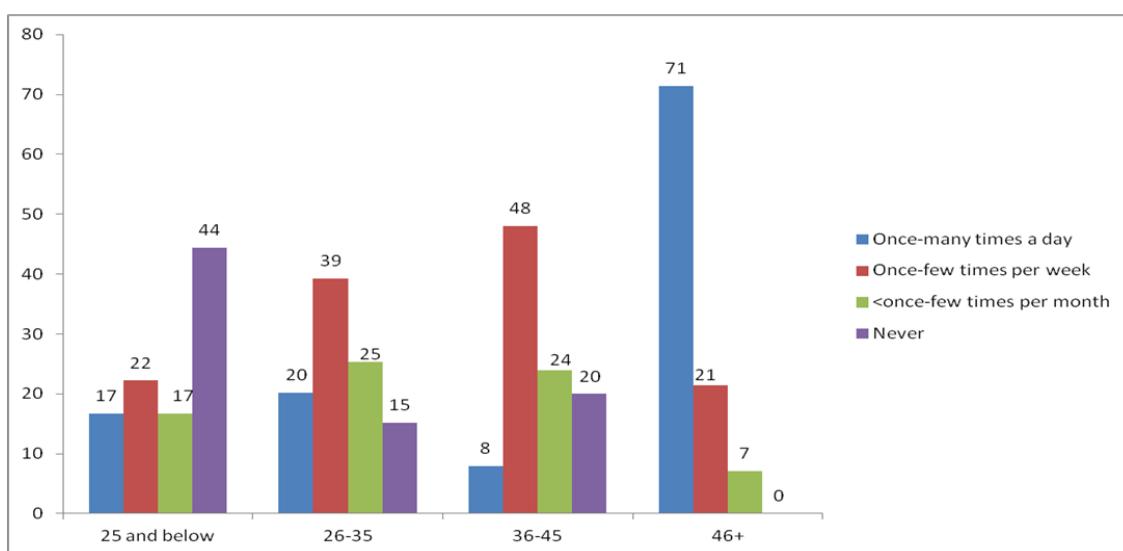
Table 23 - Frequency of consuming sports-related website by age



Pearson chi2(9) = 11.1248 Pr = 0.267

Table 23 indicates there is no relationship between consuming sports-related websites and age ($p>0.05$).

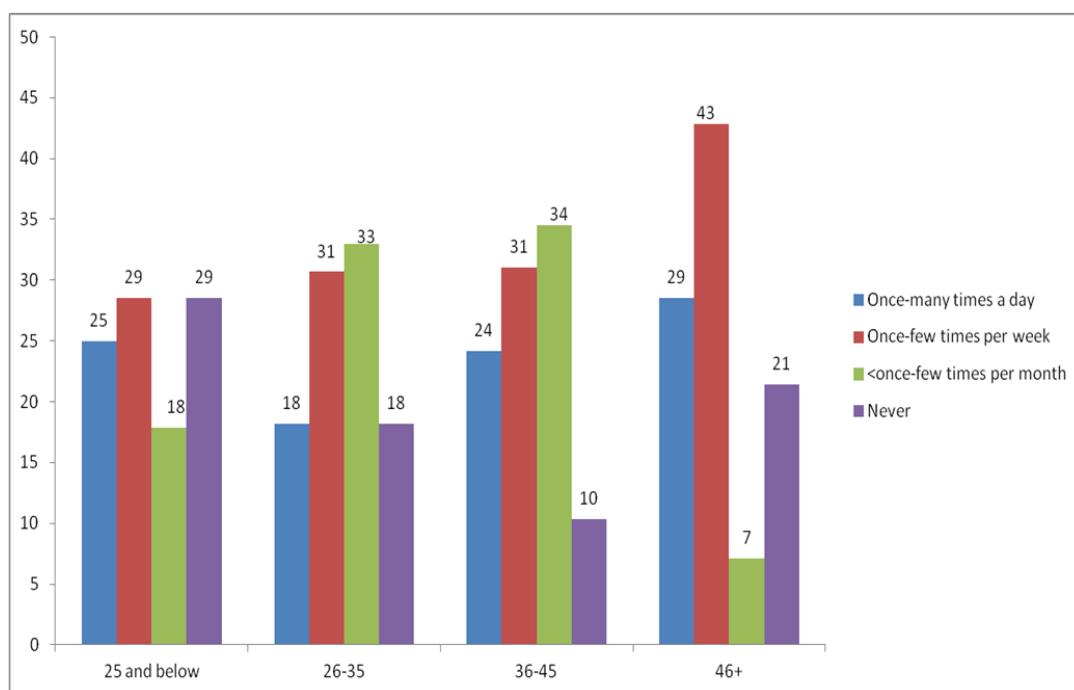
Table 24 - Frequency of consuming sports newspapers by age



Pearson chi2(9) = 32.1397 Pr = 0.00

Table 24 indicates there is a relationship between consuming sports print newspapers and age ($p>0.05$). While the numbers are small and we need to be careful about making such suggestions, the results are suggestive. It can be seen in the above table that newspapers read by the older generation, 71% of 46+ age group read newspapers on a daily basis and 48% of the 36 to 45 age group read newspapers a few times a week.

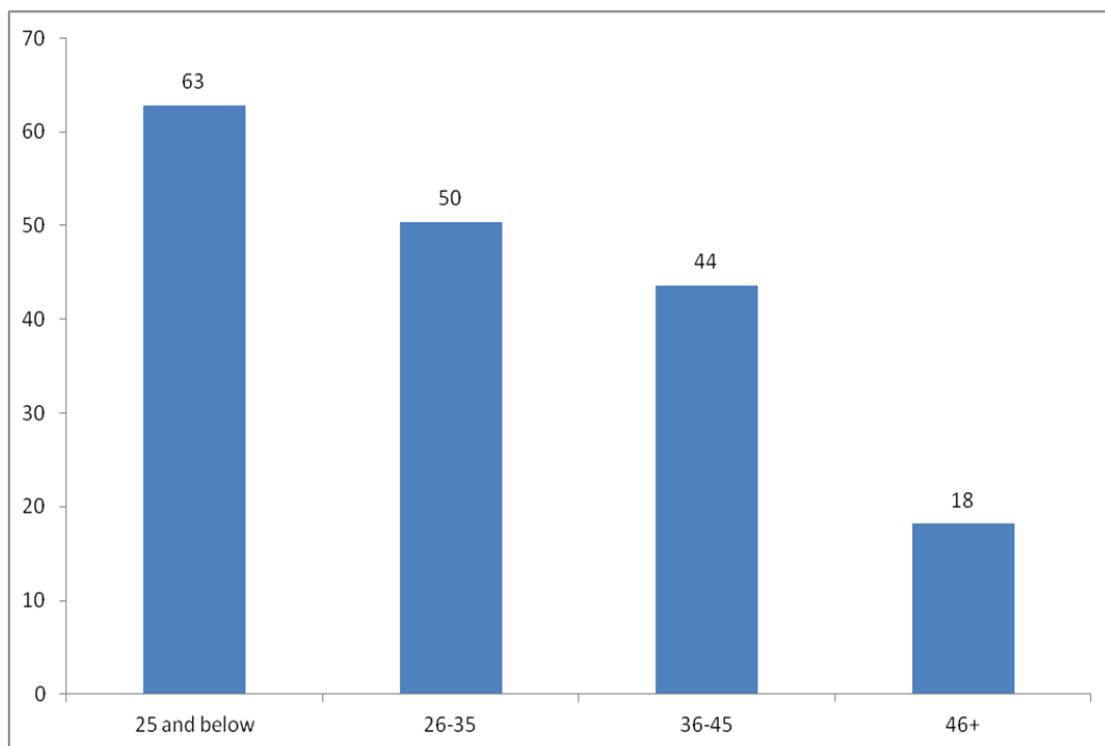
Table 25 - Frequency of consuming sports talk radio by age



Pearson chi2(9) = 8.6484 Pr = 0.470

From the above Table 25 we can see that no relationship exists between the consumption of sports talk radio and age.

Table 26 - Frequency of consuming social media by age



Pearson chi2 (3) = 12.1740 Pr = 0.007

Table 26 indicates that there is strong relationship between social media consumption and age ($p<0.05$). As can be seen in table 26, social media is having a bigger impact on the younger generation. 66% of fans aged 25 and below consume social media frequently, while 50% of 26 to 35 year olds are consuming social media frequently. As age increases social media consumption decreases and the consumption of other media forms can be seen.

6. Discussion

6.1 Discussion 1: The greater the level of fan psychological connection, the greater the number of sports media sources consumed.

As we have seen in Master's (2012, Figure 2) review on the year of sports, sports consumption is increasing globally. It is more evident that teams and sportspeople now more than ever need to find new ways to connect to their fans to maintain relevance (James, Kolbe and Trail, 2002; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Hutchins, 2011). As indicated in the results found for research question six, for future survival, teams need to develop connections with loyal fan bases (James, *et al.*, 2002). Fans form connections to teams, although for each fan this is based on a various influences; be it the ethnical, peers, gender, family, the community, work or religion (Heere and James, 2007; Melnick and Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012). As a fan moves along the PCM scale from awareness to allegiance they seek ways to maximise their consumption of amazing feats in the sporting world (Smith and Westerbeek, 2010). Change in the sports industry has been dramatic and with media sophistication continuously progressing we would expect highly committed fans to consume more sports media. This was reflected in table 8, where those fans that exhibited stronger attachment and allegiance towards the team consumed more media sources.

Highly committed fans seek interpersonal interaction with the teams they follow, which will impact the way they consume sports media (Holt, 1995). Fans desire to seek more information about their teams and sports idols, which has led to a variety of new media platforms being introduced to satisfy these needs. This was highlighted in table 11, where fans that displayed a higher allegiance to a team followed more sportspeople from their favourite team on social media. Previously, consumption was limited to traditional media formats presenting information in a certain way or attending a match. However, new media has allowed for greater unprecedented levels of interaction between fans and their idols. The results indicated that while television was still the most consumed media format, generation consumption of media is evident as seen in table six.

The surveyed fans engage in various forms of media to meet their needs according to their level of psychological commitment to the team. The majority of sports fans consume between four or more sources of media (68.94%), while only 3.83% do not consume media at all. Investigating this phenomenon further we analysed the results based on the fans PCM level. From the results, those fans who consumed five or more sources were more likely to fall under attachment (46%) or allegiance (67%), i.e. the higher end of the PCM spectrum. The results showed a dose response relationship with those fans displaying a higher psychological connection consuming more media platforms. While some fans that fell under the awareness or attraction phase on the PCM spectrum consumed more than five sources of media, the majority fell on the upper echelon of the scale.

These results confirm Smith and Westerbeek's (2010) findings that sports media consumption will continue to increase (Hutchins, 2011) through new mediums. The results imply social media is having an effect on sports media consumption. Smith and Westerbeek also argue that due to our desire to consume miraculous sporting events, sport will continue to push itself in ways beyond what fans can comprehend. They go as far to say that 'sport is rife with gene doping and a present force in today's market, as such; our desire for increased consumption will make it a practice available to all participants' (Smith and Westerbeek, 2010, p.352). However, that is something that goes beyond the scope of this study.

As per Lock *et al.* (2012) discussion, this is good news for sports marketers. Through understanding how many sources of media fans consume, they will have an indication of where they will fall on the PCM scale (Funk and James, 2006). As the results indicated, the more media sources consumed the more likely the fan would be in the allegiance or attraction stage of the PCM framework. Being able to understand where fans fall on the scale, marketers will be able to direct their strategy to each specific segment (Wann and Branscombe, 1993; Bennett *et al.*, 2006). As fans consume various media types they develop an increased affinity with the team they support, which sees the majority of those fans fall on the upper end of the PCM scale (Funk and James, 2006; Lock *et al.*, 2012).

Lock *et al.* (2012) also indicated in their study that they found that team success drove fans' consumption patterns and saw fans' attitudes strengthen at the awareness and

attachment stage due to satisfying various needs of association. This study did not take into consideration which team's fans supported and it would have made for an interesting dynamic to see if those fans that consumed more media supported teams that were successful.

The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater number of sports media sources consumed, no matter which platform it is delivered on. The results of the research indicated those higher on the PCM scale consumed a greater number of sports media sources.

6.2 Discussion 2 and 3: The greater the level of PCM, the greater the engagement with social media platforms. The higher the level of PCM the higher the engagement, with Twitter being the social medium of choice for sports fans.

Social media is having a profound effect on the world, especially in the sports industry. The way in which sports firms are able to engage with their fan bases has evolved and will continue to do so as long as fans keep thirsting for greater interaction (Blaszka, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012). To date, empirical research is at loggerheads to understand which social medium sports firms and athletes should be engaging with (Hur *et al.*, 2007; Pegoraro, *et al.*, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Hutchins, 2011; Özsoy, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012). The two main social mediums in question are those of Facebook and Twitter. While Facebook's followers in regards to numbers are more impressive, Twitter's following is rapidly emerging. What researchers need to understand is that these tools provide different needs and engagement for fans. Sports firms and marketers need to understand the different roles these media play in fan interaction.

The way social media has spread globally has allowed sports firms to reach their target market in ways never experienced before (Gibbons and Dixon, 2010; Özsoy, 2011). This was evident in the way fans were consuming sports media across various platforms as seen in table six. Before social media interaction, the closest way a fan could interact with an athlete was through attending a match (Blaszka, 2011). However, social media has changed that need to attend matches and has allowed a closer form of engagement with athletes than previously experienced. Through social media engagement, fans are able to

establish a relationship, gain greater insights and feel as though they are influencing an athlete's performance (Özsoy, 2011). This interaction has come in the forms of following sportspeople or a team, as well as posting comments regularly and during the game on social media, as shown in tables 10, 11, 12 and 13.

Fans are not only able to engage at a different level with athletes, but also with other fans located in all corners of the globe to share their own experiences on the team (Hur *et al.*, 2007). The interaction afforded through social media allows fans to progress and build on where they are located on the PCM scale. Those fans that post more regularly on social media fall on the upper end of the PCM framework, as seen in table 12. Previously we were only afforded the information provided to us by traditional media formats; however, through the internet fans' are able to find more knowledge in their own time. Through greater information and interaction online, fans will build on their awareness of the team and sport. From there social media helps develop their attraction, if they are interested, and onto the upper scale of the PCM framework where they develop an allegiance.

To date, social media is a relatively new phenomenon in the sports industry and the impact it is having on engagement is still relatively unknown. Most research has looked at the way in which athletes are engaging with social media and not fan engagement (Kassing and Sanderson, 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). The purpose of this study was to understand where fans fell on the PCM scale and to see if this had an impact on their social media sports consumption. From there, we took it one step further to understand which the social medium of choice was for sports fan media consumption.

The socio-demographic information collected through the questionnaire indicated that all age groups were avid users of social media. While the numbers of social media consumers of those aged 46 and above is minimal, the results are suggestive that social media is also being consumed by the older generation. Facebook was the most popular social media consumed, with 168 fans (71.5% of the sample) being Facebook users. The second most popular social medium consumed was Twitter, with 108 fans (46% of the sample) being Twitter consumers. Females are, on average, higher consumers of social media compared to their male counterparts. 82.8% of females consume Facebook compared to 67.8% of males, while 51.7% of females consume Twitter compared to 44.1%

of males. On these results alone, one could argue that the results are consistent with Özsoy (2011) and Hur *et al.* (2012) findings of Facebook being the medium of choice.

Other interesting socio-demographic information revealed that social media was having a greater impact on consumption for the younger generation (Table 6), which could have been expected. This is consistent with the results found in research conducted on generation X and Y (Bennett *et al.*, 2006). The results also indicated that the black population results between Facebook and Twitter consumption were similar where it differed between 20 and 31% for all other race groups. However, we need to take into account the relative numbers of the sample group and are wary about making sweeping statements about the general population.

Sports marketers, teams and athletes should be encouraged to use social media to reach their target audience, thus allowing the fan greater insight and increased value of interaction with their heroes (Wu *et al.*, 2012). Obviously, this would depend on the target market they are trying to reach, as revealed in table six. If sports teams, coaches and players do not already have social media accounts in place they should be enlightened as to the power of the medium (Blaszka, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2012). Through the use of social media, sports firms and athletes have the ability to strengthen the bond with fans thus helping fans form greater attraction, attachment and allegiance to the team. As seen in the results in chapter five, those fans that were more interactive on social media showed higher levels of attachment and allegiance on the PCM framework.

While marketers may be keen to rely on traditional media forms, social media is starting to make an impact, especially with the younger generation of fans' media consumption patterns. From examining the fans' PCM level and how many teams or athletes they follow on social media, there appears to be a dose relationship between PCM and the number of teams followed. As seen in Table 11, the more teams or athletes followed, the higher on the PCM scale the fans appeared, thus confirming the insights offered above by Blaszka (2011) and Wu *et al.* (2012) that social media is becoming an important fan offering as it meets fans' social identity needs.

This was also replicated in the findings for those fans posting on social media sites. Those fans that showed higher allegiance to their teams posted more often on social media than

those that only showed awareness (see table 12). However, due to the small number of respondents in each category we need to be aware that while the results are suggestive they are by no means conclusive. These results were also found in those fans passing comment during the match. The fans falling under the attachment (66.25%) and allegiance (88.89%) of the PCM scale were posting more regularly on social media live during the game. Hutchins (2011, p.242) suggests in his findings that the reason for these results is due to fans ‘seeking unfolding match statistics, online commentary and comments by other fans as the contest progresses’. Through the introduction of Web 2.0, the interaction afforded to fans has changed the way we consume and engage with media.

After examining all South African sports teams in major competitions on the internet (three national associations, six teams in the Super Rugby, 12 Currie Cup teams, 16 Premier Soccer League teams and six domestic cricket teams – 45 in total) only 75.5% have Facebook accounts and 64.4% Twitter accounts advertised on their websites. Of the above teams and associations, 13.5% did not even have a website. As can be seen from above, those teams that are not engaging with the internet or social media are missing out on a perfect opening to engage with fans. Through increased interaction with fans the monetisation of the product will increase as seen in Figure 1. Sports teams and marketers need to understand the ability they have through social media to increase the awareness of their product. Through increased awareness they will be able to increase the value of their product to rights holders, which in turn should see an increase in revenues back to the sports team or athlete. To help fans change from awareness to an attachment, teams need to be able to use the tools available to help them interact with their fan base (Pegoraro, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Hutchins, 2011). Further, sports teams and organisations need to understand the relevance of each social media tool to understand if it meets the requirements of their target market, as some tools are more relevant than others.

While social media was having an impact on fans’ sport media consumption, television was still the most popular form of sports consumption, with 81% of the population consuming television. As such, television is still a popular form of medium to engage with sports fan consumers. After television, other traditional forms of media were losing their power in the market place; however, this depended on the age group that was being targeted. Hutchins (2011, p.251) study concurs, alluding to sport consumption changing from a ‘broadcast and print-centred activity to one where online platforms augment

communication, viewing and interaction'. The younger generation consume sports in different ways compared to previous generations, which was reflected in the results found by Bennett, *et al.* (2006) and Blaszka (2011), thus forcing us to think of new ways to engage with fans that increases their level of interaction with the teams and athletes they follow (Hutchins, 2011).

Marketers need to understand who their target audience is as they have a chance of missing the fans intended for consumption if they do not choose the right platform to engage the audience. Without understanding how fans look to maximise their experience through media consumption, marketers will lose the impact they have with their targeted demographic (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). This is more imperative for new teams entering the market who are yet to build a presence with their fan base (Lock *et al.*, 2012). If teams and athletes are unable to engage their fan base through the strategies chosen for fan engagement, the long-term survival of the team could be in jeopardy (Bhattacharya and Elsbach, 2002).

The results have indicated that new media is playing a role in articulating and maintaining fans' social identities, as well as increasing their psychological commitment to the team they support as found in Gibbons and Dixon's (2010) research. New media formats have allowed for fans to express their association in a variety of different ways. Other fans are able to see one's commitment to a team or athlete through the comments a fan makes on their social media profile, or the photo's they choose to share. The results have revealed that those fans that fall higher on the PCM scale spend more time devoted to their association with the team (Wann and Branscombe, 1993). As new media evolves, fans will seek ways to maximise their enjoyment of sport consumption (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Smith and Westerbeek, 2010). Those fans that show high allegiance or attachment are consuming social media to help them develop greater insight into their teams than ever before (Hur *et al.*, 2007).

Social media has allowed for unprecedented levels of access to professional athletes and teams never before witnessed (Kassing and Sanderson, 2010). While not fully founded in this research, Özsoy's (2011) study indicates that social media is becoming a popular alternative medium over traditional media. Our research has indicated that this is slowly starting to take trend in South Africa; however, it could take a few years for our study to

replicate similar results found overseas. As the impact of social media spreads through Africa with better connectivity available, one would expect similar results reflected to that of Özsoy (2011), due to real time unfiltered messages being able to be disseminated to fans.

Empirical research to date has argued over which social media platform has the greatest impact in influencing sports media consumption. Özsoy (2011) and Wu *et al.* (2012) argue that Facebook is the medium of choice due to the sheer number of Facebook users. The reason Özsoy (2011) also argues so aggressively in favour of Facebook is due to the fact that at the time of his research, Facebook was translated into 70 global languages. However, Kassing and Sanderson (2010), Blaszka (2011) and Hutchins (2011) indicate that Twitter is the medium of choice for sports fan media consumers. Kassing and Sanderson's (2010) argument is based on the fact that Twitter allows for increased parasocial interaction between athletes and fans. Özsoy's (2011, p.170) argument about Facebook is contradicted by himself though stating 'Facebook gives friends, while Twitter give you followers'. The quintessential essence of the fandom practice is being a follower. Kassing and Sanderson (2010, p.124) found that Twitter provided a level 'of detail and sense of immediacy absent in other media'. Hur *et al.*, (2007, p.536) study revealed that one thing that is certain between the two most popular forms of social media is 'online sport consumers have motivation to seek convenience, up-to-date information, diversion, socialisation and economic benefit'. Through use of social media, fans help develop their psychological attachment to the team they support.

Our findings indicate that Facebook was the most popular form of social media consumed (71.5%), while Twitter was the second most popular (46%). However, while Facebook was the most popular form of social media consumed, our results concluded that there was no significant relationship between Facebook sports media consumption and the PCM scale $p>0.05$ ($p = *0.367$). On the other hand, the results for Twitter sports media consumption and the PCM scale indicated that a relationship did exist between Twitter consumption and the psychological commitment to the team $p<0.05$ ($p = *0.024$), thus indicating Twitter as the social media of choice for sports fans media consumption. However, due to the limited numbers in the results we need to be careful of making this assumption, yet the results are suggestive that Twitter will continue to influence the fan-athlete relationship (Kassing and Sanderson, 2010).

In conclusion, the higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the engagement with social media platforms – the results of the research indicated those higher on the PCM scale had greater engagement with social media platforms.

The higher the level of psychological commitment to the team, the greater the interaction will be with Twitter, relative to all other social media platforms – the results of the research suggested those higher on the PCM scale had greater interaction with Twitter, relative to all other social media platforms.

6.3 Discussion 4: Psychological commitment of fans is independent of the sport they follow.

Most empirical research to date has looked at a single-sport view in regards to studying the sports industry (Bristow and Schneider, 2002; James *et al.*, 2002; Funk and James, 2006; Heere and James, 2007; Hu and Tang, 2010; Kassing and Sanderson, 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011; Wallace *et al.*, 2011). There may be several factors for only focusing on a single-sport ideology while conducting research. Some of these may include having a large enough sample to make a general statement about the population, an easy to find convenient sample and wanting to know something specific about followers of a particular sport.

This research looked to take the findings to date one step further in analysing the sports industry and being able to make a general assumption that sports fan followers were unique. As such, fans deserved to be studied uniquely instead of having wide spread statements made about the whole population. The research carried out a chi-squared test on the findings and found no evidence to suggest an association between psychological commitment and sport followed. Taking it one step further, we also investigated the results with an ordered logistic regression, which also found no evidence to suggest an association between psychological commitment and sport followed. However, the researcher believes that due to the small sample of fans from cricket and soccer who participated in the research it inhibited the potential results. The researcher expected to find that differences at least existed between fans of soccer compared to that of cricket and rugby. Further study is required before this assumption can be ruled out altogether.

The psychological commitment of fans is independent of the sport they follow – the results indicated that there was no association between sport followed and the psychological commitment of a fan.

6.4 Discussion 5: Males exhibit higher levels on the PCM scale in regards to sport fandom.

Previous empirical research has suggested that there is a difference in the level of team support and psychological allegiance between the sexes (Schell and Rodriguez, 2000; Heere and James, 2007; Melnick and Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011). This is dependent on the environment in which the individual has grown up in and is impacted by a number of factors. While Stewart *et al.* (2003) argue that authentic fans, male or female, grow up in the same environment and, as such, should not show any difference in their commitment to the team, Melnick and Wann's study (2010) indicated that the difference between the sexes is as much as 20%. If a difference is evident, then it would make sense for marketers to adopt different strategies for each of the sexes. Marketers need to understand the different roles that sport plays in making up the identity of male and female fans (Melnick and Wann, 2010).

As previous studies were in conflict as to whether gender played an influence on sport consumption, the purpose of this study was to understand if the psychological commitment profile of males and females were similar. To understand the differences between the genders several tests were conducted. First we ran a T-test to see if the mean and median of male and female fans were similar, which the data concluded it was (table 17). We then ran another T-test to compare the mean values of a quantitative variable observed across two independent groups. Table 18 suggested strong evidence against the null hypothesis; that is that there was no difference in the psychological commitment between males and females. To test the assumption further we ran a chi-squared test to test the null hypothesis of no association. Our results, which can be seen in table 19, allow us to conclude that there is a difference between psychological commitment and gender of fans. Table 19 illustrated that male fans exhibited higher levels on the PCM scale, compared to their female counterparts. This research is consistent with the findings conducted on the

difference between gender and sport consumption (Heere and James, 2007; Melnick and Wann, 2010).

While Stewart *et al.* (2003) research concluded that no differences exist between authentic fans, further research is needed to classify what is seen as an authentic fan and the reason why the results of their study may differ to others as well as our findings.

This finding suggests that the way sports teams and sportspeople promote themselves with each gender needs to be gender specific to ensure they have engaged with each sex at the level required to meet their social identity needs. Sport fills different roles in society for the sexes; as such we need to understand these nuances to ensure we fulfil the needs of each group. As Stewart *et al.* (2003) indicated, sports consumption is multi-faceted and to reach key markets marketers need to take cognisance of the differences that exist in the industry.

Chiweshe (2011) insinuates the differences in gender sports consumption are due to family tradition that exists between males, especially in African society where this is passed from one generation of males to the next. Melnick and Wann (2010) indicate that males and females have different socialising agents; however, the biggest family agent was the father. Rodriguez (2005) also notes that males and females are stereotyped into specific roles in society, which has an impact on one's identity. This is normally imparted at a young age for males and females and, although there is the odd exception, the norm is males exhibit greater passion for sport thus falling at the higher end of the PCM scale (Melnick and Wann, 2010; Chiweshe, 2011). The role friends played as a socialising agent also had an impact on sport consumption. Peers have the ability to influence our social identity and behaviour. 'Friends play an important role in the male sport fan socialisation process' (Melnick and Wann, 2010, p.463). This is clearly evident in the school playground where males re-enact with their friends their favourite sports hero accomplishments (Chiweshe, 2011).

Melnick and Wann (2010) argue that history's role in shaping society's expectation of masculinity has influenced sports media consumption (Heere and James, 2007) and to some extent excluded females. Throughout history sport has been viewed as an instrument to express the male identity (Heere and James, 2007). Melnick and Wann's

(2010) study also indicated that female sports media consumption differed across continents. Something else that impacted on male and female consumption is the physical attractiveness of the athletes. Madrigal (2006) indicates that women who consume male sports appreciate the physical attractiveness of the athlete. As such, marketers will not only need to adapt to the differences gender has in sports consumption, but also the expectation of each country they are marketing to. What works for females in one country won't necessarily work in another country, unless sport plays a similar role in the social fabric. What is evident from the research is that females are greater consumers of social media (table 6) and if marketers can unlock this medium's potential they may see female psychological commitment to the team evolve.

Due to the way professional sport has evolved through history, females have not had the opportunity to express themselves through sport as a social agent. The professional sport era has been dominated by male sports teams. Only recently has focus been given to creating professional women leagues across various sports (Heere and James, 2007). It will be interesting to see what impact this has on female fans' sports media consumption moving forward. One would expect as these leagues become more popular, that younger female sports media consumption will differ compared to older generations. As Africa does not have as many professional female sports teams, one would expect female sports fan consumption to be lower in Africa compared to those countries that have professional women leagues, such as the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). While it was expected that women professional teams would be advantageous in attracting female fans, attendance at the WNBA has remained considerably lower when compared to its male counterpart (Heere and James, 2007). Rodriguez (2005) claims that this is due to the difference in passion exhibited between males and females, and as such females are less passionate about the teams they support.

Males exhibit higher levels of psychological commitment in regards to following a team. In conclusion, the results of the research indicated that males exhibited higher levels of psychological commitment in regards to following a team.

6.5 Discussion 6: Sports media consumption differs depending on sport consumed and age of fan.

Bennett *et al.* (2006) and Heere and James (2007) studies suggest that various demographics have an impact on the consumption of sports media; for instance, sport and age of the consumer. If that is the case then one would expect differing levels of sport consumption depending on the sport consumed. This would also coincide with discussion four on the psychological commitment of fans being independent of the sport they follow. Bennett *et al.* (2006) study focused on the differences between age groups of various fans and the sports consumed. They revealed that different generations have different expectations of sports consumption, which was reflected in our results in table six on sports media consumption patterns.

Our research indicated that there are minor differences between sports media consumption and media consumed. The only media that seemed to have any sort of relationship in regards to media consumption was sports radio consumption. While the sample is small, it is suggestive to indicate a relationship exists between sports media consumed and sports consumption (table 20). From our findings we can conclude radio has an impact on sports media consumers. Radio seems to have a greater impact on football followers; however, as the sample is small it is difficult to make any assumption. After conducting a chi-squared test the findings indicated a relationship existed as $p < 0.05$ ($p = *0.016$).

Younger-generation fans are seeking more thrills and spills from sports media consumption as they look for new ways to express themselves. As such, you would expect their forms of media consumption to differ to that of the older generation (Bennett *et al.*, 2006). This was evident in our results as reflected in tables 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. These tables showed that sports media consumption patterns are changing with the generations. As trendy, emerging sports become more mainstream, the way in which they market themselves to fans will evolve to ensure that fans are able to achieve maximisation from sports media consumption (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). The market is becoming saturated with various sports emerging, all of whom are fighting for valuable advertising spend to ensure the long-term survival of their sport. To guarantee their survival, these sports need to understand who their target market is and use the relevant media platform to engage their

audience. Through the right media form of engagement, sports should see increased psychological commitment to the team / sport from their fan base.

Our research has found that various forms of media used to promote sports consumption to fans is impacted by age. Looking at sports-related magazine consumption by age (table 22), it is obvious there is a change in consumption by age group. Those aged 46 and over read magazines on a more regular weekly basis than the younger generations. Those in the 26 to 45 age range are only likely to read sports-related magazines on a monthly basis, where those below 25 are less likely to read sports-related magazines. The p value *0.041 indicated that there is a relationship between sports-related magazine consumption and age. This is relevant to those trying to market a new sport or increase fan sports media consumption. If you do not understand the demographic you are marketing to, it could lead to wasted advertising spend on irrelevant media formats.

When investigating the impact of sports-related websites and age, we found there was no profound impact on the relationship between age and sport website consumption (table 23). From Table 23 it can be seen that all age groups consume sports-related websites in various frequencies. Another medium which had no impact on sports fan media consumption and age was that of radio (table 25), although radio did impact demographic findings by sport consumed as seen in table 20.

Another medium that impacted sports fan media consumption by age was that of sports-related newspaper consumption, as can be seen in table 24. From the table it is evident the younger generation do not read sports-related newspapers as much as the older generation. Those aged 46 and over were more likely to read sports-related newspapers on a daily basis compared to any other age group. While those aged between 26 to 45 read sports-related print newspapers on a weekly basis those aged 25 and below hardly ever read sports related print newspapers. The p value found *0.00, indicating that there is a strong relationship between age and sports-related print newspapers. However, we need to be careful of making this assumption due to the small numbers in our research and, as such, can only propose that the results are suggestive of a relationship existing.

The latest form of media to materialise that has an impact on the masses has been that of social media. Due to more traditional media formats having an effect on sports media

consumption, it would be safe for one to assume that social media would also have a strong relationship. As can be seen in table 26 our results indicated that this relationship was evident. The p value found was *0.007, which indicates a strong relationship is apparent between age and social media consumption. This is indicative of the results found by Blaszka (2011) and Özsoy (2011).

The results found have confirmed the findings of Bennett *et al.* (2006) that sports media consumption is effected by various demographics, while we did not find sufficient evidence to suggest that sport consumed had an impact on media consumption. This may have been down to the research only taking into account the traditional mainstream sport forms of rugby, cricket and soccer. If extreme and emerging sports had been taken into consideration as in the Bennett *et al.* (2006) study, we may have been able to confirm their findings.

In conclusion, sports media consumption differs depending on sport consumed and age of fan. The results of the research indicated that sports media consumption on sport consumed has minimal impact on media consumed; however, age showed various relationships between sports fans and media consumption.

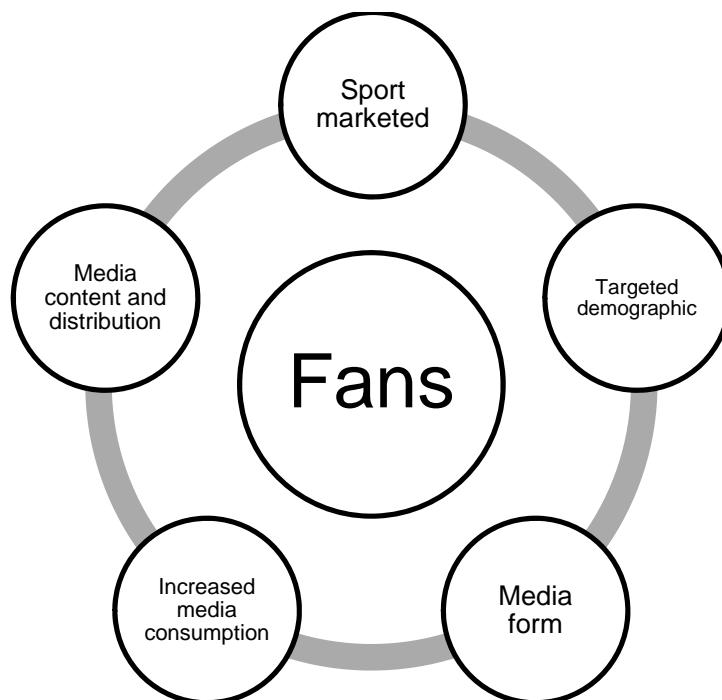
6.6 Model proposed by Robins from the results

The construction of the team identification and sports media consumption framework came to fruition as the research evolved. The framework began with an indication of the challenges faced in understanding media consumption patterns in chapter one. The literature review in chapter two allowed an understanding of how team identification through the PCM framework influenced a fans' commitment to their team. Chapter two also identified new media emerging and the potential impact it had on fans' sports media consumption, as well as the variables that affect a fans' social identity. The results from chapter five and discussion in chapter six were merged to form the following framework shown in figure 5. Figure 5 suggests sports marketers need to take cognisance of the sport they are trying to market to fans.

While not evident through our research, previous research by Bennett *et al.* (2006) has indicated that sports type indicated influences sports media consumption. Next, sports

marketers and organisations need to consider the targeted demographic of who they are trying to reach. Once they understand who they are targeting they can then decide on specific media platforms to use for engagement. This in turn should see an increase in the psychological continuum of fans towards team and athlete engagement, thus increasing media consumption and revenues towards the team. Through understanding this model, rights holders, commercial interests and media organisations will be able to augment the fan relationship.

Figure 5 – Sports fan media consumption and PCM proposed by Robins findings



Looking at the sport marketed, one needs to understand if the sport falls under the banner of a traditional sport, an extreme sport or an emerging sport. If it is a traditional sport as predominately focused on in this study, i.e. cricket, rugby and soccer, then the fans targeted will have specific consumption needs that need to be met. These needs would be similar to extreme sports and emerging sports; however, consumption platforms will differ.

The consumption patterns of these fans will be different due to the way fans are able to engage with these sports.

Next, marketers or sporting organisations need to understand the target demographic they expect to consume the sport. Different genders have different sports consumption expectations to meet their social identity requirements as do the age groups. What is popular to target one group with, will not work with another group. As such, marketers and sports organisations will need to have specific marketing angles to reach all of the market. If marketers, sports organisations or broadcasters use a blanket approach then they are likely to miss out on reaching some of the target market.

Once they have decided on the target market they are trying to reach, they will then focus on the specific media they should use to reach this demographic. If females are the targeted demographic, then television and social media will be the more appropriate media form to reach fans. However, if it is the older generation then television and newspapers would be the medium used. While if it is the younger generation you are targeting, then television, web and social media will be the most appropriate media forms.

If marketers, commercial organisations and media organisations are able to get this combination right, it will result in an increase in the level of psychological commitment of fans to the team or sport they follow. This is because the media form used will be reaching out to the targeted demographic. It will allow fans to become more informed about what is going on with their specific sport and allow for closer interaction between sports teams and fans.

This will impact rights holders, media organisations and commercial organisations. Through understanding the various interactions these variables have on each other will impact the way fans consume the sport. From understanding each variable rights holders, media organisations and commercial organisations are able to influence the content distributed and through which channels. Rights holders should be able to increase their value by understanding these needs of their target demographic. Media organisations should be able to increase market share by segregating the market and focusing on the specific strategy needed to reach the targeted demographic. Commercial organisations will also benefit from the increase in fan interaction through the correct engagement of fans,

instead of dead-end media forms. Overall this should lead to greater monetisation for all involved as well as increasing the reach of the sport to the fans.

7. Conclusion and comments

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to make sense of the findings in line with the intention of this research, i.e. to understand the relationship between team identity and sports media consumption. Through understanding the relationship, stakeholders are able to strategise on how to optimise the usage of various media platforms to maximise sports fan interaction with their organisation or association. This chapter will include suggestions to key stakeholders based on the research findings and propose ideas for future research.

7.2 Summary of key findings

This study sought to understand the role a fans' psychological commitment to team identity has in determining a fans' sports media consumption patterns. Through the use of a variety of variables such as socio-demographics, media consumption types and patterns, as well as sport followed we were able to look in-depth at previous empirical research to see if it was applicable and where it did not try and prescribe a new model. Where differences did exist we tried to make meaning of the reason for these differences. Through the research undertakings a few key findings became evident:

1. Those fans that have a higher psychological commitment to the team consume more media sources than those fans at the lower end of the scale.
2. Those fans that exhibit a higher psychological commitment engage more with social media.
3. Those fans that display a higher psychological commitment to the team have greater interaction with social media, with Twitter being the social medium of choice for the sports industry.
4. The psychological commitment of fans across different sports display similar characteristics.
5. The psychological commitment of males to team identity is higher than that displayed by females.

6. While sport consumed does not really have an impact on the media it engages with, the age of the fan does have an impact on the medium subscribed to.

One needs to understand a fans' sports media consumption pattern. From understanding how many sources of media they consume, one is able to predict with a reasonable level of certainty where the fan will fall on the PCM scale. This is due to the various characteristics the fan displays. This is displayed through a fan's social identity and wanting to belong to a team and also for it to be known that they follow a certain team. From being able to use specific marketing strategies to engage with those fans, sports teams and organisations will be able to increase revenue spent by those fans. Fans that exhibit high levels of allegiance to a team are known to spend more money following a team.

By understanding a fan's psychological commitment to the team, marketers are able to gauge which source of media they should be engaging with. If they are trying to reach fans that are highly connected to the team, then they are able to use various forms of media to get their message across as we understand they consume more. However, those fans that only display awareness or an attraction need to be marketed to differently. Teams need to understand the nature of these fans and recognise the form of media they engage with. Fans that display characteristics on the lower end of the PCM scale are not likely to use more than one source of media for all their information. If marketers and teams are not engaging with the right medium they have the potential to miss out on this fan base altogether and will not be able to develop their commitment to the team from awareness and attraction to attachment and allegiance.

Fans that display higher levels of psychological commitment to team identity are looking to engage with sports teams and athletes at another level. They are looking beyond superficial relationships and are trying to engage with their teams, athletes and other fans that provide them with a sense of maximising their relationship. Through the use of social media platforms, fans are able to have quality interactions where they feel they have a parasocial relationship. While Facebook is the more popular platform among social media users, our study suggests that Twitter is the platform for greater engagement with fans. This means that while sporting organisations should have some presence on Facebook to help fans develop awareness and attraction towards the team, using Twitter for fan

engagement helps fans reach increased levels of attachment and allegiance in the psychological continuum.

While the research expected to see some difference in interaction by fans across different sports, it was not the case. This may have been due to having limited numbers of respondents in the study which impacted the results, or due to the fact that the respondents all came from a similar socio-economic background. The other reason why this may not have differed is due to the difference seen between traditional sports, i.e. rugby, cricket and soccer compared to extreme sports, such as those displayed in the X-games (motor cross, skateboarding, rollerblading and the likes). Before this can be ruled out altogether further research needs to be conducted with fans that are at the lower end of the socio-economic scale and equally distributed across sports. The study would have benefitted from having a more equally distributed range of fans across the sports investigated.

Gender also has an impact on the psychological commitment to the team and needs to be taken into account. Males more easily engage with the team they support due to males displaying higher levels of passion for their team. This means that when marketing to each specific gender, different strategies need to be deployed. What is evident from the study is that females engage more with social media than their male counterparts and, as such, could be used to improve the relationship between females and the teams they support. Females also have a different expectation from the relationship and marketers and sporting organisations need to understand what these expectations are.

Age also influenced the medium used to display the relationship fans had with their team. While television remained the most popular choice with fans across all age groups, the next medium engaged with fans is dependent on the age group sporting organisations and marketers are trying to engage with. As could be expected, the results suggested that if sporting organisations and marketers are targeting older generations of fans then traditional media formats are most appropriate. However, if they are trying to engage with younger fans then new media platforms need to be engaged to increase commitment to the team.

7.3 Theoretical contribution of the study

When this research began, we did not understand if the PCM framework would be a valid instrument to understand sports fans in Africa. After the questionnaire was completed and the results compiled, we understood that fans in South Africa were suitably portrayed under the framework set out by Funk and James. Further sports research conducted along similar lines will be well suited to use the PCM framework as it allows researchers to understand fans' commitment to sport.

The research sought to understand what was the best way to increase fans' commitment to the team or sportspeople they followed through various forms of media consumption. Empirical evidence advised the best way was through allowing a fan to increase their maximisation (Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010). Fan maximisation will differ depending on the demographic targeted. While the latest research prescribes social media engagement (Gibbons & Dixon, 2010; Hutchins, 2010; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Pegoraro *et al.*, 2010; Blaszka, 2011; Özsoy, 2011) it will depend on the target demographic trying to be reached. The results indicate that traditional media formats still have their place, especially television; however, social media engagement is emerging as an important media tool, especially for female consumption.

The team identification and sports media consumption framework prescribed by this research helps academics understand how to engage with constituents, employees, consumers and fans. While the prescribed framework has been advised for sports media consumption, it could potentially be applied in other fields. What it indicates is that to engage with the desired audience you need to understand what their needs are in the form of media you are engaging with. Previously only limited media forms were available to get the message across; however, with the developments of new media forms, the audience has a variety of platforms to meet their media consumption needs.

With the emergence of social media platforms it has been difficult to evaluate which one has made the biggest impact on sports fan media consumption. While Facebook has a broader reach due to the amount of consumers engaging with it, Twitter seems to be the social medium of choice for sports fan consumers. Twitter allows for closer engagement between fans and sports teams and sports people, thus improving the parasocial

relationship. This confirms Kassing & Sanderson, (2010) and Blaszka's (2011) findings that Twitter is the best form of engagement with sports fans. Özsoy (2011) may have had a similar result with their findings if at the time of doing their research Twitter had a multilingual function. At the time of their study Facebook was the only multilingual social media tool and as such found it to be the medium of choice.

Other factors that had an impact on sports media consumption patterns were a number of constructs. Bennett *et al.* (2006) and Heere & James (2007) studies indicated as such; for instance age, gender, sport consumed, religion and politics, however, other studies conducted have made little mention of the variables that impact sports fans media consumption. This may be due to the studies having convenient samples available to be interrogated. However, when conducting research further than the boundaries of a tertiary institution, a greater number of variables will impact the results found. As such, researchers should be looking to extend the research further than the most convenient sample available to understand the dynamics that influence the result in the real world.

7.4 Recommendations for business

In terms of the practical implications for business various stakeholders will be impacted in different ways. As such, the following section breaks it down to the respective stakeholders and how the team identification and sports media consumption framework can assist them.

7.4.1 Rights holders

The framework suggested for rights holders is essential to understand. If they are able to target the specific demographic through the correct engagement channels, team / sport identification will be influenced. This in turn will increase the value of the rights they hold when trying to on-sell them to media organisations. Through greater fan engagement, rights holders will also increase the appeal of their sport to the masses. Rights holders for emerging sports need to understand the best way to engage with their potential fan base to maximise the revenues they can potentially receive.

7.4.2 Sponsors

If sponsors understand the impact the model has they will ensure they do not end up advertising through dead-end media platforms. Of course, this will be impacted by the demographic they are trying to reach. Through understanding the demographic they are targeting, they will be able to maximise the strategies to reach those fans. The research has indicated that television is still the premium medium to reach all sports media consumers. However, if they want to extend their reach to other media platforms than the media chosen to reach the targeted audience will depend on what appeals to the specific demographic. What is apparent is that traditional media platforms are starting to wane in favour of new digital media platforms. Sponsors need to understand what message they are trying to get across to their fan base and employ the best strategy to meet their targeted demographic's social identity needs.

7.4.3 Broadcasters

The practical implications for broadcasters are immense. Our findings indicate that fans are seeking greater engagement through social media forms. Those fans who are highly engaged are looking for greater interaction from broadcasters. To be able to meet the needs of these fans, broadcasters need to look at other forms engagement than the traditional methods offered. Broadcasters will need to go beyond just presenting sport, but to find a way in which to engage with fans, which will increase sports media consumption. A way broadcasters are able to engage with fans is through the use of social media. Through social media engagement fans will be able to form a parasocial relationship where they believe they have the ability to influence the production. Highly committed fans like to post comments during the match and broadcasters need to take advantage of that fact.

From the model proposed, if broadcasters are able to understand the way in which fans wish to consume media, they will be able to distribute it through to the correct channel to ensure maximum consumption. Instead of flooding the market with created content, they will be able to streamline the content into the correct media platform. Through the correct distribution it will ensure fans remain engaged with the media platform they are consuming as well as potentially increasing consumption among fans. The framework identifies that

media consumption patterns are evolving as new media platforms emerge. These new media platforms are having an impact on fans' team identification. Broadcasters need to understand what message they are trying to get across to their fan base and employ the best strategy to meet their fan bases social identity needs.

7.4.4 Sports teams and associations

The research indicates that those teams that are not using websites to advertise their brand are missing out on engaging with fans. Those teams and associations who are participating with social media will see a stronger bond formed between their fans and the team or association. The research findings suggest social media consumption is having an impact on team identification. It is an important part of the marketing mix for key demographic groups. While Facebook seems to be the more popular social medium of choice, Twitter is the social media used by highly committed fans. As such Facebook should be used to create awareness and attraction that the team / athlete exist, whereas Twitter helps in the attachment and allegiance of fans. Through increased engagement, sports teams and associations should see an increase in monetisation through an increase in season memberships and paraphernalia bought.

The model suggested has a symbiotic relationship with other stakeholders. If sports teams and associations are able to increase their engagement with fans, it will have an impact on the rights held. This will flow backwards and forwards as the rights holders will be able to demand more money from broadcasters for their product. The financial windfall from increased revenue of the rights should flow back to sports teams and associations as well.

For sports teams and associations the framework identifies that media consumption patterns are evolving as new media platforms emerge. As such, they need to understand the importance these new media platforms have on their targeted demographic. If these new media platforms meet the social identity needs of their fans, teams and associations will need to engage with these platforms to ensure fans stay committed.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

The following guidelines are suggested to help increase the body of knowledge moving forward.

Firstly, it was indicated that fans from Africa engage differently with those of the West (Chiweshe, 2011). This research was unable to conclude if that was the case or not. As such, this study could be conducted across the African continent to understand if African fans display similar attributes to each other and then compare those ideologies with the West.

Secondly, the research implies that African fans are not as engaged as their Western counterparts with online web interaction. This could be due to the telecommunication infrastructure in Africa not meeting fan expectation. Further research is required to understand if the telecoms infrastructure is inhibiting sports fan interaction with online experiences.

Thirdly, females have different expectations in meeting their social needs with team identification. Female team identification needs to be explored further through understanding the impact social media is having on meeting these expectations. Also in understanding if female team identification has changed through social media platforms i.e. increased from an awareness through to allegiance. To improve the findings of this research we need to understand if an increase in the coverage of professional women's sport would lead to an increase in consumption of women sports fans. Thus we would expect to see in future women falling into higher levels on the PCM scale.

Fourthly, to improve the research found through this study we need to focus more on the impact of Twitter and Facebook on sports fan media consumption. With a greater emphasis placed on these social mediums we would be able to understand what they are being used for.

Fifthly, we need to understand if fans' sports media consumption changes between mainstream, extreme and emerging sports. If there are differences in consumption patterns, which platform should these sports be engaging with.

Lastly, the hot topic in the sport industry currently is drug usage and cheating in sport. Research needs to be conducted on what impact this has on sports media consumption and whether it impacts fans' team identification.

7.6 Conclusion

The results throughout this study reflect new media is having an impact on team identity and sports fan media consumption. The findings suggests that fans that display higher levels of team identification on the PCM framework, i.e. attachment and allegiance to teams, and are more likely to engage regularly on social media, especially Twitter. As such, marketers, sports teams and associations need to look at how they engage with Twitter. Through understanding how fans interact with Twitter, marketers, sports teams and associations will be able to get more out of the fan relationship. As new forms of media interaction emerge, marketers, sports teams and associations will need to come to quickly understand what impact this has on fans' sports media consumption and team identification. This research suggests that as new media solutions continue to emerge, the sports fan relationship should be augmented.

This thesis presented a thorough review of team identification and sports media consumption literature with data collected from the questionnaires to review actual fan thoughts compared to the literature. The resultant framework composed for team identification and sports media consumption was based on empirical evidence presented throughout. Rights holders, commercial and media organisations, as well as sport teams and organisations need to consider multiple variables to ensure they are reaching their target markets and maximising the sports fan relationship. The team identification and sports media consumption framework developed in this study and illustrated in figure five, provides an understanding to the various stakeholders in how they should engage with their fan bases to achieve maximum identification with their intended audience.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Consent page

University of Pretoria Gordon Institute of Business Science

Masters of Business Administration

Waiver of Document of Consent

Title: Exploring Sport Media Consumption and fan Psychological Continuum Model scales

Supervisor: Michael Goldman

Student Researcher: Scott Robins Masters Student

I am doing research on sport media consumption and fans psychological attachment to a team. To that end, you are asked to complete a questionnaire in regards to your preferences to sport media consumption and your attachment to a team. This will help us better understand fans sport media consumption patterns and how sporting associations should relate back to their fans, and should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Of course, all data will be kept confidential. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact me or my supervisor. Our details are provided below.

Researcher: Scott Robins

Email: scottrobinsthesis2012@hotmail.co.za

Phone: 079 424 7349

Supervisor: Michael Goldman

Email: goldmanm@gibs.co.za

Phone: 011 771 4000

9.2 Questionnaire

1) Who is your favourite South African team?

2) Select which forms of media you use

Facebook

Twitter	
Linked In	
MxIT	
Newspaper (print)	
Television	
Magazines (print)	
Radio	
Other (Please Specify):	

3) How many sports people or teams do you follow on social media (for instance Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, MxIT)?

0	
1 - 3	
4 - 6	
7 - 10	
More than 10	

4) Following my favourite team's game offers me relaxation when pressure builds up

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	

Strongly agree	
----------------	--

5) On a typical day how often do you post on social media (for instance Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, MxIT) about sport?	
0	
1 - 3	
4 - 6	
7 - 10	
10 or more	

6) Are you -	
Male	
Female	

7) Do you use social media (for instance Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, MxIT) while watching sport to pass comments about the game ?	
Yes	
No	

8) I find a lot of my life is organised around following my favourite team's games	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	

Strongly agree	
----------------	--

9) How often do you read sports related magazines (print)?	
Many times a day	
About once a day	
A few times per week	
Once a week	
A few times a month	
Less than once per month	
Never / Not applicable	

10) Age	
Below 18	
18 - 25	
26 - 35	
36 - 45	
46 - 55	
55 and above	

11) Following my favourite team's games says a lot about who I am	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	

Agree	
Strongly agree	

12) In a typical month how often do you visit sports related websites?	
Many times a day	
About Once a day	
A few times per week	
Once a week	
A few times per month	
Less than once per month	
Never / Not Applicable	

13) How often do you read the sports pages of a newspaper (print)?	
Many times a day	
About once a day	
A few times per week	
Once a week	
A few times a month	
Less than once per month	
Never / Not applicable	

14) In which province do you live?	
Eastern Cape	
Free State	
Gauteng	

KwaZulu - Natal	
Limpopo	
Mpumalanga	
Northern Cape	
North West	
Western Cape	
Other (Please Specify):	

15) You can tell a lot about a person by seeing them follow my favourite team's games	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	
Strongly agree	

16) Following my favourite team's games plays a central role in my life	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	

Strongly agree	
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17) During the season how many games did you attend or intend to attend?	
0	
1 - 3	
4 - 6	
6 - 10	
More than 10	

18) When I follow my favourite team's games, I can really be myself	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	
Strongly agree	

19) During the season how many games did you watch or plan to watch?	
0	
1 - 3	
4 - 6	
6 - 10	
10 or more	

20) How often do you talk sport with friends?	
Many times a day	
About once a day	
A few times per week	
Once a week	
A few times a month	
Less than once per month	
Never / Not applicable	

21) Compared to other sports, following my favourite team's games is very interesting	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	
Strongly agree	

22) What is your race?	
Black	
Coloured	
White	
Indian	
Other (Please Specify):	

23) I really enjoy following my favourite team's games

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	
Strongly agree	

24) Please select which of the following you have at home in working order -

Microwave oven	
Flush toilet in house or on plot	
Washing machine - automatic / semi automatic / twin tub	
Built-in kitchen sink	
Water in home or on stand	
Electricity in the household	
One or more motor vehicles in the household	

25) How often do you listen to sports talk radio?

Many times a day	
About once a day	
A few times per week	
Once a week	
A few times a month	
Less than once per month	

Never / Not applicable	
------------------------	--

26) A lot of my time is organised around following my favourite team's games	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Slightly Disagree	
Neither agree nor disagree	
Slightly agree	
Agree	
Strongly agree	

Table 27 - Location of respondents

. tab Q14

Q14	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Eastern Cape	3	1.28	1.28
Gauteng	176	74.89	76.17
KwaZulu-Natal	6	2.55	78.72
Limpopo	1	0.43	79.15
Mpumalanga	2	0.85	80.00
Western Cape	41	17.45	97.45
Other	6	2.55	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

As can be seen in table 27 the majority (74.9%) of respondents were located in the Gauteng province. 17.5% of the respondents came from the Western Cape. 7.6% of the respondents were located in other provinces or other countries. However, the sample from these areas is not large enough to make any valid comments. As such, a generalisation to South Africa's population is unable to be reached.

Table 28 - Sports people or teams followed on social media

. tab noteams

Q3	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	80	34.04	34.04
1-3	81	34.47	68.51
4-6	25	10.64	79.15
6-10	12	5.11	84.26
10 or more	37	15.74	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

From table 28 it can be seen that the majority of respondents (34.5%) follow between one and three teams or sportspeople. 34% of respondents do not follow teams or sportspeople on social media. 15.8% of respondents follow more than 10 or more teams or sports people.

Table 29 - Your typical day postings on social media about sport

. tab socmed2

Q5	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	107	45.53	45.53
1-3	79	33.62	79.15
4-6	23	9.79	88.94
6-10	17	7.23	96.17
10 or more	9	3.83	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

As can be seen in table 29 just under half of the respondents (45.5%) do not post comments about sport on social media. Only slightly over a third of the respondents (33.6%) post between one and three comments daily, and approximately 21% of the respondents post four or more comments about sport daily.

Table 30 - Using social media while watching sport to pass comments about the game

. tab socmed

Q7	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Yes	114	48.51	48.51
No	121	51.49	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

From table 30 it is evident that 51.5% of respondents do not pass comments about the game while being played. However, 48.5 % of respondents do have some form of social media interaction while the game is being played.

Table 31 - Monthly visits to sports-related websites

. tab webconsump

Q12	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Many times a day	45	19.15	19.15
About once a day	40	17.02	36.17
A few times per week	43	18.30	54.47
Once a week	25	10.64	65.11
A few times a month	30	12.77	77.87
Less than once per month	26	11.06	88.94
Never/Not applicable	26	11.06	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

From table 31 it is evident that approximately 36% of respondents are visiting sports-related websites on a daily basis. 22.1% of respondents views sports-related websites less than once a month or not at all. Approximately 49.1% of respondents are visiting sports-related content websites between a few times a week and a few times a month. When taking table 9.5 into consideration websites are predominately used by those of the ages between the ages of 18 and 35. If you are trying to reach a demographic over the age of 46 and above, the sports industry will miss the mark as 0% of them used websites for sports consumption. However, the sample was exceptionally small for this age group, and, as such would need to undergo further testing to ensure that this was a true reflection of the population.

Table 32 - Daily consumption of sports-related magazines (print)

. tab magconsump

Q19	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Many times a day	5	3.76	3.76
About once a day	8	6.02	9.77
A few times per week	16	12.03	21.80
Once a week	14	10.53	32.33
A few times a month	28	21.05	53.38
Less than once per month	31	23.31	76.69
Never/Not applicable	31	23.31	100.00
Total	133	100.00	

From table 32 it is evident that fans are not really engaging in sports-related magazine consumption. Of the respondents, only 21.8% use it as a weekly medium. 46.6% of respondents use this medium less than once a month or not at all. Teams and sportspeople need to understand if this medium is reaching their target market. The demographic this medium resonated with was 46 – 55 year olds. However the sample of the respondents is exceptionally small and as such would need to be tested further.

Table 33 - Daily consumption of sports pages of a newspaper (print)

. tab newconsump

Q13	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Many times a day	5	3.68	3.68
About once a day	26	19.12	22.79
A few times per week	25	18.38	41.18
Once a week	25	18.38	59.56
A few times a month	18	13.24	72.79
Less than once per month	12	8.82	81.62
Never/Not applicable	25	18.38	100.00
Total	136	100.00	

It is evident from table 33 that approximately 60% of population still consume sports newspapers on a weekly basis, which extends to 73% of the population if monthly consumption is taken into consideration. For sports fans consumption, when compared to radio or magazines, newspapers seem to be a more appropriate means to reach team fan bases.

Table 34 - During the season how many games did you watch or plan to watch?

. tab Q17

Q17	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	74	31.49	31.49
1-3	101	42.98	74.47
4-6	34	14.47	88.94
6-10	15	6.38	95.32
10 or more	11	4.68	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Table 34 indicates that the majority of fans (42.98%), plan to attend or watch between one and three games on average.

Table 35 - During the season how many games did you watch or plan to watch?

. tab Q19

Q19	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	19	8.09	8.09
1-3	39	16.60	24.68
4-6	35	14.89	39.57
6-10	41	17.45	57.02
10 or more	101	42.98	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

As can be seen in Table 35 the majority of fans (42.98%) watch ten or more games a season. 8.09% fans watch no games during the season, which makes you question if they are fans or not.

Table 36 - Sport consumption through speaking with friends

. tab Q20

Q20	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Many times a day	61	25.96	25.96
About once a day	29	12.34	38.30
A few times per week	76	32.34	70.64
Once a week	25	10.64	81.28
A few times a month	26	11.06	92.34
Less than once per month	8	3.40	95.74
Never/Not applicable	10	4.26	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

From table 36 it is evident that the majority of fans talk about sport with friends a few times a week (32.3%). This might be due to only seeing friends or being presented with that opportunity on a weekly basis. Of the total respondents 81.3% are talking about sport on a weekly basis.

Table 37 - Consumption of sports talk radio

. tab radioconsump

Q25	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Many times a day	8	5.03	5.03
About once a day	26	16.35	21.38
A few times per week	30	18.87	40.25
Once a week	20	12.58	52.83
A few times a month	19	11.95	64.78
Less than once per month	26	16.35	81.13
Never/Not applicable	30	18.87	100.00
Total	159	100.00	

It can be seen in table 37 that only 52.8% of the respondents are tuning into sports radio consumption on a daily to weekly basis. It is evident that 47% of the respondents do not use radio as a popular form of sports consumption. Those teams and sports people using radio to reach their target market need to understand the demographic of those consuming radio. From table 6 it is evident that the most popular demographic for radio was 36 to 45 year olds.

Table 38 - Following my favourite team's game offers me relaxation when pressure builds up

. tab Q4

Q4	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	13	5.53	5.53
	29	12.34	17.87
	13	5.53	23.40
	48	20.43	43.83
	57	24.26	68.09
	57	24.26	92.34
	18	7.66	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

From table 38 it is evident that the majority of sports fans slightly agree or agree (48.5%) that an association with following their team provides some form of relaxation. While only 18% of fans either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and found no relaxation at all while following their team.

Table 39 - I find a lot of my life is organised around following my favourite team's games

. tab Q8

Q8	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	44	18.72	18.72
	52	22.13	40.85
	16	6.81	47.66
	35	14.89	62.55
	50	21.28	83.83
	27	11.49	95.32
	11	4.68	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Table 39 indicates that 62.5% of fans do not really organise that much time around following their favourite team, while for 37.5% of fans it plays a major role in their life.

Table 40 - Following my favourite team's games says a lot about who I am

. tab Q11

Q11	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Neither agree nor disagree	36	15.32	15.32
	42	17.87	33.19
	23	9.79	42.98
	43	18.30	61.28
	47	20.00	81.28
	36	15.32	96.60
	8	3.40	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

The majority of sports fans associate no meaning with following their favourite team (61.3%). However, the other 38.7% fans believe that following their team plays a role in their identity. We would expect fans that indicated higher association in their identity to fall on the higher end of the PCM scale.

Table 41 - You can tell a lot about a person by seeing them follow my favourite team's games

. tab Q15

Q15	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Neither agree nor disagree	28	11.91	11.91
	44	18.72	30.64
	15	6.38	37.02
	57	24.26	61.28
	54	22.98	84.26
	32	13.62	97.87
	5	2.13	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Table 41 indicated a similar trend to that of table 40 where fans felt 39.7% of the time that by observing another fan gave them a good indication of another fans' behaviour. However, 61.3% of fans thought that it had no reflection on a fan's personality.

Table 42 - Following my favourite team's games plays a central role in my life

. tab Q16

Q16	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	38	16.17	16.17
Disagree	69	29.36	45.53
Slightly disagree	29	12.34	57.87
Neither agree nor disagree	34	14.47	72.34
Slightly agree	35	14.89	87.23
Agree	24	10.21	97.45
Strongly agree	6	2.55	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Across the PCM questions we would expect similar results throughout. However, table 42 indicates that was not the case. Only 28.6% of fans indicated that following their team played a central role in their life.

Table 43 - When I follow my favourite team's games, I can really be myself

. tab Q18

Q18	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	25	10.64	10.64
Disagree	21	8.94	19.57
Slightly disagree	12	5.11	24.68
Neither agree nor disagree	53	22.55	47.23
Slightly agree	38	16.17	63.40
Agree	71	30.21	93.62
Strongly agree	15	6.38	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Table 43 results indicate a slightly different result to other PCM questions to date. In the above table, approximately 52% of fans think they can be themselves while watching a game, while only 24.5% did not think that was the case.

Table 44 - Compared to other sports, following my favourite team's games is very interesting

. tab Q21

Q21	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	7	2.98	2.98
Disagree	10	4.26	7.23
Slightly disagree	11	4.68	11.91
Neither agree nor disagree	40	17.02	28.94
Slightly agree	58	24.68	53.62
Agree	79	33.62	87.23
Strongly agree	30	12.77	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

The majority of fans (approximately 71%) in table 44 felt that following their team was interesting compared to other sports. Only 12% of fans thought that following another sport was more interesting than watching their team. However, during this research, the researcher did not take into account how the team was currently doing in their competition.

Table 45 - I really enjoy following my favourite team's games

. tab Q23

Q23	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	9	3.83	3.83
Disagree	1	0.43	4.26
Slightly disagree	1	0.43	4.68
Neither agree nor disagree	23	9.79	14.47
Slightly agree	32	13.62	28.09
Agree	103	43.83	71.91
Strongly agree	66	28.09	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

Most fans found enjoyment in following their team's games (86.5%) as can be seen in table 45. Only 4.7% of fans disagreed in some form. As such, one question's if they are a true fan or begs the question of how well the team they currently follow is doing.

Table 46 - A lot of my time is organised around following my favourite team's games

. tab Q26

Q26	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Strongly disagree	36	15.32	15.32
Disagree	75	31.91	47.23
Slightly disagree	18	7.66	54.89
Neither agree nor disagree	23	9.79	64.68
Slightly agree	51	21.70	86.38
Agree	17	7.23	93.62
Strongly agree	15	6.38	100.00
Total	235	100.00	

While we would expect to see a similar result across the PCM questions this has not been the case. Table 46 indicates that only 35.5% of fans' time is organised around following their favourite team. Yet again you would expect these fans to fall higher on the PCM scale.

Table 47 – Chi-squared test looking at fans PCM levels and number of media sources consumed

. tab overallexp2 pcm, col chi

Key
frequency
column percentage

overallexp	pcm				Total
	awareness	attractio	attatchme	allegianc	
0	8 13.33	1 1.30	0 0.00	0 0.00	9 3.83
1	4 6.67	3 3.90	1 1.25	0 0.00	8 3.40
2	3 5.00	1 1.30	3 3.75	0 0.00	7 2.98
3	22 36.67	20 25.97	4 5.00	3 16.67	49 20.85
4	16 26.67	29 37.66	35 43.75	3 16.67	83 35.32
5	7 11.67	23 29.87	37 46.25	12 66.67	79 33.62
Total	60 100.00	77 100.00	80 100.00	18 100.00	235 100.00

Pearson chi2(15) = 66.3736 Pr = 0.000

Table 47 indicates where a fan falls on the PCM and how many media sources they consume. Taking into account table 7 as well as 47, those fans that consume no media sources fall lower on the PCM framework, only showing an awareness or attraction to the team they support. Looking at the opposite end of the above table, those fans that consume five sources reflect higher on the PCM framework, with 46.25% of fans represented under attachment and 66.67% represented under allegiance.