

# Understanding sports fan motivation:

a study into fan involvement, satisfaction and loyalty

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# Abstract

The constructs of motivation, involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty have been extensively researched from a marketing perspective and in a sporting context. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationships between these constructs within a South African rugby context in order to better understand what motivates rugby fans to attend live rugby matches. An empirical study was conducted using a quantitative methodology in which primary data were collected using an online questionnaire.

The findings in this study generally corroborated sentiments in existing marketing and sports literature. A key finding was that entertainment is the most prevalent motivator for live sports attendance. In contrast to existing literature, only a few of the fan motivational factors, as identified in Wann's (1995) sports fan motivation scale, correlated with the other constructs. It was also found that no relationship exists between fan involvement and fan behavioural loyalty.

The study demonstrates the utility of a relationship marketing approach for rugby brands in South Africa seeking to better understand the motivation of fans attending live rugby matches. Based on the findings, specific recommendations are made to assist rugby brands in South Africa to increase the motivation for fans to attend live rugby matches.

# Keywords

Relationship marketing; fan motivation; fan involvement; fan satisfaction; fan loyalty

# Declaration

I declare that this research project 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.

Ben Maxton

11 March 2019

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#### **Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the rationale for the study. It makes the argument that sports fandom is an area of importance to sports brands and emphasises the need for local sports brands to focus on relationship marketing in order to boost attendance at local rugby matches in South Africa. This study focuses on fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty in order to add to the existing literature in the field, particularly within a South African context using a relationship marketing lens. The study also aims to provide management recommendations for local rugby brands based on existing fan motivation literature and an empirical study with regards to the factors which most influence fans to attend live rugby matches.

#### 1.2 Background

Recent trends in professional team sport have seen sport becoming a very profitable product both locally and internationally (Kaynak, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2008; Stevens & Rosenberger, 2012). The growth of professional sports can be attributed to factors such as globalisation, increasing competition between broadcasters, satellite television, social media as well as faster and cheaper internet which allows customers access to streaming services online (David & Milward, 2015; Kim, 2017).

According to a report by the management consulting firm AT Kearney, the sports industry is a global business in which as much as US \$510 billion is spent every year. This includes stadium spending, media rights and sponsorships. The sports industry within the BRICS nations has grown more than 4% annually since 2000 and in 2009 the sports industry was growing globally at a rate faster than global GDP growth rates, with this growth predicted to continue in the future. In 2009, football held by far the largest share of the sports market internationally (43%), however a noticeable growth in rugby market share was noted, sitting at 17% despite having only become a professional sport in 1995 (Zygband, Collignon, Sultan, Santander, & Valensi, 2011).

Goldman (2012) states that South Africa is one of the most advanced markets in Africa and the South African sporting industry dominates the sporting landscape in Africa in terms of overall expenditure. Research suggests that revenues garnered from sporting activities in South Africa amounted to US \$1.4 billion in 2017 (Statista, 2018).

The South African sporting landscape is diverse but is dominated by three main sporting codes: football, cricket, and rugby. Rugby was introduced to South Africa as far back as 1875 by British colonialists and was enthusiastically adopted by locals. Rugby is the second most played and followed of the sporting codes in South Africa with over 430 000 registered rugby players in the country (Five Biggest Sports, 2016).

The decision to study the motivating factors which drive fans to attend live rugby matches stems from the phenomenon of declining attendance numbers of fans at local stadiums which aligns with international trends as reported in existing literature (Boeri & Severgnini, 2014; Cronin & Holt, 2017; Horak, 2017).

Similar to previous studies within a sport context (Da Silva & Las Casas, 2017; Stavros, Meng, Westberg, & Farrely, 2014; Yoon, Petrick, & Backman, 2017) this study adopted a relationship marketing lens. Business and sports brands have realised the need for increased emphasis on fostering relationships with customers and it is clear that relationship marketing offers a significant key to success in both the modern-day business and sports worlds (Da Silva & Las Casas, 2017; Stavros et al., 2014; Zhang, Watson, George, Palmatier, & Dant, 2016). Relationship marketing is thus an appropriate approach in this study since it specifically focuses on creating and preserving sustainable relationships with customers in order to retain existing customers (Gordon, 1999, Radzi, Harun, Ramayah, Kassim, & Lily, 2018; Varki & Wong, 2003).

Fan motivation is one of the most researched topics in sports marketing, with most motivation being linked to social or psychological needs (Snelgrove, Taks, Chalip, & Green, 2008). There is a direct link between fan motivation and involvement. Involvement is considered a variable which reflects the extent to which an individual deems a decision relevant in terms of his/her values, basic goals, and self-concept (Zaichowsky, 1985). Laverie and Arnett (2000) studied the factors that affect fan attendance and found that involvement has a positive influence on satisfaction and as such there is a direct link between the two constructs, where customer satisfaction refers to the difference between the expectations which a customer has for a product and actual performance of that product (Tse & Wilton, 1988). Further to this, previous research internationally in both a business and sports context has shown a clear relationship between the constructs of satisfaction and loyalty (Choi & Chu, 2001; Murray & Howat, 2002; Susskind & Viccari, 2011), with loyalty being widely considered as one's strength of relationship between relative attitude and repeat patronage (Flavian, Martinez, & Polo, 2001). This study investigated the relationships between motivation, involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty within a South African rugby context.

## 1.3 Research Problem, Objective, and Research Questions

In recent years, organisations have begun to place greater emphasis on relationship marketing as a tool for building stronger relationships with customers both in a business (Goetsch & Davis, 2014; Mathis, Kim, Uysal, Sirgy, & Prebensen, 2016) and in a sporting context (Brady, Voorhees, Cronin, & Bourdeau, 2006; Hill & Green, 2000). From a relationship marketing perspective, Hill and Green (2000) established that customers are more likely to display repeat purchase behaviours if they are more involved with a product, more satisfied with a previous experience, and are more loyal to the brand in question.

Other studies have suggested that motivation (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Stavros et al., 2014), involvement (Da Silva & Las Casas, 2017; Varki & Wong, 2003), satisfaction (Hoppner, Griffith,

& White, 2015; Radzi et al., 2018) and loyalty (Priluck, 2015; Yoon et al., 2017) can be used to build relationships as well as be used as valuable tools in both customer and fan retention. Although Hill and Green (2000) examined the relationships between three of these constructs in a single study, most studies in the field have focused on individual relationships between pairs of constructs and not on the relationship between multiple constructs.

In the past few years, South Africa's premier local rugby competition, the Currie Cup, has been scaled back significantly in light of declining crowd attendances (Ray, 2018). Super Rugby, an international club competition in which four South African teams compete, has also seen declining attendance figures both internationally and locally (Lambley, 2018). The declining trends in attendance inevitably impact negatively on the overall profitability of local rugby teams. In an international context, Kaynak, Salman, and Tataglu (2008) report that, in addition to declining gate revenues, lower attendance figures are linked to sports brands being less able to secure lucrative media broadcast rights, sponsors and most importantly, advertising.

The research problem in this study is the declining number of fans attending live rugby matches in South Africa, with the research objective being to form a greater understanding as to the motivation of fans attending live rugby matches as well as to establish the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty.

In order to address the research problem and to achieve the research objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

- What role does involvement play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction and loyalty?
- What role does attitudinal loyalty play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty?
- What role does behavioural loyalty play in sport fan motivation and satisfaction?
- Does sport fan motivation predict satisfaction?

 Do overall sport fan motivation and overall involvement individually, and combined, predict satisfaction?

#### 1.4. Research Relevance and Motivation

This research aims to address, both from a theoretical and practical perspective, the question of how management principles can be applied to better understand the motivation of fans attending live rugby matches as well as to establish the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty. A relationship marketing lens was adopted and the research was designed to empirically explore the nature of the relationships between the key constructs of fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty.

A relationship marketing approach is valuable because it can enable business to understand the influencers of customer retention and repeat purchase behaviour and hence business will be better equipped to formulate strategies and plans which aim to counter the trend of declining attendance. Consequently, research into customer motives and the links between these motives and customer involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty have been comprehensively explored in the past by marketing practitioners and authors with the aim of understanding how to increase market share and bottom line numbers (Brown, Assaker, & Reis, 2018; Gaudreau, Gunnell, Hoar, Thompson, & Lelièvre, 2015; Shank & Beasley, 1998; Zaichkowsky, 1985). However, when looking at research done into the South African environment, the relationships between these constructs have not been adequately explored. There is a clear gap in the literature when looking at local rugby brands in South Africa and adding to this existing literature will contribute to the existing theory both internationally and locally. Not only will this research add to current literature, it will also have positive practical implications in the business environment

Although Hill and Green (2000) study repeat attendance and its relationship with the constructs of involvement and loyalty whilst also touching on the construct of satisfaction it

appears that research in the field has not explored the relationships between all of the constructs of motives, customer involvement, satisfaction and loyalty together in one study and tends to rather focus on the relationships between pairs of them. As such, a clear gap in the literature exists and it was the objective of this study to add to the existing literature by analysing relationships between all of the constructs of fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty in a single study using a relationship marketing lens in order to understand and make suggestions as to how the phenomenon of declining attendance numbers at live rugby matches in South Africa can be practically approached. The advantage of investigating the relationships between all four constructs in a single study is that external variables, such as point in time and context, are controlled.

### 1.5. Research Scope

This study was focused on rugby fans in South Africa. The research looked at their motivation as well as their levels of involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty. Respondents were selected using a snowballing technique with a screening question designed to ensure that participants had attended a live rugby match in South Africa during the previous six months and were over the age of 18. Although the screening question limited respondents who could participate, the findings gained from this research are useful and applicable to other sporting codes as well as to local and international organisations which are interested in using relationship marketing theory to better understand the relationships between motivation, involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty.

#### **1.6.** Summary and Organisation of Chapters

This report is organised into seven chapters. Chapter one has provided the background to the study as well as identifying the research problem and objectives and related research questions. The chapter also included an explanation of the relevance of the research and the scope of the research.

Chapter two reviews the literature on relationship marketing, fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty in both a business and sporting context. Chapter three formulates hypotheses which aim to answer the research questions set out in Chapter one. Chapter four provides an overview of the methodology used which includes the research design, philosophy, methods, population, unit of analysis, instrument, sampling method, sampling size, data collection, data analysis, as well as the research limitations. The results are presented in chapter five, followed by a discussion of these results in chapter six and a conclusion in chapter seven.

# **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

# 2.1 Introduction

This study investigated the motivation of fans attending live rugby matches and aimed to establish the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty. A relationship marketing lens was adopted for this study. This literature review analyses literature covering the following five constructs: (a) Relationship Marketing; (b) Fan Motivation; (c) Fan Involvement; (d) Fan Satisfaction; and (e) Fan loyalty.

Figure 1 provides a framework showing the topics considered under each of the above five constructs.



# 2.2 Relationship Marketing

Storbacka and Grönroos (1994) defined relationship marketing as the need to:

identify and establish, maintain and enhance and when necessary also to terminate relationships with customers and other stakeholders, at a profit, so that the objectives of all parties are met, and that this is done by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises. (p. 22)

The authors went on to say that this needed to be done by the mutual fulfilment of obligations from both parties and emphasised the primary focus of relationship marketing as satisfying and retaining existing customers.

Relationship marketing scholars have advocated a move from a traditional exchange paradigm in which a service is offered toward a more relationship-based paradigm (Gladden & Sutton, 2009; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008). Fornell and Wenerfelt (1987) stated that creating a new customer was more expensive than satisfying and retaining an existing customer and Gordon (1999) highlighted that relationship marketing, unlike the Five P's-product, price, place, people, and promotion—approach to marketing, is specifically focused on retaining existing customers. Hence, it makes sense to use a relationship marketing approach to investigate attendance trends at sports events. Relationship marketing is considered to be relevant to this particular study because gaining a better understanding of the relationships between domestic rugby brands and their customers may help to explain the reasons for the declining attendances. The application of a relationship marketing approach in the context of attendance at rugby matches in South Africa may extend existing literature and therefore may provide a practical contribution. A 2014 Harvard Business School case study on South African business giant Discovery Ltd. highlighted a further example of relationship marketing or an increased emphasis on client relationships management citing Adrian Gore, the group CEO, as stating "Wherever we take the company, be it into new markets, new products, or new businesses, it has to be based on our model of shared value. Without this when we enter new markets we are offering them nothing new." (Porter, Kramer, & Sesia, 2014, p. 10). Shared

value is the focus on the expansion of connections between societal and economic progress which aims at expanding the competitiveness of organisations (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

The number of studies on relationship marketing has drastically increased over recent years as researchers have sought to understand relationship marketing as a strategic advantage for individuals and organisations (Gummeson, 2017). Bee and Kahle (2006) found that relationship marketing's importance was due to its effectiveness for developing communication strategies. Norouzi and Nahavandi (2016) stated that the focus of relationship marketing has moved from not only maintaining relationships, but to understanding these relationships as well as the inherent value in these relationships, the trust between the parties and the commitment of the customers. Gummerus, von Koskull, and Kowalkowski (2017) reported that relationship marketers need to understand the environment they are working within and be malleable to the ever-changing business environment.

Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) claimed that consumers form relationships with certain brands due to three factors: personal influences, social influences, and institutional influences. Reilly and Parkinson (1985) explained that consumers form these relationships so as to, over time, reduce choices and simplify problem solving situations thereby reducing the number of brands and choices into an evoked set, this set being a fraction of the total amount of options on offer (Reilly & Parkinson, 1985). Hence, there are multi-dimensional aspects which need to be understood if organisations are to benefit from relationship marketing. Furthermore, previous research in the field of relationship marketing has focused on the relationship between various stakeholder groups, such as between buyer and seller, entire networks, marketing channels, sales management, services marketing, as well as alliances created within businesses and the management of relationships. These relationships have been investigated by authors such as Anderson, Hakansson, and Johanson (1991), Berry (1983), Bucklin and Sengupta (1993), Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987), and Swan and Nolan (1985). Mackay, Petzer, and Mostert (2014) studied relationship marketing in a South African business context. However, research on relationship marketing has been somewhat limited in its scope as it has primarily focused on the buyer-seller relationship (Gummeson, 2017).

Relationship marketing has been looked at within a sports context in a number of studies by various authors such as Abeza, O'Reilly, and Reid (2013), Bee and Kahie (2000), and Williams and Chinn (2010). Kim and Trail (2011) applied a relationship marketing approach in order to investigate the relationship between sports consumers and sports organisations and found that competition amongst sports brands for consumer buy-in has increased drastically over the years as has the cost of attending sports events. They found that declining attendance figures could be attributed to three factors: (a) consumers believe that players are overpaid and no longer care about the fans; (b) consumers believe that marketing practices of the brands are unethical; and (c) the introduction of technology, which allows fans to watch these events at locations other that at the stadium with greater ease. Fournier (1998) stated that consumers are willing to embrace sports as a metaphorical partner and as such all interactions between the consumer and a sports organisation should be considered the product. It is for this reason that the understanding of the relationship between a sports brand and its fans should be considered as fundamental in any marketing strategy implemented by a sports organisation. In fact, sports organisations are incorporating numerous data related techniques in order to foster, maintain, and enhance customer relationships so as to increase customer satisfaction at events. These techniques include, but are not limited to, the use of social media (Abeza et al., 2017; Bee & Kahle, 2006). Current research internationally also shows a major trend toward the use of social media as a useful and even invaluable relationship marketing tool in both business as well as within a sporting context (Abeza et al., 2017; Felix, Rauschnabel, & Hinsch, 2017; Wang & Kim, 2017).

Business and sports brands have realised the need for increased emphasis on fostering relationships with their customers and it is clear that this is a fundamental pillar to success in both the modern-day business and sports world (Zhang et al., 2016). Hence, relationship marketing literature informs us that it is imperative that sport brands focus on relationship marketing as a tool better understand the motivation for fans to attend live matches.

# 2.3 Fan Motivation

In order to better understand factors affecting attendance at rugby matches in South Africa, a focus of this study was sport fan motivation. Pizzo et al. (2018), building on the research of Hebb (1955) as well as Ryan and Deci (1971), have described motivation as the processes that direct purposeful behaviour. Mowen and Minor (1998, p. 160) more specifically defined motivation as "an activated state within a person consisting of drive urges, wishes and desires that lead to goal directed behaviour".

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory is one of the core pieces of literature when it comes to the field of motivation (McLeod, 2007; Poston, 2009). According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, motivation comprises five fundamental and hierarchical human needs, namely physiological; safety; belongingness and love; esteem and self-actualisation (see Figure 2). Physiological needs refer to food, water, warmth and rest; safety refers to security, law and shelter; belonginess/love refers to relationships and friends; esteem refers to prestige, achievement, and accomplishment; and self-actualisation refers to self-fulfilment and personal growth. Maslow's (1943) theory implies that a customer would purchase a product or service in order to satisfy one or more of the needs at a particular time and in order for motivation to occur at the next level on the hierarchical pyramid, lower level needs must first be satisfied.



Other motivational theories which aim to understand the psychological factors that explain human behaviour include (but are not limited to): means end chain theory, social identity theory, and behavioural decision theory (Beck, 2003; Ramlall, 2004). These theories are explained in more detail below.

Means-end chain theory has been applied to consumer behaviour and indicates that consumer motivations depend first on the consumers' values or desirable end states of existence (Gutman, 1982; Howard, 1977). The means-end chain theory is a hierarchical goal-based theory. It states that product and service attributes are linked to consequences which the product helps the consumer to fulfil. These consequences can be either positive or negative. Means-end chain theory states that these values (such as attitudes, judgement of preference and choice) create meaning in the decision making process of a consumer and that they understand the consequences of the future purchase, that is, the person buys a product

fully understanding the goals they wish to achieve (Bagozzi & Dabholkar, 2000; Jiang, Scott, & Ding, 2015; Leão & Mello, 2007). The consumer requires a consequence to be achieved and therefore selects a product based on this desired consequence (Claeys & Abeele, 2001).

Social identity theory states that one's identity is the primary motivating factor which persuades an individual to consume/behave in a certain manner. Therefore, one's choices regarding consumption are directly linked to the product which the consumer most closely associates with the identity with which they wish to fit in at the time (Jenkins, 2014; Tajfel, 1982; Turner 1982). This identity is self-determined, and one customer could have numerous identities, for example, a woman could be a wife, mother, daughter, manager, or sports fan. Social identity theory postulates that this customer acts in the most apt manner, given the current situation. Goldman (2014) investigated the function of sport fan identity in seeking optimal psychological distinctiveness and found that social identity is the bedrock for both comparisons between people who are in the same friendship circle or for comparisons between people in completely different social circles/groups.

Another prominent theory when it comes to understanding the motivation of consumers is behavioural decision theory. According to Bettman, Luce, and Payne (1998), this theory stipulates that an individual's choice of product is made up of many interrelated factors but begins with the goals of the consumer. This theory includes a hierarchy of goals from which consumers apply their own decision-making processes in order to decide on the best available purchase decision.

The motivational theories mentioned above can be used to better understand the reasons why fans attend live sports matches or why they are no longer attending live sports matches (Kozak, 2002; Robinson & Trail, 2005). Studies that involve motivational theories in a sporting context in South Africa include Burnett's (2015) study which focused on the development of sport in South Africa as well as Edward and Steyn's (2008) study which focused on sports psychology. However, it does not appear that motivational theories have been applied to the decline in live rugby attendance numbers in South Africa. Previously, authors who have done research into sports fandom using the Sports Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) have generally found entertainment and aesthetics to be the most powerful motivators in both men and women, and the economic motive to be the least influential.

Understanding the motivation of sports fans or spectators is an important area of research for sports brands and other entities associated with live sports productions. Funk, Ridinger, and Moorman (2004) stated that sports brands need to better utilise not only the understanding of fan motivation but also involvement in order to better influence consumer behaviour and attendance in what is becoming an increasingly saturated market. As modern trends emerge in which alternate options are available to consumers, such as the rise of eSports as a global phenomenon (Hamari & Sjöblom, 2017), the ever-competitive nature of sports broadcasting as well as the multitude of live sports viewing options internationally, research into the motivations of fans and spectators to consume live sports is becoming more and more relevant (Bellamy Jr, 2002; Funk et al., 2004). Further research needs to be undertaken into the relationship between motivation and the construct of involvement in a South African sporting sense as this would lead to rugby brands in South Africa gaining a better understanding of the motivations of their spectators.

#### 2.3.1 Motivational factors

Wann, a respected psychologist who has placed emphasis on researching fandom, team identification, and fan behaviours has written numerous academic articles which discuss fan motivation for attending live sports events (Wann, 1995; Wann, 1997; Wann et al., 1995; Wann et al., 2001; Wann et al., 2002). He created the Sports Fan Motivation Scale in 1995 to incorporate both the impact of entertainment as well as the aesthetic needs of a spectator. Wann (1995) identified eight separate motives of individual sports fans by building on decades of wide, generic research from numerous independent authors such as Cialdini, Borden, and Thorne (1976), Duncan (1983), Gantz (1981), Sloan (1989), Smith (1988), Wann (1995), Wann (1994), and Zuckerman (1979). The eight motives which make up the SFMS

include; eustress, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, economic, aesthetic, group affiliation, and family needs (Wann, 1995). Each of these motives are briefly discussed below.

Eustress is 'euphoric stress'—or stress which is enjoyable— which, in a sports fan context, involves a desire to gain stimulation as well as excitement through sport (Gantz, 1981; Sloan, 1989). Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) also defined eustress as the result of gaining excitement and stimulation through sport. According to Zuckerman (1979), sports are enjoyable for certain sports fans due to the fact that they arouse the senses of spectators and offer them the necessary excitement and stress that they seek.

Self-esteem as a motivating factor on Wann's (1995) SFMS refers to fans who enjoy watching sports due to the feeling of success and accomplishment which they experience when their team wins a certain match or tournament (Wann, 1995). Cialdini, Borden, and Thorne (1976) found that fans were likely to increase their loyalty or association to a team for the mere reason that it increased their self-esteem. Self-esteem in a sports motivation context thus refers to the increase in a fan's subjective evaluation of their own worth which is increased from attending a live sports event.

Smith (1988) defined escape as a motivator for live sports attendance as the desire of sports fans to escape their daily routines. Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) defined escape as one's diversion from usual life. Kaynak, Salman, and Tatoglu (2007) found that there is a relationship between escape and fan loyalty and that a there is a clear relational benefit between a sports experience and escape or the diversion from one's daily or routine stresses. Escape, in this research, is the desire of the sports fan to be distracted from the stresses of everyday life.

Entertainment has been widely researched as a motivator for live sports attendance. Scholars who have previously investigated this motive include James and Ross (2004), Hansen and Gauthier (1989), and Trail, Robinson, and Kim (2008). Wann (1995) described a fan's desire to be entertained as somewhat like a pastime, like a trip to the movies or to a theme park. Da

Silva et al. (2017) described attendees of sports matches as thrill seekers who have a deepseated desire to be entertained. Entertainment is the desire of an attendee to be thrilled or entertained by a sports event.

Wann (1995) described fans who are perhaps more interested in profits than the eventual standings or even results of a match as representative of the economic motive. Although these fans are not entirely bothered by the results of a sports from a fandom perspective, they are still entertained and can get a great deal of joy from their live attendance. Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) believe that some customers are almost solely driven by the desire to make profit from an event. Wann (1995) failed to find a correlation between the economic motivator and fandom. Wann, Grieve, Zapalac, and Pease (2008) therefore suggested that these attendees do not meet the usual definition of fans (supporting an individual team or identifying with favourite players). However, for the purpose of this study the economic motivator will be included as a factor which influences fan motivation. The economic motive refers to the desire to bet on an event.

Another major motivating factor of the SFMS is the aesthetic value which a sporting event offers. Many patrons of sporting events see sport as an art form (Duncan, 1983). Smith (1988, p. 58) reports that fans are influenced by the "excellence, beauty, and creativity in an athlete's performance". Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) describe aesthetic beauty as one's craving to see the grace and beauty in a live sports experience. For the purpose of this research, the aesthetic motive is a fan's desire to enjoy the beauty of the sports event which he/she is attending.

Branscombe and Wann (1994) identify group affiliation needs as another motivating factor. They describe affiliation needs as the fans desire spend time in a social environment as well as satisfying their desire to avoid loneliness. Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) describe affiliation as a referral to the event's social nature (i.e., the need for one to be with other people). For the purpose of this study, the group motive shall be the desire of the fan to be amongst fellow people or fellow supporters.

The eighth factor, family needs, is regarded as a fan's desire to spend time with his/her family members. Much like group affiliation above, the concepts of family needs represents a motivator which is described as a fan seeking to attend an event to spend time with his/her family. This is echoed by da Silva and Las Casas (2017) who describe family needs as relating to spending time with one's family.

Other studies have identified motivating factors other than the eight described above. For example, Ferkins and Shilbury (2009) summarised five sport motives that sports consumers desire from a sport experience. These include social interaction, performance, excitement, esteem, and diversion. Ferkins and Shilbury (2009) go on to define these motives as follows: (a) Social interaction represents a desire for sociability which can be gained through enhancement of human interaction at sporting events; (b) Performance represents a desire for aesthetic and physical pleasure; (c) Excitement represents a desire for intellectual stimulation; (d) Esteem represents a desire for competency and a heightened sense of personal and group belonging; and (e) Diversion represents the need for mental satisfaction and escape. It can be seen that there are noticeable overlaps between the factors identified by Ferkins and Shilbury (2009) and those identified by Wann (1995). This study will assume that fan motivation comprises the eight factors identified by Wann (1995) as these factors have been widely used in literature—for example, by Armstrong (2002), Robinson and Trail (2005), Wann, Royalty, and Rochelle (2002), and Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999).

## 2.3.2 Defining sports fandom

Although several studies have been undertaken on both sports fans as well as sports spectators, few of them provide accurate definitions of the two, and research which does conceptualise the two rarely provides consistency (Jacobson, 1979). Due to the fact that

spectators may not necessarily be fans, this lack of consistency is problematic. Furthermore, much like the research of Smith (1988), it is quite common in existing research that both terms are used interchangeably (Delmar, Sanchez-Martin & Velazquez, 2018; Trail, Fink & Anderson, 2003). In order to avoid confusion and ambiguity, research which aims to examine sports fandom should first define both terms. This is particularly relevant when exploring the constructs of fan motivation, involvement, satisfaction and loyalty as well as when exploring team identification as does Goldman (2014), as researchers have argued that there are different degrees of team identification (Beaton, Funk, & Alexandris, 2009). Team identification shall be looked at in section 2.3.4.

In order to define sports fans, one needs to understand the concept of involvement (Robinson & Trail, 2005). According to Shank and Beasley (1998) sports involvement revolves around both the perceived importance and interest the issue of sports has to a particular individual. Hirt, Zillman, Erickson, and Kennedy (1992, p. 724) defined a sports fan as someone who displays "an affiliation in which a great deal of emotional significance and value are derived from group membership". Spinrad (1981) defined a fan as "the person who thinks, talks about and is oriented towards sports even when [the fan] is not actually observing, or reading, or listening to an account of a specific sports event". Fans are therefore people who have a long-term affiliation with a sports team and have invested personal finances and time into the team or club. They are also committed to the club when results may not be going the club's or team's way, or the team is not performing well.

Jones (1997) made the argument that spectators will watch a sports event and then subsequently forget about it; this suggests that they are merely at a live game to enjoy the event and hold no affiliation to any of the teams involved. Fans on the other hand have far more passion and will devote parts of their everyday life to either the sport or to the team itself. Pooley (1978) also identified the need to differentiate between the two groups and claimed that the difference lies in the level of engrossment and passion. Wann, Melnick, and Russel (2001) similarly outlined the differences between spectators and fans and argued that researchers who do acknowledge the differences between the two have generally reached consensus that the difference lies in the level or degree of devotion and passion displayed toward a team or a player. The above definitions are taken from various research studies and show a wide range of competing opinions and clear overlaps between the definitions of both spectators and fans. For the purpose of this research the difference between the two lies in the level of devotion and passion displayed by the viewer.

#### 2.3.3 Team identification and the Psychological Connection Model (PCM)

Marketing research has often referenced a purchasing or marketing funnel which is a framework for understanding how customer networks impact on business relationships with customers (Rogers, 2016). The original marketing funnel comprises of four key stages, namely: awareness, the moment an user first discovers a brand; consideration, when a customer is interested but not yet ready to purchase a brand; conversion, when the consumer finally makes the behavioural choice of purchasing a brand; and loyalty, when consumers regularly buy a product and find it difficult to use a competing product (Anderson, Sims, Price & Brusa, 2011; Noble, 2010; Rawat & Diwekar, 2014). Whilst Noble (2010) claimed that the marketing funnel's value as a framework was no longer relevant due to the changes in the marketing industry, other authors such as Rogers (2016) have argued that the funnel merely needs adjustment and thus added a fifth element to its mechanism, namely, advocacy, which is when consumers actively recommend a brand to other potential customers. Whilst the opinions of authors on the ongoing use of the marketing funnel may differ, both Rogers (2016) and Noble (2010) have agreed that a model which aligns better with modern marketing principles is needed and most importantly, the customer needs to be placed at the forefront of the effort. As can be seen from Figure 3 below, the marketing funnel can be represented as opening up after the conversion stage as customer retention should be the priority (Willits, 2018). This adds to the existing relationship marketing literature in which an increased emphasis is placed on customer management and retention.



The Psychological Connection Model (PCM), which is similar to the marketing funnel mentioned above, but focuses more on explaining sport and event consumer behaviour (Beaton, Funk & Alexandris, 2009), is a framework which was designed to consolidate prior literature and academic research. Goldman (2014) stated that the model comprises of four hierarchal stages. These stages can be seen in Figure 4 below. According to Goldman (2014, p. 24) "the staging mechanism [of the PCM] is based on the construct of involvement, which is present when an activity provides an individual with a combination of pleasure, symbolic value and centrality". The PCM discusses how personal, psychological, and environmental variables have an effect on sports consumption behaviour.



2009, *Journal of Leisure Research, 41(2),* p. 180. Copyright 2009 by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Awareness is the initial stage of psychological connection to a certain team and shows that the fan is aware that there are various sports as well as teams, however the fan has not yet developed a preference or interest in any of them (Funk & James, 2001; Goldman, 2014; Martin, 2013). Attraction is the next level on the PCM and is the level in which the fan has developed an initial affiliation to a certain team but does not yet identify strongly with this team (Martin, 2013). The relationship between the fan and the team is not durable at this stage and numerous external factors could influence a change in allegiance (Goldman, 2014). The next level of commitment on the PCM is called attachment. This level sees a more robust relationship being formed between the sports fan and a particular team/sport (Goldman, 2014). The fan is beginning to identify with the team at this stage and as such it is now a part of their self-constructed beliefs about themselves (Funk & James, 2001). Due to the perceived physical and psychological associations with the team or sport at this stage, a stable connection as well as a stronger attachment with the team is now present (Martin, 2013). Funk and James (2001) have argued that within the attachment phase, a fan will make a noticeable effort to re-evaluate information which is worrying or differing regarding their team to make themselves feel at ease. The final stage of the PCM is allegiance, and is the strongest, most passionate and highest level of fandom or team commitment (Funk & James, 2001; Hunt, Bristol, & Bashaw, 1999). Funk and James (2001) described this stage as the fan being loyal to the team or sport in question and is reached when the fan's beliefs are consistent with the attitude and beliefs of the fan. The fan's beliefs at this stage are unlikely to change should they be exposed to counter-persuasion and influence (Goldman, 2014).

#### 2.4 Fan Involvement

For the purpose of this study, fan involvement in rugby is defined as the perceived importance of rugby to the consumer. This definition is formed from the research of Mittal (1995, p. 270) who defined involvement as "the perceived importance of the stimulus". Thus, in a rugby environment, a fan who is highly involved can be described as someone who relates to the sport because it is relevant to their social identity and they perceive rugby as important to their life (Laverie & Arnett, 2000). Bloch and Richins (1993) substituted the word involvement for perceived importance which ties in well with the definition by Mittal (1995) and suggests that the terms are interchangeable.

Involvement is closely linked to motivation and is considered a variable which reflects the extent to which an individual deems a particular decision relevant in terms of his/her values, basic goals, and self-concept (Zaichowsky, 1985). Gantz and Wenner (1995) as well as Shank and Beasley (1998) found that the construct of psychological involvement is fundamental to understanding fandom and more importantly the motives which persuade fans to attend live sports events. The term involvement is often used in consumer behaviour and marketing research and is seen as an imperative construct when attempting to understand consumers psychologically, especially with regards to decision making (Arora, 1985; Smeaton & Clements, 1999). Firms can use the constructs of involvement to accurately predict future

consumer behaviour, as involvement has a direct relationship to consumer decision making and processing of information (Broderick & Mueller, 1999).

According to Storey and Larbig (2018), customers are a valuable knowledge resource which organisations can use to create success in the future by including them when in the design phase of the product. Further to this, the authors have also argued that knowledge regarding customer needs and wants is best retrieved from the customers themselves and thus benefits can be obtained from involving customers in a more direct and tangible manner. Lusch and Nambisan (2015) argued that the process of co-creation between the service and the customer is what creates value; value is therefore not only created by an organisation but also by its customers. They found that desires and needs of customers and how best to service these desires and needs were best identified by the customers themselves. Moeller et al. (2013) stated that customers are more cognisant of the problem and service providers have more information, therefore, emphasis should be placed on customer involvement and the co-creation process.

Fans of sporting events or particular teams have a certain degree of involvement or an attachment to the sport itself. For example, one might hypothesise that attendees of a rugby match in South Africa are likely to have played rugby in school or are actively involved in rugby in their own social lives. Hill and Green (2000) put forward the argument that involvement in sport is often confused with participation but should rather be referred to as the perceived importance of the sport. These authors found that involvement and attitudinal loyalty had a positive relationship with one another and that there is a positive relationship between psychological involvement and future behavioural intentions. They went on to corroborate the work of Kim, Scott, and Crompton (1997), Gantz and Wenner (1995), as well as Kerstetter and Kovich (1997) by stating that psychological involvement not only affects fans' desire to participate in particular sports but also to view sport on television and attend live sporting events. More research into fan involvement of South Africa rugby fans needs to be undertaken in order for rugby brands in South Africa to better understand how relationships with fans can be improved and involvement levels can be increased so as to better understand

and combat the declining numbers of sports fans attending live domestic rugby matches in South Africa.

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) stated that the exchanges between organisations and their consumers or customers had moved to the forefront in the creation of value as well as value extraction. They said that value had shifted toward experiences and as such the market place has become far more interactive, allowing more conversations to be had between customers and suppliers. These interactions have become imperative to creating growth and have become common in value creation. Co-creation or the increased emphasis on creating more involved customers allows organisations and their customers to create value together. Cocreation allows for the customer to construct the experience along with the organisation. Cocreation is creating a practice in which customers and organisations can hold an active conversation which allows them to co-construct experiences, even if this leads to the product remaining the same. It allows for greater transparency for customers and allows them to be involved in the design process, this in turn allows them to feel more involved in the process as a whole. This allows firms greater relationships with their clients, and through the involvement of their customers, greater value is created. Through co-creation and client involvement, greater interactions are created and thus firms are able to unlock new avenues of revenue creation and competitive advantage (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo, Maglio, & Akaka, 2008). Vega-Vasquez (2013) found that value co-creation and customer satisfaction were positively correlated and that firms should actively foster client participation in the value creation process. Laverie and Arnett (2000) studied the factors that affect fan attendance and found that the hypothesis that involvement has a positive influence on satisfaction to be true.

# 2.5 Fan Satisfaction

Tse and Wilton (1988, p. 204) defined customer satisfaction as "the consumer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations (or some norm of

performance) and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption". Oliver (1997) argued that customer satisfaction is a core factor for a company in the aim of increasing triple bottom line numbers and lowering overall marketing expenditure. Satisfaction is the result of purchasing a product or service and comparing the item's "rewards and costs to the anticipated consequences" (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982, p. 493). More recently, Wicks and Roethlein (2009) put forward the argument that from a supplier perspective, satisfaction is the act of supplying a good or service which creates perceived value and as such persuades the consumer to remain engaged in an encouraging manner.

Researchers have consolidated the findings regarding the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction (Szymanski & Henard, 2001). Researchers and marketers have also focused on customer satisfaction as an antecedent of customer loyalty (Kim, Vogt, & Knutson, 2015; Suh & Youjae, 2006). Consumer satisfaction is linked to the influence of experiences in the past as it is a good way of measuring the satisfaction acquired from a personal consumption experience. When looking at the antecedents to customer satisfaction, the following factors have been found to be relevant: "expectations, disconfirmation of expectations, performance, affect, and equity" (Szymanski & Henard, 2001, p. 17). Oliver (1993) found that customer satisfactions were determined by (a) emotional responses (both positive and negative), and (b) cognitive disconfirmation. This means that a customer is affected by both the experience of a product or service and how this experience ranked in comparison to their expected experience.

According to Szymanski and Henard (2001) the consequences associated with satisfaction are complaining behaviour, word of mouth, and repurchase intentions. Oliver (1997) discussed loyalty as a positive outcome of customer satisfaction. Much like the work of Degaris (2015) mentioned above, Oliver (1997) proposed three phases of satisfaction: cognitive, affective, and conative which ultimately form a positive relationship and create customer loyalty. It is widely confirmed by researchers that there is a positive correlation between repeat purchasing and customer satisfaction (Choi & Chu, 2001; Kuo, Hu, & Yang, 2013). The satisfaction which is experienced by a customer can be linked directly to the loyalty of

customers as it makes up the behavioural aspect of customer loyalty; the other aspect being attitudinal (Cronin et al., 2000; Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995, Oliver, 1997). This will be further discussed in section 2.6.

Yoshida and James (2010, p. 340) defined fan satisfaction in a sporting context as "pleasurable, fulfilment response to the entertainment of sport competition and/or ancillary services provided during a game". Sports fans can be considered heterogeneous in nature and as such achieving customer satisfaction should, according to Cronin and Taylor (1992), be considered as a fundamental goal in driving crowd numbers and repeat attendance figures. Brady et al. (2006) as well as Zhang, Smith, Pease, and Lam (1998) found that previous customer satisfaction definitions were also applicable within a sporting context, and can thus be applied to this research. Fans' intentions to attend future games and events can be directly linked to their satisfaction with previous sports events (Foroughi, Mohammad, Nikbin, & Hyun, 2014; Laverie & Arnett, 2000). This is consistent with the findings of a study in which customer satisfaction in relation to repurchase intentions was investigated in baseball, football, and casino settings. The findings showed that respondents who had higher satisfaction were more likely to display repurchase intentions in all three settings (Blodgett & Wakefield, 1995).

Previous research internationally in both a business and sports context has shown a clear relationship between satisfaction and repeat patronage (Choi & Chu, 2001; Murray & Howat, 2002; Susskind & Viccari, 2011). Research into the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty was also investigated in a South African smart phone context by Mostert, Petzer, and Weideman (2016) in which it was found that a direct positive relationship exists between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty amongst Generation Y customers.

#### 2.6 Fan Loyalty

In existing marketing literature, loyalty is defined in two ways. Firstly, as repeat purchases and secondly as a customer making recommendations or word of mouth marketing to another person whilst unprompted to do so (Flavian et al., 2001). The latter aspect of these authors' definition ties into the sentiments of Rogers (2016) who adjusted the conventional marketing funnel and added advocacy as an additional key stage. Dick and Basu (1994, p. 99) define loyalty as "the strength of relationship between an individual's relative attitude and repeat patronage".

Early definitions of loyalty have been modified over the years as researchers have spent considerable time and effort in defining and understanding loyalty (Dick et al., 1994; Hallowell, 1996; Oliver, 1999). Early studies on loyalty focused on repeat purchase behaviour. This can be seen in Brown's (1953) definition in which loyalty was divided into four categories: undivided loyalty, divided loyalty, unstable loyalty, and no loyalty. Kuehn and Day (1962) simply measured loyalty as the probability of repurchase. More recently, researches have begun to separate loyalty into two dimensions: attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010). Jacoby (1971) had previously made mention of both aspects and argued that brand-loyal behaviour is the conscious and public act of selective repeat purchase behaviour, whereas, brand-loyal attitudes are the underlying desires one has to behave in a certain manner. In other words, someone who displays repeat purchase behaviour would be considered behaviourally loyal whereas someone who simply feels positively about a brand displays attitudinal loyalty.

It is important to include both attitudinal and behavioural aspects of loyalty when trying to understand customer behaviour from a sports perspective (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler, 2008; Park & Kim, 2000). Loyalty, in the context of sports teams, is defined as a lasting allegiance to a particular team, which is resistant to change and has an impact on the subconscious thoughts as well as the behaviour of sports fans (Funk & James, 2006; Funk &
Pastore, 2000). Sports brands are therefore encouraged to enhance their strategies in order to foster sustainable relationships with stakeholders that last for longer periods of time. Due to the heterogeneous nature of sport, it has become tougher to maintain a loyal fan base, as this loyalty is also dependant on the performance or the recent results of the team in question (Funk & Pastore, 2000; Heere & Dickson, 2008; Mahony, Howard, & Madrigal, 2000). According to Reichheld and Sasser (1990) customer loyalty should be noticeable in an organisation's returns as it guarantees a steady stream of future cash flow.

More recently, Kiran and Diljit (2017) argued that loyalty is the ultimate goal of an organisation which provides a service. Rugby brands in South Africa supply an intangible service to fans and as such need to place greater emphasis on fostering greater loyalty in their fans so as to curb the decrease in attendance figures. Kiran et al., (2017) stated that loyalty can be directly linked to profit and is directly correlated with increased revenues. For the purpose of this research loyalty shall be assumed to comprise of both an attitudinal and a behavioural dimension.

According to Yoon and Uysal (2005) the notion of loyalty and more importantly the level of loyalty which a patron displays is a critical indicator which can be used by a brand to accurately interpret how successful a marketing strategy has been. Kotler, Saliba, and Wrenn (1991) stated that customer loyalty is a fundamental pillar in strategic marketing planning and that brand loyalty is extremely important when understanding repeat purchases or allegiance of customers. This is important to local rugby brands as driving increased loyalty has been shown to increase the likelihood of repeat patronage at sports events internationally (Hill & Green, 2000; Kaynak et al., 2008; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). This research could be applied in a South African perspective in order to drive the increased loyalty of rugby fans.

According to Stevens and Rosenberger (2012), customer loyalty allows an organisation to achieve lower marketing costs, higher numbers of unique visitors, a greater motivation to search, an increase in word of mouth advertising, a lower chance of customers defaulting to

competitive products, repeat purchase as well as a larger portion of market share and a higher value for money. One of the major advantages of fostering greater fan loyalty from a sports perspective is that fan loyalty creates a solid following (Gladden & Funk, 2001). In addition to the guaranteed revenues through attendance, loyal fan bases can also allow the sports brand to secure media broadcast rights, sponsors and most importantly, advertising, all of which contribute positively toward the profitability of the sports brand in question (Kaynak et al., 2008).

The relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty has been examined extensively in existing literature (Amin, 2016; Bowen & Chen McCain, 2015; Hallowell, 1996). In their study which looked at the relationships between fan involvement, satisfaction and loyalty, Hill and Green (2000) found that correlations between these three constructs existed and concluded that it is imperative when studying fan behaviour that fan satisfaction be understood. This will allow event managers to better understand future attendance intentions. These studies have found that there is a strong positive relationship between the two constructs. This implies that if customers are satisfied with their experience at an event, they are more to display repeat attendance behaviours. Based on evidence it can therefore be accepted that there is a clear link between satisfaction and both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty and further research needs to be done from a South African perspective, especially in light of the declining number of attendants at local rugby matches.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This literature review which has looked at sports attendance through a relationship marketing lens has shown that the constructs of fan motivation, loyalty, involvement, and satisfaction are relevant and influential. This study will investigate these relationships in the context of attendance at South African rugby matches.

#### **Chapter 3: Research Hypotheses**

#### 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty using a relationship marketing lens, in light of the international phenomenon of declining attendance rates at live sporting events (Boeri & Severgnini, 2014; Cronin & Holt, 2017; Horak, 2017). The hypotheses were based on the findings of the literature review where existing relationships had been researched in business and sporting contexts. However, the literature exposed gaps in certain areas especially from a South African perspective and the following hypotheses were designed to establish whether relationships exist between the above-mentioned constructs in this context.

## 3.2 Involvement

The first research question formulated for this study focused on the relationship between fan involvement and fan motivation, fan satisfaction, fan attitudinal loyalty, and fan behavioural loyalty. To explore Research Question One, a number of hypotheses were formulated based on current literature.

Gantz and Wenner (1995) as well as Shank and Beasley (1998) proposed that the construct of psychological involvement is fundamental to understanding fandom and most importantly the motives the persuade fans to attend live sports events. Laverie and Arnett (2000) demonstrated that involvement, which is an imperceptible state of engrossment, motivation or stimulation, is a fundamental concept when attempting to understand fan behaviour and thus understanding not only fan motivations for attending live sports events but the factors that drive repeat attendance such as loyalty and satisfaction. Laverie and Arnett's (2000) results suggested that if a fan has been attending live sporting events for an extended period of time they are more likely to have experienced greater satisfaction at these events. Bee and Havitz (2010) put forward the argument that in order to drive customer retention more successfully; the relationships between involvement, attitudinal loyalty (psychological commitment) and behavioural loyalty need to be investigated and understood. Iwasaki and Havitz (2004) developed a model which aimed to understand the relationships between the involvement, psychological commitment, resistance to change, and behavioural loyalty of sports fans. Tachis and Tzetzis (2015) aimed to expand and eventually corroborated the work of Iwasaki and Havitz (2004) by finding that involvement affects attitudinal loyalty which in turn has direct effects on behavioural loyalty. It is suggested by Tachis and Tzetzis (2015) that in order to enhance sport fans' attendance habits, sport brands should focus on increasing fan involvement, psychological commitment and attitudinal loyalty through effective marketing strategies. From the discussion the following hypotheses can thus be formulated:

#### H1: There is a relationship between fan involvement and motivational factors

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between fan involvement and fan overall motivation

 $H_3$ : There is a relationship between fan involvement and satisfaction

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a relationship between fan involvement and attitudinal loyalty

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a relationship between fan involvement and behavioural loyalty

#### 3.3 Loyalty

The next two research questions formulated for this study focus on the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty and the relationships between these two constructs with fan motivation, overall motivation and fan satisfaction. To answer these questions, a number of hypotheses were formulated based on current literature.

Within existing literature, researchers generally agree that loyalty can be separated into two dimensions, namely attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010). Jacoby (1971) had previously made mention of both aspects and argued that brand-loyal behaviour is the conscious and public act of selective repeat purchase behaviour, whereas, brand-loyal attitudes are the underlying desires one has to behave in a certain manner.

Relationship marketing theory dictates that in order for organisations to create and maintain sustainable long-term relationships with customers, they should focus on short term, isolated transactions (Gladden & Sutton, 2009; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008). In fact, according to Bojei, Julian, and, Wel (2013) the development and ongoing preservation of strong long-term relationships enables organisations to boost customer loyalty and thus benefit financially in the long term. Kotler, Saliba, and Wrenn (1991) stated that customer loyalty is a fundamental pillar in strategic marketing planning and most importantly stated that brand loyalty is extremely important when understanding repeat purchase intentions as well as the allegiance of customers. Further to this Bauer et al. (2008) as well as Trail and James (2001) argued that both fan motivation and loyalty have an effect on future fan behaviour. One of the major advantages of fostering greater fan loyalty from a sports perspective is that fan loyalty creates a solid following regardless of the performance of the team, thus when the team is not performing well, sports brands can still rely on revenues from loyal supporters (Gladden & Funk, 2001). In addition to the guaranteed revenues through attendance, loyal fan bases can also allow the sports brand to secure media broadcast rights, sponsors and most importantly, advertising, all of which contribute positively toward the profitability of the sports brand in question (Kaynak, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2008). Several authors found that the satisfaction which is experienced by a customer can be linked directly to customer loyalty (Cronin et al., 2000; Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995, Oliver, 1997). From a sporting perspective, it was found that fans who identified strongly with a team and experienced greater satisfaction with a live sporting experience were most likely to display future intentions to attend another game (Matsuoka, Chelladurai, & Harada, 2003). The work of Matsuoka et al. (2003) is consistent with past research on sports fan behaviour (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998; Wann & Branscombe, 1990) in which it was found that fostering team identification was the best way of guaranteeing behavioural loyalty as satisfaction linked to the performance of the fans' favourite team was the greatest indicator of likely repeat attendance in the future. The following hypotheses can therefore be formulated regarding attitudinal loyalty:

H<sub>6</sub>: There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and motivational factors
H<sub>7</sub>: There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and fan overall motivation
H<sub>8</sub>: There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and satisfaction
H<sub>9</sub>: There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty
H<sub>10</sub>: There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and motivational factors
H<sub>11</sub>: There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and motivational factors
H<sub>11</sub>: There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and overall motivation
H<sub>12</sub>: There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and satisfaction

### 3.4 Satisfaction

The final two research questions and hypotheses which were formulated for this study focus on the relationship between fan satisfaction and overall motivation and fan involvement as well as between fan satisfaction and the sport fan motivational factors. There is also an increased emphasis on the connection between fan satisfaction and the combination of overall motivation and overall involvement. Recent research by Sarstedt, Ringle, Raithel and, Gudergan (2014) - in which they studied soccer club activities and found that as fans become more involved in a sport, they are likely to show increasing levels of satisfaction - backs up existing research and findings on the relationship between fan involvement and fan satisfaction (Mathies & Gudergan, 2012; Sutton, McDonald & Milne, 1997). Bang and Ross (2009) investigated the relationships between volunteer satisfaction and motivation during a 2004 sporting event and found a relationship to exist between the two constructs. This finding had also been originally noted by Wann (1995) as well as by Stavros et al. (2003). The following two final hypotheses were formulated based on current literature:

# H<sub>13:</sub> There is a relationship between sport fan motivation factors and fan satisfaction

 $H_{14:}$  There is a relationship between fan overall motivation and overall involvement individually, and combined, with fan overall satisfaction

## **3.5 Conclusion**

Based on the arguments provided thus far and with specific relation to the research questions mentioned in chapter one, deductive reasoning was utilised to formulate the 14 hypotheses mentioned above. These hypotheses were tested empirically in order to establish the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty. The following chapter aims to describe the philosophy, methodology, methods, and techniques that were adopted for this research.

#### **Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design**

#### 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the philosophy, methodology, methods, and techniques that were adopted for this research. The core objective of this research was to obtain a better understanding of the reasons for fans attending live rugby matches in South Africa. A relationship marketing approach was used to form the hypotheses outlined in chapter three, which were then empirically tested. These hypotheses relate to four constructs, namely, fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty. The aim of the research was to understand and test the relationships between these constructs particularly in the context of attendance at South African rugby matches.

#### 4.2 Research Philosophy and Research Methodology

According to Saunders and Lewis (2018, p. 106) research philosophy refers to a "system of beliefs and assumptions about the development and nature of knowledge". For this study, the research questions all concerned the relationships between fan motivations, involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty and hence are 'what' type questions which involve the investigation of relationships between certain objectively-measurable constructs. Therefore, the appropriate research philosophy is positivism as it is assumed that there are natural laws which govern such relationships. Positivism is the philosophy used in the physical and natural sciences, in that objective, replicable methods are used resulting in law-like generalisations. The research philosophy underlies the choice of research methodology (Flick, 2014). Consequently, in line with a positivist research philosophy and 'what' research questions, the research methodology for this study was quantitative.

As is typical in quantitative research, this research relied on existing theory and then tested it in a deductive approach. According to Kothari (2004, p. 20) "deduction is the process of reasoning from some premise to a conclusion which follows from that very premise" whereas "induction is the process of reasoning from a part to the whole". Saunders and Lewis (2018, p. 112) explained that "deduction is a research approach which involves the testing of a theoretical proposition by using a research strategy designed to perform this test" and Silverman (2013) stated that a deductive approach involves developing hypotheses from existing literature or research and then empirically testing these hypotheses. A deductive approach is common to positivist research (Snieder & Larner, 2009).

Leedy and Omrod (2001, p. 191) explained that quantitative studies investigate correlations between constructs, saying that "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". This research aimed to obtain a better understanding of the relationship between the constructs of fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty for attendees of live super rugby matches in South Africa.

According to Saunders and Lewis (2018), three types of research studies exist, namely, explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory. The differences between these three types are described as follows:

(a) Explanatory – Explanatory research aims to focus on the relationships between variables or constructs (Saunders & Lewis, 2018);

(b) Descriptive - Yin (2003) as well as Baxter and Jack (2008) stated that a descriptive study concentrates on recounting or explaining a phenomenon as well as the circumstances in which it occurred.

(c) Exploratory – An exploratory study focuses on probable outcomes which may come about due to an intervention. Exploratory research also seeks to explore the validity of each of these outcomes (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003;).

This study was an explanatory study as it aimed to explore the relationships between the constructs of fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty in light of the phenomenon of declining attendances at live rugby matches in South Africa.

## 4.3 Study Population and Sampling

The study population for this study comprised individuals, older than 18, who had attended a live rugby match in South Africa over the six months prior to the time of data collection for this study. Since a sampling frame was not available, the researcher could not consider using probability sampling (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The researcher subsequently used non-probability sampling methods, specifically convenience and snowball sampling (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Convenience sampling was used by inviting potential respondents in the researcher's personal networks (colleagues, friends, and family) as well as by targeting the Facebook pages of four prominent South African super rugby teams. Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, in which sample members identify other participants based on the criteria identified (Saunders & Lewis, 2018), a process which Valentine (1993) described as contacting one participant via the other; a referral system created by a network of people who know each other. The researcher thus asked respondents to forward the website link to the questionnaire to their personal networks.

Creswell (2015) stated that the sample size of quantitative work needs to be large in order to be representative of the wider population. The sample size of this study was 118 which according to Eiselen, Uys, and Potgieter (2007) is a large (n > 30) sample size.

### 4.4 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in the research is at the level of the individual as the aim is to better understand the reasons for individuals attending live rugby matches.

#### 4.5 Data Collection

This study is cross-sectional in nature as the data were collected at a particular point in time (Flick, 2011). A cross-sectional study is employed when a study aims to study a particular phenomenon at a specific time. A longitudinal study, on the other hand, refers to the collection of data over an extended time period and is most relevant in research in which change is being examined over a certain time period (Goddard & Melville, 2004).

In order to most effectively cross-sectionally capture the responses of rugby fans in South Africa, an electronic questionnaire was created and sent out to the sample of the study population. By using Twitter and WhatsApp, the researcher invited members of his personal networks (colleagues, friends, and family) to participate in the study by means of clicking on a website link which automatically routed participants to an online survey hosted on Survey Monkey. The researcher furthermore posted the website link to the survey on four Facebook pages, namely, those of four major super rugby teams in South Africa and invited those who had attended live rugby matches in South Africa during the previous six months to participate in the study.

#### 4.6 Research Instrument

Similar to Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2018) as well as Johnson and Turner (2003), the researcher used a structured questionnaire to collect data. This is deemed a valid method of collecting data for quantitative research. The questionnaire commenced with an informed consent statement and a screening question to ensure that respondents qualified to participate in the study (by having attended a live rugby match in South Africa during the previous six months as well as being over the age of 18). The questionnaire comprised seven sections. Section A collected the demographic information of the participants, sections B and C collected information relating to the participants' general motivation for attending a live rugby match as well as their overall motivation, section D collected data relating to the participants' overall involvement, section E measured overall satisfaction, and section F measured fan loyalty.

Fan motivation was measured using two established scales, the first of which comprised 23 items. This scale, known as the sports fan motivation scale, was taken from Wann (1995) and used, as per Wann's suggestion, an 8-point Likert scale measure (where 1 = this is not at all descriptive of me and 8 = this is very descriptive of me). The second scale for motivation measured overall motivation using the five items suggested by Brown et al. (2014) using an identical 8-point Likert type scale measure.

In order to measure respondents' involvement, the sport involvement measure by Shank and Beasley (1998) was used. As with the other sections of the questionnaire, this section also contained Likert-type scales, where respondents were asked to rank eight involvement-related items from 1-7 (1 = lowest involvement and 7 = highest involvement). These items were excitement, interest, value, appeal, use, need, relevance, and importance.

Respondent satisfaction was measured using three items adopted from Brown et al. (2014). A Likert-type scale was used to measure respondent satisfaction, where questions were asked pertaining to the respondent's previous experience at a live rugby match and the options ranged from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much so).

The final section of the questionnaire measured respondent attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Fan loyalty was measured using 10 items adopted from Bauer et al. (2008), using 7-point Likert-type scale measures ranging from 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = totally agree).

# 4.7 Ethical Clearance

Ethical clearance for this research was a prerequisite and as such the relevant steps were taken to ensure that the research complied with the dictate of the Senate Committee of Research Ethics and Integrity of the Gordon Institute of Business Science. The aim of this was to ensure the following:

(a) Protection from harm or exploitation of both the respondent and researchers;

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(b) The rights of the respondents, which supersede the rights of society, were protected;

(c) A reassurance to society that their rights were respected; and

(d) Protection of the researcher himself.

This was achieved by requiring respondents to agree to an informed consent statement in order to complete the questionnaire and be considered for inclusion in the study. Further to this, participants were disqualified if they were under the age of 18 as participants under the age of 18 are required to have a consent form signed by a parent or legal guardian.

#### 4.8 Data Analysis

Data were analysed using IBM's SPSS version 24. The software allows for the accurate compilation of frequencies and can accurately determine descriptive statistics which was necessary for this study.

An exploratory factor analysis, using principle axis factoring with Varimax rotation, was performed to establish the underlying factor structure in the data and to establish the validity of the measuring instrument. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha, where values of 0.7 and above were considered reliable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). After computing overall mean scores, independent samples t-tests were used to determine whether there were significant differences between the means of two groups. Further, the researcher calculated correlations between constructs and ran single and multiple regressions in order to establish the predictability of independent variables on dependent variables.

#### **4.9 Research Limitations**

The use of convenience and snowballing, two non-probability sampling techniques, implies that the generalisability of the results beyond the participants in the study is limited. Furthermore, due to the use of snowballing technique the data were somewhat skewed. The research relied heavily on personal networks as well as social media; for this reason responses were dominated by respondents who were between the ages of 25 and 34 (58.57%).

The study was quantitative and cross-sectional in nature and as such provided an understanding of the correlations between variables at a particular point in time. The study was therefore a snapshot at a point in time and thus did not consider possible changes in the relationships between the constructs included in the study over a period of time (Lindell & Whitney, 2001; Rindfleisch, Malter, & Ganesan, 2008). For example, according to Baxter and Jack (2008) researchers may often face problems in controlling the environment in which respondents are providing answers to questions within the questionnaire. This is particularly relevant in this case as views of respondents might have varied depending on how their team had been performing at the time of the respondent completed the questionnaire. In other words, the conditions at the time that each respondent completed the questionnaire might have been different as this was done during different time frames.

The use of a Likert-type scale is valuable in its ease of use but allows no room for the respondent to provide feedback beyond the items included in the questionnaire. Respondents are thus unable to elaborate when answering questions, should they wish to do so. For example, additional factors, specific to a South African context, could influence fan motives, such as crime and the location of an event. Furthermore, one of the limitations of using existing scales is that, although they measure the required constructs reliably, they may not be entirely relevant to certain geographic contexts. For example, the scales used in this study may have failed to take certain macro-economic conditions prevalent in a South African context into account. Factors which were excluded from the scales used which may have been relevant include crime, location, and affordability.

Due to the self-report nature of data collection certain cognitive biases that are associated with the subjectivity of the individuals completing the questionnaires may have been present. This limitation is amplified because the study was a mono-method quantitative study in which self-report questionnaires were the sole method used to collect data. Implications could include the following: dishonesty, lack of honest responses, differences between understanding and interpretation, lack of emotion, lack of understanding, hidden agendas, and malice.

#### 4.10 Conclusion

In line with the research question, this study was a positivist, quantitative study which used established scales to measure fan motivations, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty by means of self-report questionnaires. Sampling was achieved using non-probability techniques of convenience and snowball sampling. The consequent limitations of the study have been explained. The following chapter will display the sample and results of this research.

## **Chapter 5: Results**

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study results. A total number of 208 respondents completed the online questionnaire, however 43% of these respondents did not qualify for analysis as they had not attended a live domestic rugby match in South Africa during the previous six months, they were not over the age of 18, or due to incomplete questionnaires.

## 5.2 Demographic Profile and Attendance Habits

The figures in Table 1 indicate that, of the 118 qualified respondents who participated in the study, the majority (87.3%) was male; 53.4% were between the ages of 25 and 34 and 42.4% of them held a bachelor's degree.

Most respondents indicated that they supported the Lions (37.3%) and the Sharks (27.1%) and the majority responded that they had been to between one and three local rugby matches to watch their favourite team in the previous season (64.4%) as opposed to the 59.3% of respondents who stated that they had watched their favourite team more than five times on television during the previous season.

# Table 1

Variablas	Frequency (n=118)		
variables	n	%	
Gender			
Male	103	87.3%	
Female	15	12.7%	
Age			
18-24	6	5.1%	
25-34	63	53.4%	
35-44	16	13.6%	
45-54	19	16.1%	
55-64	13	11.0%	
65+	1	0.8%	
Population Group			
White	99	83.9%	
Indian	8	6.8%	
Black	5	4.2%	
Colored	5	4.2%	
Asian	1	0.8%	
Highest level of education			
High school graduate	30	25.4%	
Bachelor's degree	50	42.4%	
Master's degere	27	22.9%	
Doctoral or Professional degree	11	9.3%	
Supported Team			
Bulls	18	15.3%	
Lions	44	37.3%	
Sharks	32	27.1%	
Stormers	20	16.9%	
Other	4	3.4%	
Games of favourite team attended during previous season			
Less than 1	26	22.0%	
1-3	76	64.4%	
4-5	6	5.1%	
More than 5	10	8.5%	
Games watched of favourite team on television during previous season			
Less than 1	2	1.7%	
1-3	21	17.8%	
4-5	25	21.2%	
More than 5	70	59.3%	

# Demographic Profile and Attendance Habits of Respondents

# 5.3 Validity and Reliability

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA), a data reduction technique using principle axis factoring extraction with varimax rotation (Field, 2013; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014), was performed to identify the underlying structure in the data. However, similar to Al-Thibiti's (2004) study exploring the SFMS, a number of items cross-loaded onto multiple factors. It was

subsequently decided, as was done in Al-Thibiti's (2004) study, to delete all items that crossloaded on multiple factors and to re-run the EFA. Thus, all the items pertaining to eustress and self-esteem were deleted from further analyses.

According to Field (2013) two criteria need to be met in order for data to be considered suitable for an EFA. Firstly, the Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant (p<0.001) and secondly, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) should be larger than 0.5. The Bartlett's test of sphericity produced a result of 0.000 which shows that it is significant, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) for the overall measure was 0.799. This is higher than the 0.5 cut off and thus proves that the data were suitable for a factor analysis (Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013; Hair et al., 2014).

From the factor analysis, 11 factors were extracted based on the eigenvalue (>1) criterion. These 11 factors explain 68.17% of the total variance in the data. The 43 items included in the analysis loaded onto these 11 factors, and no cross-loading occurred on any of the factors, thereby demonstrating convergent and discriminate validity (Pallant, 2016). The findings of the EFA were indicative of convergent validity as the factors that were originally assumed to be associated with each other, were indeed associated (Pallant, 2016).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were calculated to measure internal consistency (reliability) of the measurement scales used for the 11 factors in this study. The Cronbach's alpha values equalled or exceeded 0.7 on all 11 factors, which according to Hair et al (2014) indicates that the measurement scales which were used in this study were reliable. In conclusion, the above-mentioned results establish the presence of validity and reliability. It is notable that even for family and behavioural loyalty, which each only have two items, the reliability measures were satisfactory. Table 2 below displays the factor analysis results and descriptive statistics for the extracted factors.

### Table 2

### Factor analysis results

Factor	No. of Itoms	Mean	Std Dav	Variance per	Cronbach's
Factor	NO. OF ITEMS	Mean	Stu. Dev	factor	Alpha
Aesthetics	3	4.89	1.883	4.293	0.8
Economic	3	2.07	1.625	4.929	0.8
Entertainment	3	6.36	1.339	3.187	0.7
Escape	3	3.16	2.08	6.185	0.9
Family	2	3.36	2.108	3.226	0.7
Group	3	4.91	1.648	3.761	0.7
Overall motivation	5	5.57	1.733	6.95	0.9
Involvement	8	6.48	0.845	14.187	0.9
Satisfaction	3	4.06	0.936	5.587	0.9
Attitudinal loyalty	8	5.48	1.388	12.196	0.9
Behavioural loyalty	2	3.58	1.889	3.668	0.9
Total	43			68.17%	

The extracted factors were labelled as per the constructs in the original sources from which the items for each factor were adopted. Based on the EFA results, only six as opposed to the original eight sport fan motivating factors (Wann, 1995) were included in the remainder of the analyses, namely, aesthetics, economic, entertainment, escape, family, and group. The two motivating factors that were dropped were eustress and self-esteem. Once validity and reliability had been established, the researcher computed overall mean scores for each factor to be used for further analyses.

### 5.4 Hypothesis Testing

#### 5.4.1 Involvement

Hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 explored the relationships between respondents' involvement and the other constructs included in the study. The researcher subsequently conducted Pearson correlations to determine whether relationships exist between respondents' involvement, the motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty, and behavioural loyalty. Table 3 presents the p-values and corresponding *r*-values of Pearson product moment correlation coefficients.

## Table 3

## Involvement Correlations

Correlation between involvement and:	r-value	p-value
Aesthetics	0.136	0.141
Economic	0.025	0.789
Entertainment	0.294	0,001*
Escape	-0.009	0.921
Family	-0.167	0.070
Group	0.003	0.976
Overall motivation	0.404	0,000*
Satisfaction	0.355	0,000*
Attitudinal loyalty	0.314	0,001*
Behavioural loyalty	0.175	0.058

\* Statistically significant (p<0.05)

Statistically significant positive correlations can be seen between involvement and entertainment (r = 0.294); overall motivation (r = 0.404); satisfaction (r = 0.355) and attitudinal loyalty (r = 0.314). Subsequently it can be concluded that relationships exist between respondents' involvement and entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty. Concerning the hypotheses formulated in chapter three, the following can be concluded:

Hypothesis 1 stating that there is a relationship between involvement and motivation can thus partially be supported as only one of the six motivational factors (entertainment) has a statistically significant positive correlation with involvement.

Hypothesis 2 stating that there is a relationship between involvement and overall motivation should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 3 stating that there is a relationship between involvement and satisfaction should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 4 stating that there is a relationship between involvement and attitudinal loyalty should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 5 stating that there is a relationship between involvement and behavioural loyalty should thus not be supported.

For a study in which variables occur with many possible scores, a researcher may wish to group the data into dichotomous categories such as low and high frequencies. These are known as dichotomous variables (Bailey, 1987). The researcher subsequently decided to categorise respondents according to their involvement scores to identify those with high and low involvement in order to establish whether there were differences between respondents with low and high involvement levels concerning the motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty, and behavioural loyalty.

## 5.4.1.1 Classifying respondents according to their involvement

An overall mean score was calculated for each respondent's involvement in order to categorise the respondents into two involvement groups (by using the 50 percentiles as the cut-off points) according to their involvement levels, thus low and high involvement. The number of respondents per group differed due to ties in the continuous data. A t-test was performed (see results in Table 4) to establish whether the two involvement groups indeed differed in terms of their involvement.

#### Table 4

Construct	Low/High Involvement	Ν	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Overall involvement	Low	60	5.97	0.941	-8.345	0.000
	High	58	7.00	0.000	-8.489	0.000

The low involvement group (M = 5.97, SD = 0.941) differed statistically significantly (p < 0.05) from the high involvement group (M = 7.00, SD = 0.000).

It was subsequently decided to compare the low and high involvement groups' motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal, and behavioural loyalty. Figure 5 graphically illustrates the mean scores for those with high and low involvement for these constructs.



T-tests were accordingly performed to determine whether these two involvement groups differed statistically concerning these factors.

## 5.4.1.2 Independent sample t-tests for involvement groups

Independent t-tests were performed to determine the differences in mean scores between the six motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal and behavioural loyalty for respondents with low and high involvement levels. Before the independent t-tests were conducted, it was confirmed that the assumptions were met (Pallant, 2007). The results of the independent t-tests are reflected in Table 5 below.

## Table 5

Construct	Low/High Involvement	Ν	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Aasthatics	Low	60	4.64	1.822	-1.497	0.137
Aestnetics	High	58	5.16	1.925	-1.495	0.138
Entortainmont	Low	60	5.99	1.333	-3.143	0.002*
Entertainment	High	58	6.74	1.246	-3.146	0.002*
Eccano	Low	60	3.11	1.908	-0.293	0.770
Escape	High	58	3.22	2.260	-0.293	0.770
Economic	Low	60	2.16	1.670	0.613	0.541
ECONOMIC	High	58	1.98	1.587	0.614	0.540
Family	Low	60	3.43	0.997	0.361	0.719
Failiny	High	58	3.28	0.946	0.361	0.719
Group	Low	60	4.91	1.607	0.100	0.992
Gloup	High	58	4.91	1.703	0.100	0.992
Overall motivation	Low	60	5.10	1.659	-3.059	0.003*
	High	58	6.05	1.691	-3.058	0.003*
Satisfaction	Low	60	3.89	1.000	-2.006	0.047*
Satisfaction	High	58	4.24	0.084	-2.012	0.047*
Attitudinal lovalty	Low	60	5.10	1.441	-3.070	0.003*
Attituumarioyalty	High	58	5.86	1.228	-3.079	0.003*
Robavioural lovalty	Low	60	3.24	1.788	-2.033	0.044*
Denavioural loyalty	High	58	3.94	1.940	-2.030	0.044*

### Involvement Independent T-test Scores

\*Statistically significant (P<0.05)

From Table 5 a statistically significant difference can be seen between respondents with low (M = 5.99, SD = 1.333) and high involvement (M = 6.74, SD = 1.246) in terms of their entertainment (t = -3.143; df = 116; p = 0.002). There is also a statistically significant difference between respondents with low (M = 5.10, SD = 1.659) and high involvement (M = 6.05, SD = 1.691) in terms of their overall motivation (t = -3.059; df = 116; p = 0.003). A statistically significant difference also exists between respondents with low (M = 3.89, SD = 1.000) and high involvement (M = 4.24, SD = 0.084) in terms of their satisfaction (t = -2.006; df = 116; p = 0.047). A statistically significant difference is also seen between respondents with low (M = 3.89, SD = 1.000) and high involvement (M = 4.24, SD = 0.084) in terms of their satisfaction (t = -2.006; df = 116; p = 0.047). A statistically significant difference is also seen between respondents with low (M = 3.89, SD = 1.000) and high involvement (M = 4.24, SD = 0.084) in terms of their satisfaction (t = -2.006; df = 116; p = 0.047).

5.10, SD = 1.441) and high involvement (M = 5.86, SD = 1.228) in terms of their attitudinal loyalty (t = -3.070; df = 116; p = .003). Finally, a statistically significant difference can be seen between respondents with low (M = 3.24, SD = 1.788) and high involvement (M = 3.94, SD = 1.940) in terms of their behavioural loyalty (t = -2.033; df = 116; p = 0.045).

It can accordingly be concluded that respondents with low and high involvement differ statistically significantly from each other in terms of their entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. Respondents with high involvement were significantly more entertained, overall motivation was higher, they were more satisfied, had greater attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty than those with low involvement.

### 5.4.2 Attitudinal loyalty

Hypotheses H6, H7, H8 and H9 explored the relationships between respondents' attitudinal loyalty and the other factors included in the study. The researcher conducted Pearson correlations to determine whether relationships existed between respondents' attitudinal loyalty, the motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. Table 6 presents the p-values and corresponding *r*-values of Pearson product moment correlation coefficients.

## Table 6

## Attitudinal Loyalty Correlations

Correlation between attitudinal loyalty and:	r-value	p-value
Aesthetics	0.239	0,009*
Economic	0.038	0.680
Entertainment	0.264	0.004*
Escape	0.214	0.020*
Family	-0.137	0.140
Group	0.070	0.453
Overall motivation	0.541	0.000*
Satisfaction	0.465	0.000*
Behavioural loyalty	0.488	0.000*

\* Statistically significant (p<0.05)

From Table 6 statistically significant correlations can be seen between attitudinal loyalty and aesthetics (r = 0.239); entertainment (r = 0.264); escape (r = 0.214); overall motivation (r = 0.541); satisfaction (r = 0.465); and behavioural loyalty (r = 0.488). Subsequently it can be concluded that relationships exist between respondents' attitudinal loyalty and aesthetics, entertainment, escape, overall motivation, satisfaction and behavioural loyalty. Concerning the hypotheses formulated in chapter 3, the following can be concluded:

Hypothesis 6 stating that there is a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and motivation can thus partially be supported as three of the six motivational factors (aesthetics, entertainment and escape) have statistically significant positive correlations with attitudinal loyalty.

Hypothesis 7 stating that there is a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and overall motivation should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 8 stating that there is a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and satisfaction should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 9 stating that there is a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty should thus be supported.

The researcher subsequently decided to categorise respondents according to high or low attitudinal loyalty scores to establish whether there were differences between respondents with low and high levels concerning the motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty.

## 5.4.2.1 Classifying respondents according to their attitudinal loyalty

An overall mean score was calculated for each respondent's attitudinal loyalty in order to categorise the respondents into two attitudinal loyalty groups (by using the 50 percentiles as the cut-off points) according to their attitudinal loyalty levels, thus low and high attitudinal loyalty. The number of respondents per group differed due to ties in the continuous data. A t-test was performed (see results in Table 7) to establish whether the two attitudinal loyalty groups indeed differed in terms of their attitudinal loyalty.

### Table 7

### Independent t-test for Attitudinal Loyalty Groups

Construct	Low/High Att. Loyalty	Ν	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Attitudinal Loyalty	Low	63	4.54	1.287	-11.256	0.000
	High	55	6.55	0.307	-11.964	0.000

From the results portrayed in Table 7, it can be seen that the low attitudinal loyalty group (M = 4.54, SD = 1.287) differed statistically significantly (p < 0.05) from the high involvement group (M = 6.55, SD = 0.307) in terms of attitudinal loyalty.

It was subsequently decided to compare the low and high attitudinal loyalty groups' motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. Figure 6 graphically illustrates the mean scores for those with high and low attitudinal loyalty for these constructs.



T-tests were performed to determine whether these two attitudinal loyalty groups differed statistically concerning these constructs.

## 5.4.2.2 Independent sample t-tests for attitudinal loyalty groups

Independent t-tests were performed to determine the differences in mean scores between the six motivation factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty for respondents with low and high attitudinal loyalty levels. Before the independent t-tests were conducted, it was confirmed that the assumptions were met (Pallant, 2007). The results of the independent t-tests are reflected in Table 8 below.

### Table 8

Construct	Low/High Att. Loyalty	Ν	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Aasthatics	Low	63	4.54	1.804	-2.181	0.031*
Aesthetics	High	55	5.29	1.908	-2.172	0.031*
Entortainmont	Low	63	6.04	1.345	-2.856	0.005*
Entertainment	High	55	6.73	1.246	-2.871	0.005*
Eccapo	Low	63	2.97	1.888	-1.078	0.283
Escape	High	55	3.38	2.278	-1.064	0.290
Economic	Low	63	2.03	1.477	-0.315	0.754
ECONOMIC	High	55	2.12	1.793	-0.311	0.757
Family	Low	63	3.63	2.081	1.548	0.124
rainiiy	High	55	3.04	2.112	1.546	0.125
Group	Low	63	5.02	1.323	0.748	0.456
Group	High	55	4.79	1.961	0.729	0.468
Overall metivation	Low	63	4.83	1.623	-5.547	0.000*
	High	55	6.41	1.457	-5.588	0.000*
Satisfaction	Low	63	3.72	0.977	-4.610	0.000*
Satistaction	High	55	4.45	0.713	-4.708	0.000*
Debayioural lovalty	Low	62	4.97	1.525	-4.506	0.000*
Behavioural loyalty	High	56	6.04	0.954	-4.608	0.000*

### Attitudinal Loyalty Independent T-test Scores

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

From Table 8 a statistically significant difference can be seen between respondents with low (M = 4.54, SD = 1.804) and high attitudinal loyalty (M = 5.29, SD = 1.908) in terms of aesthetics (t = -2.18; df = 116; p = 0.031). There is also a statistically significant difference that can be seen between respondents with low (M = 6.04, SD = 1.345) and high attitudinal loyalty (M = 6.73, SD = 1.246) in terms of their entertainment (t = -2.856; df = 116; p = 0.005). A statistically significant difference can also be seen between respondents with low (M = 4.83, SD = 1.623) and high attitudinal loyalty (M = 6.41, SD = 1.457) in terms of their overall motivation (t = -5.55; df = 116; p = 0.000). A statistically significant difference is also seen between respondents with low (M = 3.72, SD = 0.977) and high attitudinal loyalty (M = 4.45, SD = 0.713) in terms of their satisfaction (t = -4.61; df = 116; p = 0.000). Finally, a statistically significant difference can be seen between respondents with low (M = 4.97, SD = 1.525) and high attitudinal loyalty (M = 6.04, SD = 0.954) in terms of their behavioural loyalty (t = -4.506; df = 116; p = 0.000).

It can accordingly be concluded that respondents with low and high attitudinal loyalty differ statistically significantly from each other in terms of their aesthetics, entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. Respondents with high attitudinal loyalty were significantly more driven by the beauty of the game (aesthetics), entertainment, overall motivation was higher, they were more satisfied and had noticeably higher behavioural loyalty than those with low attitudinal loyalty.

## 5.4.3 Behavioural loyalty

Hypotheses H10, H11 and H12 explored the relationships between respondents' behavioural loyalty and the other constructs included in the study. The researcher conducted Pearson correlations to determine whether relationships exist between respondents' behavioural loyalty, the motivation factors, overall motivation, and satisfaction. Table 9 presents the p-values and corresponding *r*-values of Pearson product moment correlation coefficients.

### Table 9

Correlation between behavioural loyalty and:	r-value	p-value
Aesthetics	0.325	0.000*
Economic	0.151	0.103
Entertainment	0.251	0.006*
Escape	0.263	0.004*
Family	0.001	0.987
Group	0.175	0.057
Overall motivations	0.335	0.000*
Satisfaction	0.326	0.000*

## Behavioural Loyalty Correlations

\* Statistically significant (p<0.05)

From Table 9 statistically significant correlations can be seen between behavioural loyalty and aesthetics (r = 0.328); entertainment (r = 0.251); escape (r = 0.263); overall motivation (r = 0.251); escape (r = 0.263); overall motivation (r = 0.251); escape (r = 0.263); overall motivation (r = 0.251); escape (r = 0.263); overall motivation (r = 0.251); escape (r = 0.263); escape (r = 0.263)

0.335); and satisfaction (r = 0.326). Subsequently it can be concluded that relationships exist between respondents' behavioural loyalty and aesthetics, entertainment, escape, overall motivation, and satisfaction. Concerning the hypotheses formulated in chapter three, the following can be concluded:

Hypothesis 10 stating that there is a relationship between behavioural loyalty and the six motivation factors can thus partially be supported as three of the six motivational factors (aesthetics, entertainment, and escape) have statistically significant positive correlations with attitudinal loyalty.

Hypothesis 11 stating that there is a relationship between behavioural loyalty and overall motivation should thus be supported.

Hypothesis 12 stating that there is a relationship between behavioural loyalty and satisfaction should thus be supported.

The researcher subsequently decided to categorise respondents according to high and low behavioural loyalty scores in order to establish whether there were differences between respondents with low and high behavioural loyalty levels concerning the motivation factors, overall motivation, and satisfaction.

#### 5.4.3.1 Classifying respondents according to their behavioural loyalty

An overall mean score was calculated for each respondent's behavioural loyalty in order to categorise the respondents into two behavioural loyalty groups (by using the 50 percentiles as the cut-off points) according to their behavioural loyalty levels, thus low and high behavioural loyalty. The number of respondents per group differed due to ties in the continuous data. A t-test was performed (see results in Table 10) to establish whether the two behavioural loyalty groups indeed differed in terms of their behavioural loyalty.

## Table 10

## Independent t-test for Behavioural Loyalty Groups

Construct	Low/High Beh. Loyalty	N	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Behavioural Loyalty	Low	62	2.08	0.855	-16.757	0.000
	High	56	5.25	1.187	-16.487	0.000

From the results portrayed in Table 10, it can be seen that the low behavioural loyalty group (M = 2.08, SD = 0.855) differed statistically significantly (p < 0.05) from the high involvement group (M = 5.25, SD = 1.187) in terms of behavioural loyalty.

It was subsequently decided to compare the low and high behavioural loyalty groups' motivation factors, overall motivation and satisfaction. Figure 7 graphically illustrates the mean scores for those with high and low behavioural loyalty for these constructs.



Subsequently, t-tests were performed to determine whether these two behavioural loyalty groups differed (statistically) concerning these constructs.

# 5.4.3.2 Independent sample t-tests for behavioural loyalty groups

Independent t-tests were performed to determine the differences in mean scores between the six motivation factors, overall motivation, and satisfaction for respondents with low and high behavioural loyalty levels. Before the independent t-tests were conducted, it was confirmed that the assumptions were met (Pallant, 2007). The results of the independent ttests are reflected in Table 11 below.

## Table 11

Construct	Low/High Beh. Loyalty	Ν	Mean	Std. dev.	t-value	p-value
Aasthatics	Low	63	4.33	1.975	-3.598	0.000*
Aesthetics	High	55	5.22	1.569	-3.640	0.000*
Entortainmont	Low	63	6.08	1.470	-2.499	0.014*
Entertainment	High	55	6.68	1.105	-2.535	0.014*
Faceno	Low	63	2.74	1.877	-2.378	0.019*
Escape	High	55	3.63	2.207	-2.358	0.019*
Economic	Low	63	1.90	1.484	-1.179	0.241
ECONOMIC	High	55	2.26	1.784	-1.169	0.245
Family	Low	63	3.27	3.270	-0.442	0.660
raininy	High	55	3.45	3.450	-0.440	0.661
Crown	Low	63	4.58	1.642	-2.364	0.020*
Group	High	55	5.28	1.588	2.368	0.020*
Overall metivation	Low	63	5.14	1.626	-2.901	0.004*
Overall motivation	High	55	6.04	1.740	-2.891	0.004*
Satisfaction	Low	63	3.86	1.032	-2.523	0.013*
Satisfaction	High	55	4.29	0.764	-2.561	0.013*

## Behavioural Loyalty Independent T-test Scores

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

A statistically significant difference can be seen between respondents with low (M = 4.33, SD = 1.975) and high (M = 5.22, SD = 1.569) behavioural loyalty in terms of aesthetics (t = -3.598; df = 116; p = 0.000). There is also a statistically significant difference between respondents with low (M = 6.08, SD = 1.470) and high behavioural loyalty (M = 6.68, SD = 1.105) in terms of entertainment (t = -2.499; df = 116; p = 0.014). There is a statistically significant difference between respondents with low (M = 2.74, SD = 1.877) and high behavioural loyalty (M = 3.63, SD = 2.207) in terms of escape (t = -2.378; df = 116; p = 0.019). Another one of the six motivational factors (group) also displays a statistically significant difference between respondents with low (M = 4.58, SD = 1.642) and high behavioural loyalty (M = 5.28, SD = 1.588) in terms of group (t = -2.364; df = 116; p = 0.020). There is also a statistically significant difference between respondents with low (M = 5.14, SD = 1.626) and high behavioural loyalty (M = 6.04, SD = 1.740) in terms of overall motivation (t = -2.901; df = 116; p = 0.004). A statistically significant difference can also be seen between respondents with low (M = 3.86, SD = 1.0.32) and high behavioural loyalty (M = 4.29, SD = 0.764) in terms of their satisfaction (t = -2.523; df = 116; p = 0.013).

It can accordingly be concluded that respondents with low and high behavioural loyalty differ statistically significantly from each other in terms of aesthetics, entertainment, escape, group, overall motivation, and satisfaction. Respondents with high behavioural loyalty were significantly more driven by the beauty of the game (aesthetics) and the construct of escape, as well as more entertained and driven by group needs, overall motivation was higher, and they were more satisfied than those with low behavioural loyalty.

## 5.5 Multiple Regression

To test hypotheses H13 and H14, the researcher performed multiple regressions to, firstly, determine whether the different independent variables (IVs) predicted the dependent variable (DV), and secondly to determine which of the IVs were the strongest predictor of the DV.

### 5.5.1 Assumptions for multiple regression

Pallant (2007) stated that before a multiple regression can be performed, specific assumptions need to be checked as multiple regression is very sensitive to violation of its assumptions. These assumptions were evaluated as follows:

- Sample size requirements were met since 118 respondents participated in the study, which is more than the number suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) [50 plus 8(M), where M represents the number of independent variables (6) included in the analysis].
- The Pearson's correlations between the independent variables and between the independent and dependent variables were within the acceptable range (Pallant, 2007). Furthermore, the collinearity statistic showed the tolerance and VIF values within the acceptable range (Pallant, 2007), thereby indicating that multi-collinearity could be ruled out (Pallant, 2007).
- Concerning outliers, only one case had a Mahalanobis value exceeding the recommendation by Pallant (2007). However, with Cooks distance below 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), it could be concluded that this case did not pose a problem and was subsequently retained for the analysis (Pallant, 2007).
- The normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were confirmed by inspecting the normal P-Plot and Scatterplots. The Normal P-Plot showed a progressive linear graph which mirrored the normality line. This confirmed that the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was normally distributed and had a rough straight line-relationship (Pallant, 2007). The scatter plot showed an irregular rectangular shape which confirmed that the variance for residuals about the predicted dependent variable scores were the same for the predicted score (Pallant, 2007).

As seen above, the assumptions were met, which meant that a multiple regression analysis could be performed.

# 5.5.2 Multiple regression analysis results (motivational factors)

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which the six motivational factors (independent variables), namely aesthetics, entertainment, economic, escape, group, and family, would predict satisfaction (dependent variable). The results of the analysis are shown in Table 12 below:

## Table 12

## Model Summary of Motivational Factors and Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	0,370	0.137	0.090	0.893

*Note:* The dependent variable was satisfaction. The predictors were (constant), aesthetics, entertainment, economic, escape, family, group, whilst the dependent variable was satisfaction.

From Table 12 above it can be seen that the six independent variables, namely aesthetics, entertainment, economic, escape, family, and group, together explain 13.7% of the variance in satisfaction. Table 13 below presents the ANOVA table for the regression model.

Table 13

# ANOVA Analysis of Motivational Factors and Satisfaction

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	13.990	6	2.332	2.926	0,011*
Residual	88.443	111	0.797		
Total	102.433	117			

*Note:* The dependent variable was satisfaction. The predictors were (Constant), Aesthetics, Entertainment, Economic, Escape, Family, Group, whilst the dependent variable was satisfaction.

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

From Table 13 it can be seen that the regression model was significant (p = 0.011). Table 14 shows the coefficient table together with the standardised beta coefficient values.

## Table 14

	Unstandardised Coefficients				
			Standardised		
Model	В	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.431	0.462		5.265	0.000*
Escape	0.060	0.044	0.014	0.145	0.885
Economic	0.040	0.053	0.070	0.766	0.445
Aesthetic	-0.019	0.048	-0.038	-0.392	0.696
Group	-0.044	0.056	-0.077	-0.779	0.438
Entertainment	0.275	0.068	0.394	4.061	0.000*
Family	0.024	0.041	0.055	0.591	0.556

## Coefficients Analysis of Motivational Factors and Satisfaction

*Note:* The dependent variable was overall satisfaction.

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

As can be seen from Table 14 above, only one independent variable was significant, namely, entertainment (p < 0.05;  $\beta$ -value = 0.394). It can thus be concluded that entertainment is the only statistically significant predictor of overall satisfaction. Hypothesis 13 should thus be partially supported since, although the regression model as a whole was significant (Pallant, 2007), only entertainment was a statistically significant predictor of satisfaction. A summary of these findings can be seen in Figure 8 below:


# 5.5.3 Multiple regression analysis results (overall motivation and involvement)

Prior to performing the second multiple regression, the researcher ensured that the assumptions when performing a multiple regression (Pallant, 2007) were met.

A multiple regression analysis was subsequently performed to determine the extent to which the independent variables (overall motivation and involvement) predicted the dependent variable (satisfaction).

# Table 15

# Model Summary of Overall Motivation & Involvement combined and Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	0.402	0.162	0.147	0.864

*Note.* The predictors were the following: (Constant), Overall Motivation, Involvement whilst the dependent variable was satisfaction.

Overall motivation and involvement together explained 16.2% of the variance in satisfaction. Table 16 below presents the ANOVA table for the regression model.

# Table 16

ANOVA Analysis of Overall Motivation & Involvement and Satisfaction

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16.551	2	8.275	11.081	0.000*
Residual	85.882	115	0.747		
Total	102.4330	117			

*Note:* The dependent variable was satisfaction. The predictors were (Constant), overall motivation, involvement, whilst the dependent variable was satisfaction.

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

From Table 16 it can be seen that the regression model is significant (p = 0.000). Table 17 shows the coefficient table together with the standardised beta coefficient values.

# Table 17

	Unstandardised Coefficients				
			Standardised		
Model	В	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.552	0.618		2.511	0.013*
Involvement	0.280	0.102	0.253	2.750	0.007*
Overall motivation	0.125	0.050	0.231	2.510	0.013*

# Coefficients Analysis of Overall Motivation and Involvement and Satisfaction

*Note:* The dependent variable was overall satisfaction.

\*Statistically significant (p<0.05)

As can be seen from Table 17, both independent variables were significant, namely involvement (p < 0.005;  $\beta$ -value = 0.253) and overall motivation (p<0.05;  $\beta$ -value = 0.231). Although the Beta-values were very similar, involvement ( $\beta$ -value = 0.253) was a slightly greater predictor of satisfaction than overall motivation ( $\beta$ -value = 0.231). It can be concluded that both involvement and overall motivation are statistically significant predictors of satisfaction. Hypothesis 14 should thus be supported. A summary of these findings can be seen in Figure 9 below:



# 5.6 Conclusion

The results presented in this chapter are summarised as follows:

- Respondents with low and high involvement differed statistically significantly from each other in terms of entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty, and behavioural loyalty. Respondents with high involvement were significantly more entertained, overall motivation was higher, they were more satisfied, had greater attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty than those with low involvement.
- Respondents with low and high attitudinal loyalty differed statistically significantly from each other in terms of aesthetics, entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. Respondents with high attitudinal loyalty were significantly more driven by the beauty of the game (aesthetics), entertainment, overall motivation was higher, they were more satisfied and had noticeably higher behavioural loyalty than those with low attitudinal loyalty.
- Respondents with low and high behavioural loyalty differed statistically significantly from each other in terms of aesthetics, entertainment, escape, group, overall motivation, and satisfaction. Respondents with high behavioural loyalty were significantly more driven by the beauty of the game (aesthetics) and the construct of escape, as well as more entertained and driven by group needs, overall motivation was higher, and they were more satisfied than those with low behavioural loyalty.
- Of the six motivational factors included in this study, entertainment was the only statistically significant predictor of satisfaction.
- Involvement was a slightly greater predictor of satisfaction than overall motivation. It can be concluded that both involvement and overall motivation are statistically significant predictors of satisfaction.

The findings presented in this chapter will be further discussed in chapter six.

#### **Chapter 6: Discussion of Results**

#### 6.1 Introduction

The data collection process which is explained in detail in section 4.7 of this report resulted in a completion rate of 57% from the 208 participants who attempted the online questionnaire, this led to a total of 118 valid respondents. Tests were carried out using the questionnaire detailed in section 4.6. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to establish the validity of the measuring instrument used to measure the constructs relevant to the study, namely, fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty, both attitudinal and behavioural. The main purpose of this chapter is to compare the results in chapter five of this report with the associated literature in chapter two in order to understand whether the results support, contradict, or add to the existing body of literature.

The first section of this chapter presents a discussion of the results for each of the constructs which were deemed relevant in understanding the motivation of fans attending live rugby matches and aimed to establish the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty. The findings of each research hypothesis were then considered in order to understand the main differences between our existing knowledge on the mentioned constructs and the specific findings of this study.

## **6.2 Fan Motivational Factors**

This study explored the motivational factors proposed by Wann (1995), but also included an overall motivational measure proposed by Brown et al., (2014). Relationships between individual motivational factors as well as overall motivation and the other constructs relevant to the study were analysed. Wann's (1995) SFMS proposed eight motivational factors, however, as mentioned in chapter five of this research, only six factors were identified in this study following the exploratory factor analysis due to items cross loading on multiple factors. The six factors which for the purpose of this study make up the constructs of fan motivational factors are thus: aesthetics, economic, entertainment, escape, family, and group.

An analysis of these six motivational factors which were measured using 23 items in the online questionnaire found that of the six motivational factors, entertainment had the highest mean score (M = 6.36; SD = 1.339), followed by the aesthetics factor (M = 4.89; SD = 1.883). This aligns with the initial findings of Wann (1995) who proposed that entertainment was the strongest motivational factor amongst both men and women. This sentiment is also backed up by the work of Schroy et al., (2015) who also found entertainment to be the greatest motivator of sports fan behaviour. Schroy et al., (2015) and Wann (1995) found entertainment and aesthetics to be the greatest motivators of sports fans. The findings of these authors are corroborated by the findings presented in chapter five of this research in which it was found that the factor with the lowest mean score (amongst the six identified as sport fan motivational factors) for fan attendance is the economic factor (M = 2.07; SD = 1.625). The above sentiments are examples of numerous findings in sports fan motivation studies which corroborate the findings mentioned above (Armstrong, 2002; Mahony, Nakazawa, Funk, James, & Gladden, 2002; Shroy et al., 2015; Wann, 1995). Further to this, the weakness of the economic motive for sports fan attendance is conclusively backed up by Wann (1995) as well as Wann et al., (2008) in which they failed to find a correlation between the economic motivator and self-proclaimed fandom. As such Wann et al., (2008) suggested that these attendees were not fans in the normal sense of the word.

Sport fan motivation was a construct which was included as it was deemed necessary to better understand the research problem of this study. Three of the fourteen hypotheses for this study involve sport fan motivation as a construct. As mentioned in the literature, understanding sport fan motivation as well as customer motivation is paramount to building better relationships with customers (Bellamy Jr, 2002; Funk et al., 2004). Motivation theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs as well as the means-end chains theory make reference to the motivational factors mentioned above with the factor of group fitting firmly into the psychological needs portion of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). Gutman (1982) and Howard's (1977) statements regarding means-end chain theory imply that motivations depend first on the consumers values or desirable end states of existence. This ties into the consumer's desire to be entertained or to have certain needs satisfied. As mentioned in chapter two, social identity theory states that consumption choices are directly linked to the

product which consumers most closely associate with the identity which they wish to fit in at the time (Jenkins, 2014; Tajfel, 1982; Turner 1982), another motivating factor identified by this research (group: M = 4.91; SD = 1.648) is also largely supported by social identity theory.

For organisations and sports brands, understanding each of these motivating factors is paramount to understanding repeat purchase/attendance behaviour since it is clear from the existing literature as well as the findings of this study that certain motivational factors are more important to fans than others.

## 6.3 Involvement

The mean score for the construct of involvement found that respondents agreed to a great extent with the items measuring their involvement as sports fans (M = 6.48; SD = 0.845). This was measured using a Likert scale (1-7) in which participants were asked to what extent they believed that certain involvement-related items were relevant to them as sporting fans. These items included; excitement, interest, value, appeal, use, need, relevance and importance (see annexure A). When looking at the mean values of the Likert-scale questions, data showed that most participants selected option seven for the Likert scale questions and as such results suggest that the respondents of this survey were very involved in rugby. These findings are consistent with literature as authors such as Kim et al., (1997), Gantz and Wenner (1995), as well as more recently, Tachis and Tzetzis (2015), have stated that involvement not only affects fans' desire to participate in sport but also to watch sport on television and attend live sporting events. The suggestions of the above authors are backed up by the findings of this research. Hill and Green (2000) put forward the argument that involvement in sport is often confused with participation but should rather be referred to as the perceived importance of the sport.

The findings of this research are very much in line with previous research (Brown et al., 2016; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Hill & Green, 2000) in suggesting that fans who attend live rugby matches have high involvement with the sport itself.

## 6.4 Fan Satisfaction

Satisfaction was a critical construct to this research and was tested as the dependent variable against fan motivation, overall motivation, and involvement. Overall satisfaction was measured using three Likert-scale questions (1-5) which aimed to gauge the satisfaction which participants believed they experienced at the last rugby match which they attended. The mean score for the construct of satisfaction was found to be high (M = 4.06; SD = 0.936) and suggests that respondents were pleased that they decided to attend a rugby game as well as being pleased with their latest live rugby experience as a whole.

According to Cronin et al., (2000), Engel et al., (1995) Blackwell and Miniard (1995) as well as Oliver (1997) the satisfaction which is experienced by a customer can be linked directly to the loyalty of customers as it makes up the behavioural aspect of customer loyalty. This suggests that if customers are satisfied with an experience, they are more likely to display repeat attendance patterns. According to Laverie and Arnett (2000) out of the factors they chose to focus on, namely, satisfaction, salience, attachment, situational involvement and enduring involvement, fan satisfaction was the greatest influence in affecting fan attendance. This ties into the findings of Cronin and Taylor (1992) who stated that customer satisfaction should be considered as a fundamental goal in driving crowd numbers and repeat attendance figures.

#### 6.5 Fan Loyalty

As mentioned in chapter two of this report, customer loyalty as well as fan loyalty has been widely agreed upon by numerous authors to consist of two separate, yet correlated constructs, namely, attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010; Jacoby 1971). For the purpose of this research the constructs were considered as separate and were measured individually. Jacoby (1971) was one of the first authors to distinguish between the two constructs and argued that brand-loyal behaviour is the conscious and public act of selective repeat purchase behaviour, whereas, brand-loyal attitudes are one's underlying desires to behave in a certain manner. In other words, someone who displays repeat purchase or attendance behaviours would be considered

behaviourally loyal whereas someone who simply feels positively about a brand displays attitudinal loyalty.

The mean score for the construct of attitudinal loyalty found that respondents were reasonably loyal in terms of their attitudes in supporting their current rugby team (M = 5.48; SD = 1.388). This was measured using a Likert scale (1-7) in which participants were asked to what extent they believed that certain attitudinal loyalty items pertained to them as rugby fans. These questions focused mainly on their current affiliation to their team and their commitment to the team which they supported.

The mean score for the construct of behavioural loyalty was lower than that of attitudinal loyalty (M = 3.58; SD = 1.889) and amongst the 11 factors measured in the correlation analysis, returned the second lowest mean score. Behavioural loyalty was also measured using a Likert scale, but in contrast to attitudinal loyalty, the questions focused more on fan behaviours and attendance patterns. It is clear to see from the findings of this research that the participants of this study displayed more attitudinal loyalty traits which in line with the definition of Jacoby (1971). However, from the correlation analysis it was established that attitudinal and behavioural loyalty are statistically significantly correlated, thus supporting the strong relationship between these constructs.

The above findings of this research support the sentiments of Bauer et al., (2008) as well as Park and Kim (2000) as they argued that it is imperative that both attitudinal and behavioural aspects of loyalty are considered when attempting to explain customer behaviour from a sports perspective. This is further backed up by Beaton et al.'s (2009) PCM model in which allegiance was identified as the highest stage of the model which aims to explain sport and event consumer behaviour. In the PCM model, the outcomes of attitudinal and behavioural loyalty were categorised under the allegiance stage. According to Bauer et al., (2008) as well as Park and Kim (2000), the reason for this is that behavioural measures do not influence a consumer's attitude toward a certain sports brand whereas attitudinal measures allow one to encapsulate the inner attachment which a fan shows toward a certain sport. The above discussion makes inferences from the test results of each of the relevant constructs in this study. The following section focuses on the relationships between these constructs and discusses the research questions as well as the hypotheses.

#### 6.6 Research Question 1

What role does involvement play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty? Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are relevant to the first research question. They revolve around the construct of involvement and explored this construct in relation to the others included in this study, namely, the six motivational factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty, and behavioural loyalty. A correlations analysis was conducted, and it was found that statistically significant positive correlations exist between involvement and entertainment (r = 0.294), overall motivation (r = 0.404), satisfaction (r = 0.355), and attitudinal loyalty (r = 0.314). It was therefore concluded that relationships exist between respondents' involvement and entertainment, overall motivation, satisfaction, and attitudinal loyalty.

#### 6.6.1 Fan involvement and sport fan motivation/overall motivation

The six sports fan motivational factors set out by Wann (1995) were not all found to be related to sport fan involvement, in fact only one of them (entertainment) was found to have a statistically significant relationship with involvement. For this reason, hypothesis 1 (*There is a relationship between fan involvement and motivational factors*) can only be partially accepted. However, hypothesis 2 (*There is a relationship between fan involvement* and *motivational factors*) can only be partially accepted. However, hypothesis 2 (*There is a relationship between fan involvement and fan overall motivation*) can be accepted. This finding is in line with those of authors such as Arora (1985), Broderick and Mueller (1999), Smeaton and Clements (1999) as well as Zaichowsky (1985). Involvement is closely linked to motivation and is considered a variable which reflects the extent of an individual's relevance in a decision in terms of values, basic goals, and self-concept. Involvement is widely regarded in consumer behaviour and marketing research as an imperative construct when attempting to understand consumers, especially with regards to decision making (Bauer, Sauer & Becker, 2006; Hansen, 2005). Businesses can use the constructs of involvement to accurately predict future consumer behaviour, as involvement has a direct relationship to consumer decision making and processing of information.

As can be seen in Table 5 in section 5.4.1.2 above, t-tests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with both high and low involvement. It was found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low involvement in terms of their entertainment. As such respondents with high involvement were significantly more entertained than those with low involvement.

#### 6.6.2 Fan involvement and fan satisfaction

Hypothesis 3 postulates that there is a relationship between fan involvement and fan satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported by the findings of this study as there was a statistically significant correlation between the two constructs. Hence, hypothesis 3 is accepted. The finding of this study supports the findings of Vega-Vasquez (2013) who argued that co-creation is a sound method of adding value due to the increased involvement of customers. This also supports the findings of Laverie and Arnett (2000) who tested the relationship in a sporting context and found that fan involvement and fan satisfaction are positively correlated. Furthermore, the findings of this research relating to fan involvement and fan satisfaction in a sports context align with argument of Brady et al. (2006) as well as Zhang et al. (1998) that the correlation between customer involvement and customer satisfaction is as relevant in a sporting context as it is in a business context.

Hypothesis 3 is further supported by the results of the regression analysis which was performed in this study. Involvement was found to statistically significantly predict satisfaction (p = 0.007). The correlation analysis and the multiple regression analysis in this research reinforce the evidence that, as fans become more involved in a sport, they are likely to show increasing levels of satisfaction. This was shown recently in research by Sarstedt, Ringle, Raithel, and Gudergan (2014) in which they studied soccer club activities and the results corroborate what was originally hypothesised by Sutton, McDonald, and Milne, (1997) and verified empirically by Mathies and Gudergan (2012).

As can be seen in Table 5 in section 5.4.1.2 above, t-tests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with both high and low involvement. It was found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low involvement in terms of their satisfaction. Respondents with high involvement were therefore significantly more satisfied than those with low involvement.

#### 6.6.3 Fan involvement and fan loyalty

Hypothesis 4 and hypothesis 5 relate to the relationship between fan involvement and both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. As mentioned in chapter two, researchers have reached consensus that loyalty can be separated into two dimensions: attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010). Despite existing literature which states that both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty are correlated with fan involvement (Bee & Havitz, 2010; Dwyer, 2011), this research found a statistically significant relationship only between fan involvement and attitudinal loyalty. Hence hypothesis 4 (*There is a relationship between fan involvement and attitudinal loyalty*) is supported and hypothesis 5 (*There is a relationship between fan involvement fan involvement and behavioural loyalty*) cannot be supported.

This research somewhat contradicts the findings of authors such as Hill and Green (2000), as well as Kim et al., (1997), Gantz and Wenner (1995) as well as Kerstetter and Kovich (1997) who stated that psychological involvement not only affects fans' desire to participate in sport but also to watch sport on television and attend live sporting events and found that involvement and loyalty have a positive relationship with one another. Further to this they also found that involvement has been shown to affect future behavioural intentions.

As can be seen in Table 5 in section 5.4.1.2 above, t-tests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with both high and low involvement. It was

found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low involvement in terms of both their attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Therefore, respondents with high involvement were significantly more likely to display both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty than those with low involvement.

# 6.6.4 Findings

It was found that involvement is correlated with overall motivation, satisfaction, and attitudinal loyalty. It was also found that involvement only correlated with some of the fan motivational factors and does not have a statistically significant correlation with behavioural loyalty. Figure 10 below illustrates the relationships that were identified based on the data in this research. It shows that the research objective of examining the relationships between fan involvement and fan motivational factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty, and behavioural loyalty was met. These findings are cohesively set out in chapter seven along with the other findings in this research.



## 6.7 Research Questions 2 and 3

# RQ2: What role does attitudinal loyalty play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction and behavioural loyalty?

RQ3: What role does behavioural loyalty play in sport fan motivation and satisfaction?

Hypotheses 6, 7, 8 and 9 stated that there is a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and the six motivational factors, overall motivation, satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. Correlation analyses were conducted, and it was found that statistically significant positive correlations exist between attitudinal loyalty and aesthetics (r = 0.239), entertainment (r = 0.264), escape (r = 0.214), overall motivation (r = 0.541), satisfaction (r = 0.465), and behavioural loyalty (r = 0.488). It can therefore be concluded that relationships exist between respondents' attitudinal loyalty and aesthetics, entertainment, escape, overall motivation, satisfaction, and attitudinal loyalty.

Hypotheses 10, 11 and 12 stated that there are relationships between behavioural loyalty and the six motivational factors, overall motivation, and satisfaction. Correlation analyses were conducted, and it was found that statistically significant positive correlations exist between behavioural loyalty and aesthetics (r = 0.328), entertainment (r = 0.251), escape (r = 0.263), overall motivation (r = 0.335), and satisfaction (r = 0.326). Subsequently it can be concluded that relationships exist between respondents' behavioural loyalty and aesthetics, entertainment, escape, overall motivation, and satisfaction.

#### 6.7.1 Fan loyalty and sport fan motivation/overall motivation

The six sports fan motivations set out by Wann (1995) were not all found to be related to attitudinal loyalty as well as to behavioural loyalty. Only three of them (aesthetics, entertainment and escape) were found to have a statistically significant relationship with both of the loyalty constructs. For this reason, hypothesis 6 (*There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and motivational factors*) and hypothesis 10 (*There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and motivational factors*) can only be partially accepted. However, as expected hypotheses 7 and 11, which link fan loyalty with overall motivation,

can be accepted as the results are very much in line with the findings of authors such as Gladden and Funk (2001) as well as Kaynak et al., (2008) who argued that fan loyalty is one of the greatest motivators of not only attendance but also repeat attendance or patronage. These authors' contention that loyal supporters guarantee steady revenues and attendance figures is supported by this research in which it was found that there is a positive correlation between fan loyalty and fan motivation.

As can be seen in Table 8 in section 5.4.2.2 as well as in Table 11 in section 5.4.3.2 above, ttests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with high and low loyalty. It was found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low loyalty in terms of aesthetics, entertainment and escape. It was also found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low loyalty exists in terms of their overall motivation.

## 6.7.2 Fan loyalty and fan satisfaction

Analogous to the findings of Anderson and Sullivan (1993), Cronin et al., (2000) as well as Taylor and Baker (1994) who tested the relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, this study found that there is a large positive relationship between fan loyalty and fan satisfaction. This implies that if customers are satisfied with their experience at an event, they are more likely to attend again. Based on evidence, it can therefore be accepted that there is a relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. A such hypothesis 8 (*There is a relationship between fan attitudinal loyalty and satisfaction*) and hypothesis 12 (*There is a relationship between fan behavioural loyalty and* satisfaction) can be supported. This supports the findings of Foroughi et al., (2014) as well as Laveria and Arnett (2000) who stated that fan loyalty directly affects intentions to attend future games and that both of these constructs can be directly linked to fan satisfaction with a previous sports event.

As can be seen in Table 8 in section 5.4.2.2 as well as in Table 11 in section 5.4.3.2 above, ttests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with both high and low loyalty. It was found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high loyalty in terms of satisfaction. Respondents with high loyalty were therefore significantly more satisfied than those with low loyalty.

#### 6.7.3 Attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty

Hypothesis 9 relates to the relationship between attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. The findings of this research confirm that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two constructs (p = 0.000) thereby supporting previous studies advocating that loyalty should be broken up into these constructs (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010).

As can be seen in Table 8 in section 5.4.2.2 above, t-tests were performed in order to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means of certain constructs existed between respondents with both high and low attitudinal loyalty. It was found that a statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low attitudinal loyalty in terms of behavioural loyalty. Respondents with high attitudinal loyalty were therefore significantly more likely to display repeat attendance behaviours than those with low attitudinal loyalty.

## 6.7.4 Findings

In line with previous research, loyalty was broken into two constructs (Anatolevena Anisimova, 2007; Chahal & Bala, 2010). It was found that not only are attitudinal and behavioural loyalty correlated with each other, they are correlated with overall motivation and satisfaction. It was also found that loyalty only correlated with some of the fan motivational factors. It was found that both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty are correlated with overall motivation, satisfaction as well as with each other. It was also found that both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty are correlated with overall motivation, satisfaction as well as with each other. It was also found that both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty only correlated with some of the fan motivational factors. Figure 11 below illustrates the relationships that were identified based on the data collected for this research. The research objective of examining the relationships

between both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty and fan motivational factors, overall motivation, and satisfaction was met. These findings are cohesively set out in chapter seven along with the other findings in this research.



# 6.8 Research Question 4

Does sport fan motivation predict satisfaction?

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which the six motivational factors (independent variables), namely, aesthetics, entertainment, economic, escape, group, and family, predict satisfaction (dependent variable). The results of the analysis are shown in Table 12 in chapter five. Based on the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value, a total of 13.7% of the variance in overall satisfaction can be explained by the six motivational factors. As can be seen from Table 14, only one independent variable was significant, namely entertainment (p < 0.05;  $\beta$ -value = 0.394). It can thus be concluded that of the six motivational factors,

entertainment is the only statistically significant predictor of overall satisfaction. Hypothesis 13 (*There is a relationship between sport fan motivation factors and fan satisfaction*) can therefore be partially supported.

The findings of this study, in which entertainment was found to be a statistically significant predictor of satisfaction are consistent with other research into the constructs. Sarsetdt, Ringle, Raithel, and Gudergan (2014) measured the factors that drive fan satisfaction and found that of the seven factors measured (entertainment, entrance fees, merchandise, accessibility, loyalty, tradition, and security) entertainment was the most significant predictor of overall satisfaction. This corroborates the findings of Schroy et al. (2015) as well as Wann (1995) who found entertainment to be the most influential motivator for live sports attendance. This is also in line with the findings of Sturm (2015) who found that entertainment and satisfaction were highly influential factors in the success of T20 cricket.

This analysis indicates that of the six motivational factors, only entertainment is a significant predictor of overall fan satisfaction and, it follows that, if rugby brands and management wish to influence the phenomenon of declining attendance numbers at live rugby matches through satisfaction, they should investigate entertainment as a factor and focus on creating a product which is deemed more entertaining to fans. Figure 12 below illustrates the relationships that were identified based on the data, showing that the research objective of examining the relationship between satisfaction and fan motivational factors was met.

## 6.9 Research Question 5

Do overall sport fan motivation and overall involvement individually, and combined, predict satisfaction?

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which the overall motivation and involvement (independent variables), predict satisfaction (dependent variable). The results of the analysis are shown in Table 15 in chapter five. Based on the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value a total of 16.2% of the variance in overall satisfaction can be explained by the combination of overall motivation and involvement. As can be seen from Table 17, both

independent variables were significant, namely overall motivation (p<0.05;  $\beta$ -value = 0.231) and involvement (p < 0.005;  $\beta$ -value = 0.253). It can thus be concluded that both overall motivation and involvement are statistically significant predictors of overall satisfaction. Hypothesis 14 should thus be supported. Figure 12 below illustrates the relationships that were identified based on the data. This shows that the research objective of examining the relationship between satisfaction and both overall motivation and involvement individually, as well as combined, was met. These findings are set out in chapter seven of this research along with the other findings in this research.



# 6.10 Conclusion

Chapter six showed that the objectives of this research were met and that hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 were supported. The findings also showed that hypotheses 1, 6, 10, and 13 could only be partially supported and that hypothesis 5 could not be supported. The final chapter of this research highlights the main findings of this research, its limitations and sets out suggestions for future research.

# **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

## 7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 discussed the results of the research, linking them to existing literature. This chapter consolidates these results, sets out the principal findings and, based on these, highlights the implications for practice. In addition, the limitations of this research are acknowledged and suggestions are made for further research.

## 7.2 Consolidated Results

Five research questions and 14 hypotheses were formulated in order to address the objectives of this study. The empirical testing of the hypotheses led to the following findings:

- Involvement is correlated with overall motivation, satisfaction, and attitudinal loyalty,
- 2. Involvement only correlated with some of the fan motivational factors and does not have a statistically significant correlation with behavioural loyalty,
- 3. Attitudinal and behavioural loyalty are correlated with each other and both are correlated with overall motivation and satisfaction,
- 4. Loyalty only correlated with some of the fan motivational factors,
- 5. Entertainment is the only significant indicator of overall fan satisfaction out of the six fan motivational factors,
- 6. Both overall motivation and involvement individually, as well as combined, are statistically significant predictors of overall fan satisfaction,
- 7. Respondents with high involvement were significantly more entertained than those with low involvement,
- 8. Respondents with high involvement were therefore significantly more satisfied than those with low involvement,

- 9. Respondents with high involvement were significantly more likely to display both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty than those with low involvement,
- 10. A statistically significant difference exists between respondents with high and low loyalty exists in terms of their overall motivation,
- 11. Respondents with high loyalty were significantly more satisfied than those with low loyalty, and
- 12. Respondents with high attitudinal loyalty were significantly more likely to display repeat attendance behaviours than those with low attitudinal loyalty.

Figure 13 and Figure 14 below show the overall findings of this research and are linked to the five research questions mentioned in chapter one as well as the hypotheses linked to the research questions as shown in chapter three. The findings have been separated into two diagrams for clarity.





# 7.3 Principle findings

There are five principle findings in this study. The first principle finding relates to the hypotheses which were supported, the second relates to fan motivational factors and their relationships with involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty. The third principle finding relates to the strongest and weakest motives for fan attendance. The fourth principle finding relates to the relationship between fan involvement and behavioural loyalty in which the proposed hypothesis was not supported. Finally, the fifth principle finding relates to the relationship between satisfaction and behavioural loyalty, in which, despite the correlation, noticeable differences were found between the mean scores. The principle findings were as follows:

# 7.3.1 Principle finding 1: Supported hypotheses

This study found relationships between fan involvement and overall motivation, fan satisfaction, and attitudinal loyalty. There is also a relationship between attitudinal loyalty and overall motivation, fan satisfaction, and behavioural loyalty. A relationship is also present

between behavioural loyalty and overall motivation, and fan satisfaction. Overall motivation and fan involvement, individually as well as combined, are correlated with fan satisfaction.

Existing literature shows there to be a relationship between fan involvement and overall motivation (Keaton & Watanabe, 2015; Shank & Beasley, 1998; Wann & Schrader, 1999), fan satisfaction (Keaton & Watanabe, 2015; Laverie & Arnett, 2000; Madrigal, 1995) and attitudinal loyalty (Heere & Dickson, 2008; Neal & Funk, 2006). This research extended these previous findings in establishing there is a relationship between these constructs in a South African rugby context.

Authors have reached consensus that the construct of fan loyalty can be split into two separate constructs, namely, attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty (Cronin et al., 2000; Engel et al., 1995; Oliver, 1997). Existing literature on the construct of fan loyalty has found that a relationship exists between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Research has also found that fan loyalty has a relationship with overall motivation and satisfaction (Lee & Hsu, 2013; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This is corroborated by this research.

It has previously also been found that overall motivation and fan involvement have a relationship with fan satisfaction. In existing sports fandom literature, these constructs have been examined with fan satisfaction individually (Hunt, Bristol, & Bashaw, 1999; Laverie & Arnett, 2000). This research found that there is a correlation between overall motivation and fan involvement, both individually as well as when combined, with the construct of fan satisfaction in a South African rugby context.

The findings back up the sentiment in existing literature that increasing fan involvement can lead to greater satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty. It also supports the existing literature stating that increases in attitudinal loyalty lead to greater fan satisfaction and repeat attendance habits. Repeat attendance habits can also be influenced by increasing fan satisfaction. By increasing the overall satisfaction of fans, overall motivation and involvement can be influenced. Hence, the use of a relationship marketing lens has been shown to be appropriate for addressing the research problem of declining attendance at rugby matches in South Africa.

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## 7.3.1.1 Recommendation 1

Rugby brands which wish to positively influence attendance numbers at live matches should implement relationship marketing techniques in order to better understand their customers and positively influence attendance figures. These techniques could include the use of social media as per the work of Abeza et al. (2017) as well as Bee and Kahle (2006), networking, listening to customers and giving customers more attention, building greater brand identity, loyalty and reward programmes, face to face time, special events, and better communication ("Nine Relationship Strategies," 2017).

## 7.3.1.2 Recommendation 2

Respondents who were found to display greater levels of involvement were also found to be more entertained, satisfied as well as being more likely to display both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. As such, local rugby brands can conduct research into their fans which both aims to understand the involvement levels of their fans as well undertaking campaigns which aim to increase fan involvement so as to actively increase the perceived entertainment which these fans derive from live rugby attendance, ensure that fans are more satisfied with their experience at live events, and to increase fan loyalty.

## 7.3.2 Principle finding 2: Partially supported hypotheses

There is only a partial relationship between fan motivational factors and fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty.

Previous research into the eight fan motivational factors outlined in Wann's (1995) SFMS mainly focused on the eight motives in certain sporting environments. These include using the SFMS to understand Romanian and Finish soccer fan motives (Dick & Kernick, 2016; Izzo et al., 2011) as well as in mixed martial arts environments (Seungmo, Greenwell, Andrew, Lee, & Mahony, 2008) and in rugby union (Ross, James & Vargas, 2006). Some of these studies have aimed to understand these motives and their relationships with involvement (Keaton &

Watanabe, 2015; Shank & Beasley, 1998; Wann & Schrader, 1999), satisfaction (Laverie & Arnett, 2000; Madrigal, 1995) and loyalty (Dwyer, 2011; Stevens & Rosenberger, 2012). However, it is uncommon that research has been done into the relationships between all of these constructs in one study in order to understand sport fan behaviours. This research tested these motivational factors against the constructs of involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty using a correlation analysis as well as multiple regression testing. It was found that entertainment was the only motive which was statistically significant and correlated with involvement. It was also found that only three of the motivational factors had statistically significant relationships with both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, namely, aesthetics, entertainment, and escape. When the motivational factors were tested independently against overall satisfaction using a multiple regression analysis, it was found that only entertainment had a statistically significant relationship with satisfaction.

Furthermore, the combination of the six motivational factors only explain 13.7% of the variance in satisfaction. This relatively low percentage allows one to conclude that there are additional factors that should be considered as predictors of satisfaction in the South African rugby context. As mentioned in recommendation four below, rugby brands in South Africa should conduct research into the factors which influence satisfaction as this could unlock valuable information which is relevant to a South African rugby context.

## 7.3.2.1 Recommendation 3

As mentioned above, entertainment was the only motive which was statistically significant and correlated with involvement and satisfaction. It was also found that only three of the motivational factors had statistically significant relationships with loyalty, namely, aesthetics, entertainment, and escape. Conversely, the three motivational factors identified by Wann's (1995) SFMS which were found not to have a statistically significant relationship when tested in this study individually against fan involvement, fan satisfaction and fan loyalty were the economic, family, and group motivational factors. As such rugby brands in South Africa should not over focus their advertising and promotional efforts on economic, family and group motivational factors. They should rather focus their promotional and advertising activity on factors which have a greater influence on attendance, such as aesthetics, entertainment and escape.

## 7.3.3 Principle finding 3: Relative fan motivational factors

The most significant motive for rugby fans in this study is the entertainment motive whereas the most insignificant motive is the economic motive.

In line with the work of Wann (1995) and Schroy et al., (2015), this research found that of the eight motivational factors, entertainment had the highest mean score (M = 6.36; SD = 1.339), followed by the aesthetics factor (M = 4.89; SD = 1.883). Both the work of Schroy et al., (2015) and Wann (1995) found entertainment and aesthetics to be the greatest motivators of sports fans. The findings of these authors corroborate the findings of this research that the factor with the lowest mean score (amongst the six identified as sport fan motivational factors) for fan attendance was the economic factor (M = 2.07; SD = 1.625). In fact, Wann (1995) as well as Wann et al., (2008) found no correlation between the economic motivator and self-proclaimed fandom. As such Wann et al., (2008) suggested that these attendees are not fans in the normal sense of the word.

The partial acceptance of the hypotheses which examine the fan motivational factors leads one to explore which of these motives is most relevant from a management perspective. It is clear from the findings of this research as well as from previous research into fan motivational factors that the motives which have been found to be most important to fans are the motives of entertainment and aesthetics (Schroy et al., 2015; Wann, 1995).

# 7.3.3.1 Recommendation 4

It is clear that in order to positively influence the attendance figures at live rugby matches in South Africa, stadium managers need to place a priority on investigating methods in which a greater entertainment value is created and offered at stadiums. This sentiment is supported by the work of Sturm (2015) in which he attributes the international success of T20 cricket to the emphasis which organisers have placed on the entertainment factor. Further suggestions as to how rugby brands in South Africa can increase entertainment at live rugby matches could be as follows: increasing live experiences through fan zones, simulations, and fan challenges; half time shows; pyrotechnics; cheerleaders; family areas; fan interaction and more social media interaction ("Trends in Sports Events," n.d.).

The success of the above-mentioned methods can be seen on a grand scale in both attendance numbers as well as television ratings of the NFL, a professional football league in the United States. The Superbowl, which is the culmination of the American Football season recently attracted a record 110 million viewers (Steinberg, 2014). Steinberg (2014) attributes this success to the focus on entertainment which is driven by the event organisers. This includes half time performances from famous artists, pre-game shows, fantasy football leagues, extraordinary use of production and technology which all adds together to create a highly engaging, watchable product.

A recent effort made by local rugby brands saw SA Rugby partnering with Marvel and offering fans a unique 'Super Sunday' rugby experience at the Cape Town Stadium. The event was dubbed 'Superhero Sunday' and saw four of South Africa's local rugby franchises play in front of a sold-out stadium in Cape Town. The event organisers emphasised that the event would trial a new focus on offering fans and their families more value for money and most importantly increased entertainment in a different environment. The two games on offer provided fans with a festival like atmosphere and the day was deemed to be an overwhelming success (Ray, 2019; "Rugby enthusiasts' great marvel," 2019).

Similar to the collaboration between SA Rugby and Marvel mentioned above, rugby brands in South Africa should make concerted attempts to increase the entertainment value offered at live events. Promotional activities and strategic marketing initiatives undertaken by rugby brands in South Africa should focus on emphasising the increased entertainment value offered at stadiums. In addition to this increased emphasis on entertainment, subtle increases in advertising both the aesthetic and escape motives would be a valuable strategic move.

This increased emphasis on entertainment as well the aesthetic and escape motives is in line with sentiments of James and Ross (2004, p.17) who state that "In order to develop strategies

for increasing ticket sales for various low or nonrevenue sports, it is necessary to better understand why individuals have an interest in these sports and what factors may motivate them to attend live events".

## 7.3.4 Principle finding 4: Unsupported hypothesis

There is no relationship between fan involvement and fan behavioural loyalty.

Despite existing literature stating that both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty are correlated with fan involvement (Bee & Havitz, 2010; Dwyer, 2011; Stevens & Rosenberger, 2012), in this research conducted in a South African rugby context, a statistically significant relationship was found between fan involvement and attitudinal loyalty but not between fan involvement and behavioural loyalty.

This suggests that in a South African rugby context, if fans are highly involved in rugby, it does not necessarily mean that they will display behavioural loyalty through, for example, repeat attendance or merchandise purchases. Although explanations for this finding are beyond the scope of this study, a speculative reason for the lack of a relationship between these constructs could be factors such as security concerns or cost implications. Although not a sporting event, a recent music concert which took place in Johannesburg received numerous negative reviews due to several serious crime related activities being reported, in this particular case many of the victims shared experiences via the social platform Twitter and stated that they would no longer attend events at this particular venue (Mjo, 2018; Stone, 2018). According to Maslow's (1943) theory, in order for motivation to occur at the next level on a hierarchical pyramid (see Figure 2) each level must first be satisfied. Security needs lie in the second level of the pyramid and constitute the basic needs of an individual. It can thus be determined that if this need is not satisfied, the higher-level needs cannot be satisfied.

## 7.3.4.1 Recommendation 5

If the speculative proposition that negative security perceptions act as a deterrent for attendance by South African rugby fans can be justified then it would have important implications for local rugby brands because any effort in which rugby brands aim to increase fan involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty may not necessarily lead to an increase in attendance unless the basic need of safety is not first provided.

Rugby brands should conduct research on their fans either at events or using online questionnaires which aim to better understand the thoughts and concerns of attendees. Not only would this increase fan involvement, but it would also lead to rugby brands better understanding the motivators of rugby fans in South Africa. This research would offer valuable insight into whether security concerns do indeed affect attendance in South Africa, it could also create a valuable dialogue between brands and their fans which could lead to invaluable benefits moving forward.

## 7.4 Summary of Implications for Practice

Understanding fan motives, as well as the constructs of fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty, will lead to rugby brands better understanding customers and potential customers. It will allow them to implement better relationship marketing strategies and thus boost attendance figures at live rugby matches in South Africa. Better attendance figures will have various positive impacts on business which include greater ticket revenues as well as allowing for greater broadcast rights to be secured, better sponsors, and most importantly, higher advertising revenues (Kaynak et al., 2008). Implications for practice have been explained in detail above and are summarised below:

In order to positively influence attendance numbers at live rugby matches in South Africa, rugby brands need to use relationship marketing tools to better understand fan motives and the relationship between these motives and fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty. These tools include but are not limited to the use of social media, networking, listening to customers and giving customers more attention, building greater brand identity, loyalty and reward programmes, face to face time, special events and better communication (Abeza et al., 2017; Bee & Kahle, 2006; "Nine Relationship Strategies," 2017).

Management of rugby brands need to place a greater emphasis on creating productions with higher entertainment value as well as a greater focus on aesthetical improvements. Some initiatives that can be used to enhance the entertainment aspect of live rugby matches include but are not limited to; increasing live experiences through fan zones, simulations and fan challenges; half time shows, pyrotechnics, cheerleaders, family areas, fan interaction, and more social media interaction ("Trends in Sports Events," n.d.). As much as increased focus needs to be placed on the motives of aesthetics, entertainment and escape; less focus should be placed on promoting the economic, family and group aspects of a live rugby experience.

As mentioned in the Chapter two of this research, the concept of involvement and co-creation are paramount to the ongoing success and sustainability of a brand. Local rugby brands need to conduct research into their fans in order to better understand the needs and concerns of their fans. By increasing the involvement of their fans, rugby brands could gain valuable insights into what it is that motivates fans to attend live rugby matches in South Africa. They could also gain information regarding what it is that fans do not enjoy about live rugby experiences. Creating this dialogue would lead to a healthy relationship between both parties in which co-creation leads to a more sustainable relationship moving forward.

## 7.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

As mentioned in section 4.9 of this report, this study is of a quantitative, cross-sectional nature and allows the reader a better understanding of the relationships between variables at a certain point in time. Further to this, the online questionnaire uses a Likert Scale measure as well as a multiple-choice format which do not allow for comments and further discussion on questions. Hence it is not possible for the researcher to ascertain the reasons for certain replies by respondents. Such information would have been particularly useful in the circumstances where the findings contradicted those in established literature. Research of a more exploratory nature is therefore required to investigate reasons for such contradictions.

Another limitation of this research was the use of established international scales as these scales may not be entirely relevant to certain geographic contexts. The scales used in this

study may have failed to take certain macro-economic conditions which are prevalent in a South Africa context into account. Factors which were excluded from the scales used which may have been relevant in a South African context include: crime, location, and affordability. For this reason, exploratory qualitative research could be conducted to identify factors which are specific to the South African context. Even though the scales used in this research were found to be both valid and reliable, scales which are more relevant to a South African context could be created and tested, much like the work of Wann (1995) in which he created and tested his original SFMS scale in order to measure to fan motivation. Further research into the constructs of fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty from a sporting perspective in South Africa could then be undertaken if such scales were developed. Furthermore, it would be advisable for such future research to use triangulated research methods such as interviews and observations in order to reduce the bias associated with individual methods.

The cross-sectional nature of this research only allowed for a snapshot of spectator motives at a specific point in time. Further research into the matter could take on a more longitudinal nature which would allow for temporal trends to be identified.

As indicated in chapter four, the researcher used snowball and convenience sampling which led to 58.57% of respondents being between the ages of 25 and 34. In order to get a more representative sample of the population a wider net could be cast in selecting the sample in future research.

#### 7.6 Concluding remarks

The objective of this study was to investigate the motivation for fans attending live rugby matches and to examine the relationships between fan motivation, fan involvement, fan satisfaction, and fan loyalty. The consistency matrix below shows the reader that the research problem, literature, methodology, and the method of analysis are all aligned and that the objectives of this research were met.

# Table 18

# Consistency matrix

TITLE: Understanding sports fan motivation: a study into fan involvement, satisfaction and loyalty					
Research Questions	Literature Review	Data Collection Tool	Analysis		
<b>Research Question 1</b> What role does involvement play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction and loyalty?	Motivation (Zaichowsky, 1985 Gantz & Wenner, 1995, Shank & Beasley, 1998) Satisfaction (Laverie and Arnett, 2000) Loyalty (Hill and Green, 2000)	Primary Data: Involvement (Shank & Beasley, 1998) Fan Motivation (Brown et al., 2014; Wann, 1995) Satisfaction (Brown et al., 2014) Loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008)	Correlation Analyis Multiple Regression Correlation Analysis		
<b>Research Question 2</b> What role does attitudinal loyalty play in sport fan motivation, satisfaction and behavioural loyalty?	Motivation (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler, 2008; Park & Kim, 2000) Satisfaction (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000; Taylor & Baker, 1994) Behavioural Loyalty (Hill & Green, 2000; Kaynak et al., 2008; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995)	Primary Data: Attitudinal Loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008) Motivation (Brown et al., 2014; Wann, 1995) Satisfaction (Brown et al., 2014) Behavioural Loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008)	Correlation Analysis Correlation Analysis Correlation Analysis		
Research Question 3 What role does behavioural loyalty play in sport fan motivation and satisfaction?	Motivation (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler, 2008; Park & Kim, 2000) Satisfaction (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Choi & Chu, 2001; Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000; Kuo, Hu & Yang,	Primary Data: Behavioural Loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008) Motivation (Brown et al., 2014; Wann, 1995) Satisfaction (Brown et al., 2014)	Correlation Analysis Correlation Analysis		
<b>Research Question 4</b> Do sport fan motivations predict satisfaction?	Satisfaction (Sarsetdt et al., 2014, Schroy, 2015; Wann, 1995)	Primary Data: Motivation (Brown et al., 2014; Wann, 1995) Satisfaction (Brown et al., 2014)	Multiple Regression		
<b>Research Question 5</b> Do overall motivations and involvement individually, and combined, predict satisfaction?	Motivation (Sarsetdt et al., 2014, Schroy, 2015; Wann, 1995) Involvement (Sarsetdt et al., 2014; Sutton et al., 1997; Mathies and Gudergan, 2012).	Primary Data: Motivation (Brown et al., 2014; Wann, 1995) Involvement (Shank & Beasley, 1998) Satisfaction (Brown et al., 2014)	Multiple Regression		

The study demonstrates the utility of a relationship marketing approach for rugby brands in South Africa seeking to better understand the motivation for fans attending live rugby matches. Based on the findings of this study, specific recommendations are made to assist rugby brands in South Africa to increase the motivation for fans to attend live rugby matches.

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# Appendices

# Appendix 1: Questionnaire

# **Informed Consent Statement**

To whom it may concern

I am conducting research on which of the eight motivational factors most influence fans and spectators to attend (have attended) live rugby matches in South Africa over the previous six months. To that end, you are kindly asked to complete the below questionnaire which looks in detail at fan motivation factors. Your feedback will help us form a better understanding of rugby spectators' motivation to attend live games. This survey should take no longer than 10 minutes of your time.

Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.

Your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported.

By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below:

Ben Maxton - 18359991@mygibs.co.za (researcher) - 0725637860

Prof PG (Pierre) Mostert – pierre.mostert@up.ac.za

#### Screening Question

Have you attended a live super rugby match in South Africa over the last 6 months (If Yes, then please proceed to the questionnaire) (Yes/No)

# **Demographics – Respondent**

Gender (M/F/Other) Age (Year Born) Race (Drop down list) Highest level of education (Drop down list) Which super rugby team do you support (Drop down list) How many games of your favourite team did you attend during the previous season (Drop down list) How many games did you watch on television of your favourite team during the previous season (Drop down list)

### Fan Motivation

SFMS

(1=This is not at all descriptive of me & 8=This is very descriptive of me).

#### SFMS

One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that doing so gives me the opportunity to temporarily escape life's problems (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is so that I can bet on the sports events (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that I get pumped up

when I watch my favourite teams (1-8)

One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is for the artistic value (1-8)

One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that I enjoy the beauty and grace of sports (1-8)

One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that I enjoy being physiologically (naturally) aroused by the competition (1-8)

Sports are only enjoyable if you can bet on the outcome (1-8)

One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that doing so makes me feel good when my team wins (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is that doing so allows me to forget about my problems (1-8) Making wagers is the most enjoyable aspect of being a sports fan (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is because most of my friends are sports fans (1-8) I enjoy watching sports events because to me sports are a form of art (1-8) To me, watching, reading, and/or discussing sports is like daydreaming because it takes me away from life's hassles (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports is I am the kind of person who likes to be with other people (1-8) I enjoy sports because of their entertainment value (1-8) I enjoy watching sports more when I am with a large group of people (1-8) I enjoy watching sports because it increases my self-esteem (1-8) I like the stimulation I get from watching sports (1-8) One of the main reasons that I watch, read, and/or discuss sports simply because it is a good time (1-8) To me, sports spectating is simply a form of recreation (1-8) To me, my favourite team's successes are my successes and their losses are my losses (1-8) I like to watch, read, and/or discuss sports because doing so gives me an opportunity to be with my spouse (1-8) I like to watch, read, and/or discuss sports because doing so gives me an opportunity to be with my family (1-8)

# **Overall Motivation**

(1=This is not at all descriptive of me & 8=This is very descriptive of me).

I like to watch, read, and/or discuss rugby for entertainment (1-8)
I like to watch, read, and/or discuss rugby for excitement (1-8)
I like to watch, read, and/or discuss rugby so that I can show support to my local team (1-8)
I like to watch, read, and/or discuss rugby because the results are important for me (1-8)

I like to watch, read, and/or discuss rugby because I like to see the best rugby players in the world perform (1-8)

### Fan Involvement

To me, sports are:

l. Boring (	) 0 0 0 0 0 0 Exciting (1-7)
2. Uninteresting	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Interesting (1-7)
3. Worthless	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Valuable (1-7)
4. Unappealing	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Appealing (1-7)
5. Useless	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Useful (1-7)
6. Not Needed	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Needed (1-7)
7. Irrelevant	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Relevant (1-7)
8. Unimportant	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Important (1-7)

### Fan Satisfaction

(1=Not at all & 5=very much so)

I am pleased I decided to watch a live super rugby match (1-5) It was a good decision to watch this particular game (1-5) I am pleased with my experience of the live game I attended (1-5)

### Fan Loyalty

(1=strongly disagree & 7=totally agree).

# **Psychological Commitment**

I am a real fan of my favourite super rugby team (1-7)

I am very committed to my favourite super rugby team (1-7)

There is nothing that could change my commitment to my favourite super rugby team (1-7) I will not change my affiliation from my favourite super rugby team to another super rugby team in the future just because it is not successful anymore (1-7)

I would defend my favourite super rugby team in public even if this caused problems (1-7) I will not change my affiliation from my favourite super rugby team to another club just because my friends try to convince me to (1-7)

It is really important to me that my favourite super rugby team continues playing in the Super Rugby tournament (1-7)

The long-term success of my favourite super rugby team is important to me (1-7)

# **Behavioural Loyalty**

I have often attended games of my favourite super rugby team live in the stadium (1-7)
I have watched games of my favourite super rugby team on TV (1-7)
I have often followed reports about my favourite super rugby team's players, coaches, managers etc. in the media. I have purchased a lot of club-related merchandise (1-7)
I often wore the colours and/or the logo of my favourite super rugby team (1-7)
I have often participated in discussions about my favourite super rugby team (1-7)

Appendix 2: Letter from Language Editor

Jennifer Charlton

Editor

53 Hoylake Road

Greenside, 2193

27 February 2019

To whom it may concern

This serves to confirm that I have edited Ben Maxton's submission for his MBA dissertation entitled:

Understanding sports fan motivation: A study into fan involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty.

I have edited the text for language, including grammar, spelling, sentence structure, sentence length, and formatting according to the APA 6.

The edits made were in tracked change format, and that it was the author's final responsibility to accept or reject the suggested changes.

Yours faithfully

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