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Professional football sponsorship in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga

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**PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL SPONSORSHIP
IN THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE
AND THE GERMAN BUNDESLIGA**

by

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A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL SPONSORSHIP IN THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE AND THE GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Abstract

This research project looks at professional football sponsorship from three different perspectives: the clubs' perspective (sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs), the sponsors' perspective (sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies), and a joint perspective (sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors). The English Premier League and the German Bundesliga serve as the subject of research owing to their extraordinarily sound reputation in commercial terms.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used in order to answer the research questions which derived from an extensive literature review. First, qualitative in-depth interviews with representatives of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs and their sponsors as well as sponsorship experts were carried out in order to gain a broader understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny. Consequently, seven principal research propositions and six hypotheses were formulated relating to the size of the football business, the importance of sponsorship as an income stream, motives and objectives of sponsors, and the importance and dimensions of relationship quality. Then, two content analyses were carried out (including an analysis of more than 500 clubs' and sponsors' websites and 106 televised football games) in order to identify as many football sponsors of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs as possible. The research propositions were then tested in a quantitative survey incorporating all English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs as well as 460 sponsors. Parametric as well as non-parametric tests were applied at this stage.

The findings of the research partially confirmed previous studies. More importantly, new insights have been uncovered. For example, new dimensions of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship have been identified. This study therefore has both theoretical and practical implications for professional football clubs, sponsoring companies and prospective researchers in the field of (professional) football sponsorship. The study also contributes significantly to existing knowledge about the football business, sponsorship and relationship marketing.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

The research project has been the subject of several guest lectures at Nürtingen University (Germany) and the School of International Business at Reutlingen University (Germany). The following authored and co-authored papers and articles have been published or submitted to date.

Publications:

Bühler, A.W. (2003) 'Mehr als ein Fußballklub', *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 9 December 2003, p. 31

Bühler, A.W. (2004) 'Monopoly mit echtem Geld', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25 February 2004, p. 31

Bühler, A.W. (2004) 'Sponsoring in der Fußballbundesliga – Eine Analyse der Akteure zu Beginn der Saison 2004/2005', *Absatzwirtschaft online*, (online)

Bühler, A.W. (2005) 'England will aufholen', *SPONSORS*, January 2005, pp. 33-34

Bühler, A.W. (2005) 'Fans und Fanverhalten im Profifußball: Ein Vergleich zwischen England und Deutschland' in Schewe, G. and Rohlmann, P. (eds) *Sportmarketing*, Schorndorf, Verlag Hofmann, pp. 221-236

Bühler, A. W. (2006) 'Football as an international business - an Anglo-German comparison', *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 3 (1) (in press)

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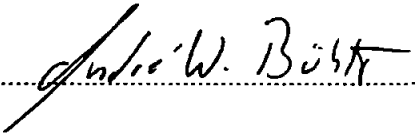
Bühler, A.W. and Nufer, G. (2006) 'The Nature of Sports Marketing', working paper series, University of London

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- Bühler, A.W. (2006) 'Professional Football Sponsorship – The Research Project', in Barton, A. and Lean, J. (eds) *Proceedings of the Plymouth Business School and School of Sociology, Politics and Law Postgraduate Symposium 2006*, Plymouth, University of Plymouth, pp. 54-74
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- Bühler, A.W. (2006) 'The impact of commitment, trust and satisfaction on the relationship quality between professional soccer clubs and their sponsors', *EASM Congress 2006*
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PREFACE

With this research project one of my dreams came true as it enabled me to combine my favourite areas of interest: sports and marketing. I am very grateful to have been able to carry out research in such a highly fascinating area and in a country where people not only play and watch football, but *live* football in the true sense of the meaning.

However, it has to be emphasised that this study focuses on sponsorship at professional football club level and consequently excludes other forms of football sponsorship such as sponsorship of events (e.g. the World Cup tournament or the UEFA Champions League), associations (e.g. the English Football Association) or individuals (e.g. players, managers, officials).

In order to gain a comprehensive picture, Anglophone and German-speaking information sources were used. All direct quotations from German literature and interviews have been translated into English to the best of my ability. My Director of Studies, Professor David Head, who happens to have a perfect command of the German language, checked all of them and declared the translations as being accurate.

Doing a PhD (especially in a foreign country) is not only an academic process but also a personal one. At this point of time, I am very grateful for the experiences I have gained within the last three years and the people I have met. I would like to take the opportunity to thank especially Cesar & Ena, Hussein, Kelvin, James and Troy for their friendship.

Apart from the staff members at the Plymouth Business School, who were friendly, helpful and good fun, I would like to thank two people in particular: Dr. Jasmine Williams and Professor David Head. Jasmine, on the one hand, proved to be a perfect second supervisor and managed to arouse my interest in empirical research. She is responsible for the fact

that I actually started to enjoy statistical analysis. I am looking forward to continuing our discussion on whether sports marketing is different from other forms of marketing over the coming years. David, on the other hand, proved to be a perfect first supervisor and Director of Studies by encouraging me whenever motivation was needed. We both enjoyed the fact that we had to talk about football on a regular basis.

I would also like to thank my examiners, Dr. Simon Chadwick (one of UK's leading academics in sports business research at Birkbeck College – University of London) and Dr. John White (an expert in relationship marketing at the University of Plymouth Business School), for their suggestions and therefore for improving the quality of the final draft of my thesis.

Last, but definitely not least, I would like to thank my parents. The last three years would not have been possible without their help and support. Herzlichen Dank! Therefore, I would like to dedicate this thesis to them and to all the people who think that doing a PhD in football is pure fun. It is indeed – in a serious way.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BL	Bundesliga
CAQDAS	Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software
DFB	Deutscher Fußball-Bund
DFL	Deutsche Fußball Liga
FA	The English Football Association
FAPL	The F.A. Premier League
FASPO	Fachverband für Sponsoring & Sonderwerbeformen
FC	Football Club
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
G	Germany
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (measure of sampling adequacy)
MRA	Multiple regression analysis
NUD*IST	Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising
PL	Premier League
PRP	Principal research proposition
RQ	Relationship quality
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SV	Sportverein
UEFA	Union des Associations Européennes de Football
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

1 INTRODUCTION

Actually, sponsorship is the biggest area of opportunity. And it's something that we really need to get more scientific about.

[The Marketing Director of an English Premier League club]

The above statement, generated in the qualitative research phase of this study, summarises the importance of professional football sponsorship and the need for further research in this area. Therefore, this thesis attempts to contribute to existing knowledge by examining professional football sponsorship from the following three different perspectives:

- 1) Sponsorship as an important income stream for professional football clubs
- 2) Professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies
- 3) Professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their respective sponsors

Basically, this study aims to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship and seeks to reach the following research objectives:

- To identify the characteristics of the football business
- To identify the importance of sponsorship for professional football clubs
- To identify the motives of sponsors for going into professional football sponsorship
- To identify the objectives of football sponsors
- To identify potential areas for improvement in professional football sponsorship
- To establish the relational aspects of football sponsorships
- To examine the importance of relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors
- To examine the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship
- To identify an appropriate definition of professional football sponsorship

The English Premier League as well as the German Bundesliga¹ serve as the context of research owing to their extraordinary reputation in commercial terms compared to other European football leagues, as will be explained later in this chapter.

At this point, it should be noted that this thesis focuses on professional football sponsorship at club level despite other forms of football sponsorship (e.g. sponsorship of associations, football events or individuals, as will be outlined in Chapter 3). In addition, this thesis focuses primarily on the 2004/05 season, although some figures relate to previous seasons or the current season (2005/06) as well.

However, although the overall aim of this study is to gain a broader understanding of football sponsorship, the focus is on the third perspective under scrutiny, because it is felt that this is the area where the main contribution can be made. This judgement is based on the fact that only limited research has been done in the area of sponsorship relationships, as Chapter 4 will show. Therefore, the further establishment of sponsorship as a relational construct is one of the main objectives of this thesis in view of the fact that most studies in the marketing literature deal with sponsorship as a discrete transaction. Chapter 4 will discuss the 'transactional paradigm' and the 'relational paradigm' relating to (football) sponsorship in greater detail. Furthermore, it has to be emphasised that this thesis is one of a very few studies conducted to date which examine relational aspects of sponsorship. It is also the first study applying the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship, as explained further in Chapter 4.

In order to answer the research questions, a combined approach of qualitative and quantitative research methods is used. In a qualitative research phase, which took place from September 2003 till August 2004, seventeen representatives of English Premier

¹ Appendices I and II introduce all English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs (season 2004/05)

League and German Bundesliga clubs and their sponsors, as well as English and German sponsorship experts, were interviewed. The insights of these face-to-face in-depth interviews plus findings of the literature review led to the generation of seven principal research propositions and six hypotheses, covering the three perspectives of sponsorship in question. Following a comprehensive content analysis of more than 500 websites and 106 Premier League and Bundesliga games on video tape in order to identify as many sponsors as possible, a quantitative (questionnaire) survey was carried out in April/May 2005, incorporating 38 professional football clubs in England and Germany as well as 460 shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs. A principal component analysis as well as a multiple regression analysis were used in order to test the propositions and hypotheses. The findings add to existing knowledge and provide practical as well as theoretical implications for organisations/people involved in professional football sponsorship.

This introductory chapter starts with an overview of what has been written in the area of football, sponsorship and professional football sponsorship and therefore identifies some gaps in the relevant literature. It then moves on to an explanation of the nature of this thesis and an introduction of the context of this research. Following this, the rationale for choosing the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga is given. The chapter then concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 The literature on football, sponsorship and (professional) football sponsorship

This section introduces the literature on football and on sponsorship, and finally investigates what research has been done in the area of (professional) football sponsorship.

1.1.1 Football

Football's popularity is reflected not only in the enthusiasm of the several million people who play and watch the game globally, but also in the number of books which have been written on the subject. Merkel, Sombert and Tokarski (1996) notice in this connection that football writing in the United Kingdom is certainly more extensive than in Germany.² Seddon (1999), for example, lists more than 7,000 English-language books alone on all aspects of the game in his *Football Compendium*, and a search enquiry on the British *Amazon* website in January 2006 produced a list of more than 11,200 books dealing with football or soccer respectively.³

In addition, football has established itself as a subject of academic research in recent decades. For example, 133 doctoral theses have been written on football between 1973 and 2005 in Germany⁴, whereas the British Education Index records 26 published theses on football/soccer between 1961 and 2005 in the UK, covering all sorts of research areas (e.g. law, psychology, physics, economics, sociology, and history). As yet, there has been little academic research in the area of professional football considering sports marketing. One of the few exceptions comes from Hudson (2003) who investigated the concept of marketing orientation of English professional football at the individual club level.

The main forms of football research to date have been primarily the history of the game or the social and cultural aspects of football. Studies like those by Clarke (*Football hooliganism and the Skinhead*, 1973), Critcher (*Football Since the War: a study in social changes and popular culture*, 1973) or Dunning, Murphy and Williams (*The roots of*

² They give the following reasons for their assumption: football in Germany is considered too trivial as an academic topic, too celebratory of reactionary values and too dominated by pseudo-systematic analysis of journalists as well as too full of myths which have to be unveiled before a constructive discussion can commence.

³ Around 8,800 included either football or soccer in the title. An enquiry on the German Amazon website found around 2,100 German-language books on 'Fußball'.

⁴ Revealed by an search enquiry on the database of the Deutsche Bibliothek (German Library) in January 2006

soccer hooliganism, an historical and sociological study, 1988) are typical of the academic exploration of the hooligan phenomenon in the 1970s and 1980s respectively (Perry, 1999). Garland and Rowe (1993, p. 101) note in this context 'that there seems to have been a greater academic investigation into the nature of football and its fans in Britain compared to elsewhere.' In addition, particularly in recent years, a broad range of new perspectives has become associated with the field of football research. For example the area of physics covered by Bray and Kerwin (2003) adopt a ballistic perspective in their paper about 'Modelling the flight of a soccer ball in a direct free kick'. Foster (2000) covers the area of law by investigating the impact of European Law on football. Bjorn (1994), however, deals with the physical side of the game by publishing a handbook of sports medicine regarding soccer. In addition, Downing (2001) covers the field of international relations with his work *The Best of Enemies: England v Germany*. Football also served as a guide to management in recent years as Bolchover and Brady (*The 90 Minute Manager*, 2002), Birkinshaw and Crainer (*Leadership the Sven-Göran Eriksson Way*, 2002) or Theobald and Cooper (*Business and the Beautiful Game: How You Can Apply the Skills and Passion of Football to Be a Winner in Business*, 2005) show.

During the 1990s, football attracted the attention of more and more academic business researchers who investigated various business-related aspects of professional football. For example, Meredith (1994) offered new approaches to marketing a football club, Currie and Kerrin (1996) identified English football as a metaphor for organisational change. More recent publications have sought to investigate the laws of the football market and their impact on club level in a more sophisticated manner (Dobson and Goddard, 2001; Greenfield and Osborn, 2001) or how marketing strategies contribute to the expansion of the football clubs across business sectors (Mortimer, 2003).

Not only academic researchers have been attracted by football as a subject of research. More and more multinational companies of accountants and consultancies are stepping into the football business by doing independent research and publishing various reports. One of the most well-known reports is the *Annual Review of Football Finance* published yearly by the Sports Group at Deloitte (formerly Deloitte & Touche). The report investigates the areas of profitability, wages and salaries, player trading and the financing of English football, and it compares some of its findings with the situation of the top leagues in Italy, Spain, Germany and France. The report itself is well recognized and elicits a significant response from the media whenever it is due to be published. Another outstanding report is provided by the German-based sports consultancy Sportfive (formerly known as UFA-Sports), which publishes its *Fußball-Studie* every second year. The report describes the situation of the clubs, the media, the brands and the football events in England, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. In contrast to the Deloitte report, which generates its information mainly from the clubs themselves, Sportfive cooperates with market research agencies in the specific countries who carry out questionnaire interviews in order to identify the habits, likes and dislikes of football-interested people. Other reports have been published by the British marketing research company Key Note (*Football Clubs & Finance*, 2002), the German WZL-Bank (*FC Euro AG*, 2002), and the Financial Times Yearbook (*The Investors' Guide to European Football 2000*, 1999). The main objective of these reports is to give clients or investors respectively an overview of the European football business by comparing the various football markets and the European top clubs.

However, the level of interest in football as a subject of research is demonstrated not only by the number of published books, reports or papers but also by media coverage of the game, since football is no longer restricted to the back pages of newspapers, as Morrow (1999) notes. Indeed, business newspapers such as *The Financial Times* have now introduced a daily sports page, and more and more football stories can be found in the

business section of major newspapers such as *The Independent*, *The Guardian* or *The Times* in England and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* or the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* in Germany. Even highly sophisticated magazines like *The Economist* regularly publish business-related football articles.

In contrast to academic studies, popular books about the business dimension of football have been published in great numbers in recent years, for instance Bower (*Broken Dreams*, 2003), Banks (*Going Down – Football in Crisis*, 2002) and Conn (*The Football Business*, 2001) in the UK or Grünitz and von Arndt (*Der Fußball-Crash*, 2002) and Kistner and Weinreich (*Das Milliardenpiel*, 1998) in Germany. The disadvantage of this non-academic literature is that it emphasises only one side of the story, mainly the negative consequences of the ongoing commercialisation of the game and the increasing influence of only a few key figures in professional football. Popular literature such as this nevertheless gives some ideas of what is going on in British and German football. Perry (1999) refers to the dilemma of dealing with non-academic literature and concludes that it would be inappropriate to ignore such popular books. That is why non-academic sources have been utilised in this research, i.e. as a valuable contribution to building an overall appreciation of the subject matter in this thesis.

Another characteristic of the increasing attention devoted to football as a subject of research is the establishment of specific research centres in England and Germany. Some of these are academic ones such as the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research at the University of Leicester, the Institute of Football Studies at the University of Lancashire, the Football Research Unit at the University of Liverpool, the Football Governance Research Centre of Birkbeck College at the University of London or the Akademisches Fußball-Team of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster. Others are commercial such as the Sports Business Group of Deloitte.

1.1.2 Sponsorship

This subsection looks at how much and what kind of research has been done in the area of sponsorship research so far.

There are currently more than 300 available books on sponsorship in English and around 160 books in German.⁵ Within the last few years, numerous research papers have been written on sponsorship. A search enquiry at the Deutsche Bibliothek revealed the publication of 104 doctoral theses on sponsorship between 1987 and 2005 in Germany, covering various areas. For example, some of them deal with legal aspects of sponsorship (e.g. Irle, 2001; Wegner, 2001; Höltkemeier, 2004), some with psychological aspects (e.g. Glogger, 1998; Wagner, 1993; Erdtmann, 1988) and some others cover marketing aspects (e.g. Dinkel, 2002; Vogt, 2000). Surprisingly, the British Education Index records only three published theses on sponsorship. However, although sponsorship has been researched in the areas of arts, media or education, most studies focus on sports sponsorship.

A valuable source of additional information are the various market research reports of British and German agencies such as Key Note, the Pilot Group and above all Sportfive, which publishes two interesting reports: The *Europäisches Sponsoring-Barometer* primarily asks decisions makers to explain the nature of their sponsorship deals, whereas the *Affinitäten*-studies reflect the attitude of the population towards sponsorship.

Walliser (2003, p. 6) analysed and compared more than 230 papers on sponsorship. He notes that 'sponsorship may be one of very few areas which has attracted more academic interest in Europe – particularly in Ireland, France and Germany – than in North America or other parts of the world.' Sponsorship as a subject of research was discovered at the end of the 1970s or beginning of the 1980s respectively. The first books and reports about

⁵ Revealed by a search inquiry of the English and German Amazon website in January 2006.

sponsorship were published in the United States, followed by some German publications, primarily the works of Bruhn (1987) or Hermanns (1987), which are still the core books on sponsorship in Germany. The same is true for Sleight (1989) in the UK. In the early editions of the 'marketing bibles' (for example the works of Porter, Kotler, or Meffert) sponsorship was just a peripheral phenomenon. With the increasing significance of sponsorship and its transformation from 'a small-scale activity in a limited number of industrialised countries to a major global industry', research interest in sponsorship increased as well (Walliser, 2003, p. 5). Most research papers deal with the measurement of sponsorship effects, relate to managerial aspects or the nature of sponsorship, or investigate sponsorship strategies and counter-strategies according to Walliser (2003). Olkkonen, Tikkanen and Alajoutsijärvi (2000, p. 13) argue that 'the bulk of existing sponsorship research is very "managerially" oriented, with strong emphasis on the sponsoring company's viewpoint'. In this respect, it has to be noted that sponsorship is seen rather as a discrete transaction than as a relational construct in the sponsorship literature, most notably in the existing sponsorship definitions (Chapter 3). This is a clear theoretical gap in view of the fact that a paradigm shift has been taking place in the general marketing literature resulting from the rise of relationship marketing. The sponsorship literature trails behind this development, and therefore a clear desire of this thesis is to contribute to a further establishment of the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorship as a theme of sponsorship literature.

Dinkel (2002) also notes that most research on sponsorship has been carried out from the sponsor's point of view and that only a few consider the other side of the deals, the sponsees. Therefore, this thesis takes both sides of the sponsorship dyad into consideration by examining professional football sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs, as a marketing tool for sponsors and finally as an inter-organisational relationship between sponsors and sponsees. The next subsection takes a closer look at what has been done specifically in the area of (professional) football sponsorship.

1.1.3 (Professional) football sponsorship

Although professional football is used as a popular example in a lot of papers on general sponsorship, professional football sponsorship as a subject of research is not as common as assumed. This subsection looks at to what extent previous research examined (professional) football sponsorship as an income stream, marketing tool and inter-organisational relationship.

Research on sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs is mainly limited to reports dealing with the finance of football, for example reports from Deloitte (2004b, 2005), Key Note (2002), the WGZ-Bank (2002) or Ernst & Young (2004) as mentioned above. In addition, reports published by the Deutsche Fußball Liga (DFL, 2004, 2005a) or the FA Premier League (2004a) also deal with sponsorship as an income source. Most of these reports describe the current situation of professional football in commercial terms by providing figures relating to the key income streams of professional football clubs, but neglect an in-depth analysis of sponsorship and other key income streams and how they relate to each other. Therefore, this study will examine sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs in greater detail.

With regard to football sponsorship as a marketing tool, a greater number of studies can be found. Sengle (1989), for example, describes sponsorship as a marketing tool on the basis of German football. The benefit of her research is the fact that she was one of the first researchers who analysed the football sponsorship situation. The limitation in this case, however, is the sole focus on shirt sponsorship. In addition, the sponsorship market as well as the importance of sponsorship for professional football clubs has changed dramatically since the publication of her PhD thesis. However, a more recent paper comes from Köster (2003), who describes sponsorship in the context of professional football in Germany. She may take both the clubs' and the sponsors' perspective into consideration, but mainly

focuses on the management process of the sponsorship activities. Studies on issues relating to football sponsorship as a marketing tool (such as objectives of football sponsors or evaluation of sponsorships) come from Thwaites (1995) and Chadwick and Thwaites (2005) who examined sponsorship programmes in English professional football. Other examples come from Rosson (2001) and Wilcox, Andrews and Longmuir (2001), who used case studies in order to assess football sponsorship as a marketing tool. In addition, some market research reports, such as *Sponsor Visions* (Pilot Group, 2004, 2005) publish survey results relating to the objectives of football sponsors. However, it is quite surprising that professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool is not as popular as a subject of research given the popularity of the sport and the fact that most papers on sponsorship deal with managerial issues and mainly cover the sponsor's point of view. In view of the limited papers on the subject, further research is justified. Therefore, this thesis examines professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool in greater detail.

If the previous two perspectives of professional football sponsorship are under-researched areas, the third perspective is a research desert in itself. Hardly any research has been done on professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship. This accounts for the fact that most papers in this research area consider (professional) football sponsorship as a discrete transaction and therefore represent the transactional paradigm of the marketing literature. Indeed, sponsorship is primarily based on a transaction, as sponsors provide financial resources in exchange for some property rights provided by the sponsee. In this respect, it has to be noted that there are likely to be organisations engaged in professional football sponsorship that see sponsorship as a short-term opportunity to meet their objectives without building a deep relationship with the football club. This might also apply for some football clubs which seek to generate revenues in the short-term. However, as Chapter 4 will show, most professional football sponsorships are likely to be more than just the exchange of financial resources and some legal rights. There are also

sponsors and sponsees looking for long-term relationships and ways to make their relationship and their sponsorships more successful. These sponsorship relationships are based on social exchange through which sponsorship partners engage in ongoing relations. Therefore, it is felt that a deeper understanding of the relational aspects of professional football sponsorship is needed in view of the fact that only few studies have so far examined the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.

The few exceptions come from Bembenek and Meier (2003) and Farrelly and Quester (2003, 2005). However, both exceptions contain major limitations. Bembenek and Meier, on the one hand, may investigate the relationship between sponsors and sponsees in the first and second football Bundesliga in Germany, but also include handball and basketball in their study. Therefore, the results of their study cannot be related to professional football sponsorship alone. Farrelly and Quester, on the other hand, may examine the relationship between sponsor and football club as a business-to-business relationship, but in the context of Australian Rules Football. Therefore, the only notable exception comes from Chadwick (2004), who looked at determinants of commitment in the English professional football club/shirt sponsorship dyad in his PhD thesis. Consequently, further research is needed in the area of professional football club – sponsor relationships.

In summary, research on sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs, as a marketing tool for companies and as an inter-organisational relationship is very limited despite the popularity of both football and sponsorship. It is therefore necessary to examine all three perspectives in greater detail by including both sides of the sponsorship dyad and thereby adding to existing knowledge. As a matter of fact, no research to date has ever incorporated all three perspectives,⁶ and therefore this study is also seen as a foundation for further research in the area of professional football sponsorship. In addition,

⁶ Professor Dr. Björn Walliser, a sponsorship specialist, who has compared more than 230 studies on sponsorship, confirmed in a personal E-mail (dated 05.06.2004) that such a combination has never been attempted before, whether as a PhD project or in any other research project.

another reason to undertake this research is the fact that, surprisingly, an investigation of sponsorship in the context of professional football in both England and Germany has not been carried out to date.

1.2 The nature of this thesis and the context of research

This section explains the nature of this thesis and introduces the context of research (i.e. the business of football).

1.2.1 The nature of this thesis

What is the nature of this thesis? Is it about football (and therefore sports) or is it about sponsorship (and therefore marketing)? The answer is a bit of both: this thesis is about sponsorship in the context of professional football, and therefore it is a sports marketing thesis.

Sports marketing has established itself over the last three decades not only as a very special form of marketing, but also as an own subject of research. However, it is quite surprising that the nature of sports marketing is relatively unknown as different definitions of sports marketing indicate. Van Heerden (2001, p. 93) postulated a comprehensive definition of sports marketing by combining Shank's (1999) definition⁷, the views of Evans, James, and Tomas (1996)⁸ and his own previous three-scenario approach (van Heerden, 1998)⁹:

⁷ Shank (1999, p. 2) defines sports marketing as 'the specific application of marketing principles and processes to sport products and to the marketing of non-sports products through association with sport.'

⁸ Evans *et al.* (1996, p. 207) define sports marketing as 'the use of sport as a promotional vehicle for consumer and industrial goods and services, the marketing of sports products, services and events to consumers of sport.'

⁹ Van Heerden (1998) formulated three scenarios contextualising sports marketing: the marketing of sports products and services (e.g. equipment and facilities) which might be consumed by professional athletes and amateur hackers (scenario 1); the marketing of an organisation through its association (i.e. sponsorship) with sport events, teams or individuals (2); and the way that sport bodies and codes market themselves and their events to attract sponsorship participants, spectators, funding, and corporate involvement (3).

Sport marketing is the specific application of theoretical marketing principles and processes to sport products and services; the marketing of non-sport and sport-related products and services through an association - such as a sponsorship - with sport; and the marketing of sport bodies and codes, their personalities, their events, their activities, their actions, their strategies and their image.

The above definition takes two distinct streams within the broad concept of sports marketing into consideration: 'marketing *of* sports' and 'marketing *through* sports' (Lagae, 2005). The first stream refers to the 'the use of marketing variables to communicate the benefits of sport participation and spectatorship to potential consumers' (Shilbury, Quick and Westerbeek, 1998, p. 12), whereas the second stream refers to sports sponsorship (Nufer, 2002a). Therefore, it becomes evident that a thesis examining professional football sponsorship relates to the research area of sports marketing.

Sports marketing, however, is not just a variation or modification of traditional marketing, but a very special, near-autonomous form of marketing combining the unique characteristics of sports with fundamental marketing techniques. Mullin (1985, p. 158), for example, notes that 'almost every element of marketing requires significantly different approaches when the product being marketed is sport.' Indeed, sports marketing differs from other forms of marketing in three main aspects: the sports industry, the sports product and the consumer. It is therefore felt necessary to introduce briefly the context in which professional football sponsorship takes place, i.e. the business of football.

1.2.2 The context of research (i.e. the business of football)

This subsection introduces the business of football, its main markets and market players as well as the unique characteristics of the football business.

Football is widely considered to be an established and distinct business. For example, the European football market was estimated to be worth €11 billion in 2004. The German

Bundesliga turned over €1,058m in 2003/04, the English Premier League earned nearly €2 billion, making it the richest football league in the world (Deloitte, 2005).¹⁰

Despite the fact that football is a business, a disputed point is the question as to whether football is a 'big business'. There is still considerable disagreement on the size of the football business. For example, Michie and Walsh (1999) and Poli (2001) view football as a big business. In contrast, Morrow (1999) contends that football is not a big business, since the financial figures¹¹ of most football clubs are insignificant in comparison to enterprises in most other business sectors. Based on this disagreement, a classification of the football business in terms of size could be an implication for further research.

However, the football business incorporates various markets and is influenced by various market players. Figure 1.1 illustrates the most important markets and market players of the football business. Chapter 2 will deal with the main markets in greater detail.



Figure 1.1: markets and market players of the football business

Based on Key Note (2002), Grünitz and von Arndt (2002), Deloitte and Touche (2003), Deloitte (2004b, 2005)

¹⁰ Please see Bühler (2006a, 2006b) for further business patterns of the football business.

¹¹ like turnover, profits or market capitalisation

The football business is quite often described as part of the entertainment industry. Indeed, certain similarities cannot be denied. People watch football in order to be entertained. However, although football might be entertainment, it also differs in some aspects from other entertainment sectors or ordinary businesses. For example, football clubs compete with each other off the field (just as companies in other industry sectors do) but they also need their competitors in order to compete on the pitch, since a single football match cannot take place without a competitor. This phenomenon, where economic and sporting competition are linked in exactly the opposite way, is known as ‘associative competition’ (Heinemann, 2001). Other unique characteristics of the football business relate to the structure of the leagues, the dependence of business success on sporting success and the rather ‘unhealthy’ attitude of football clubs towards profits.¹² However, one of the main – if not the main – characteristic of the football business is the high level of public interest and media coverage that it attracts. Football is in the limelight of public interest and therefore a main topic for the media. Morrow (1999) assumes that if football was only an ordinary business, then the extent and type of the coverage football receives would be greatly diminished. In addition, the public awareness of football is much greater than public awareness of other business sectors.

The above peculiarities relate to the nature of the football business. However, football as an industry also differs from other industries in terms of its products and customers.

The product as provided by professional football clubs, associations or league bodies can be divided in the core product and product extensions. The core product is the initial game, the sporting event or competition, whereas the product extensions are all goods or services which relate to the core product such as merchandising, catering, hospitality, or information services. The core product of football clubs (i.e. the match/competition) is a joint product. Football clubs need each other to create the core sports product. In addition,

¹² Here again, the reader’s attention is drawn to Bühler (2006b) for a detailed discussion of the unique characteristics of the football business.

sports marketers have no control over the quality of the core product because every game and/or competition is highly spontaneous and unpredictable (Shilbury, Quick and Westerbeek, 1998). The uncertainty of outcome is the lifeblood of every competition, as one cannot be certain how the competition will end (Morrow, 1999; Szymanski and Kuypers, 1999; Dobson and Goddard, 2001).

Figure 1.2 illustrates the various products of football clubs as well as the buyers and the resulting relationships.

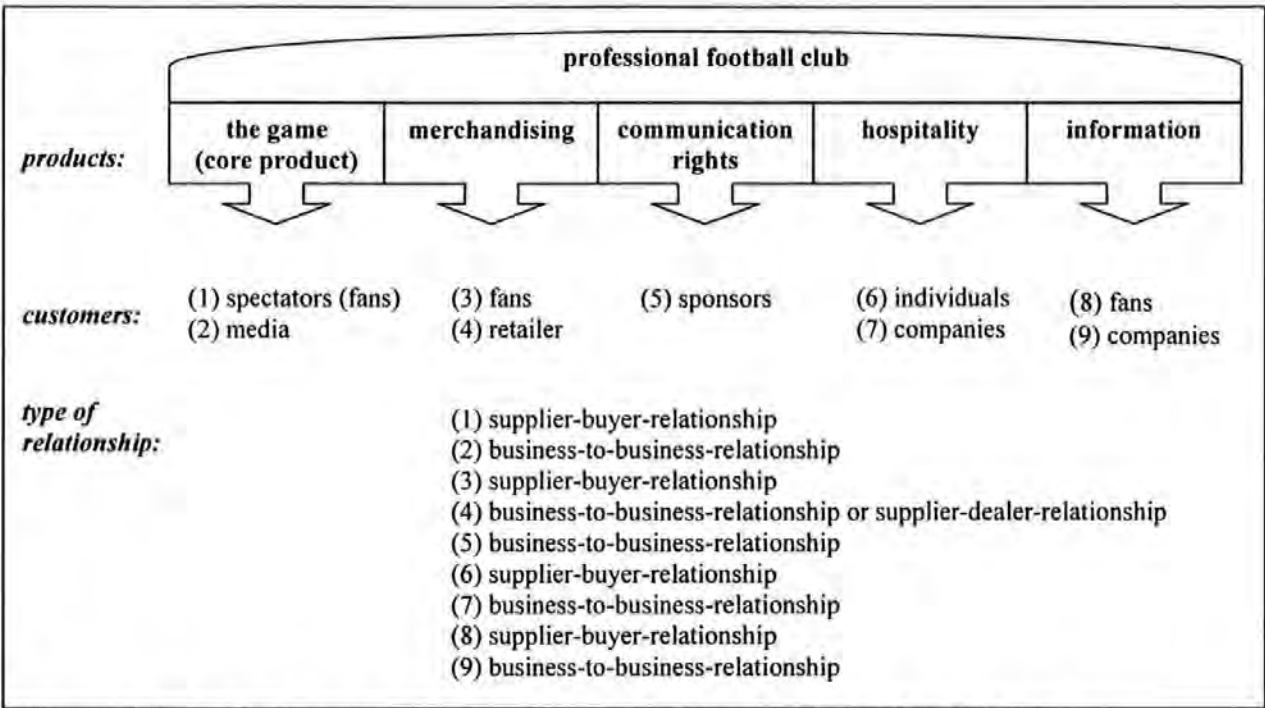


Figure 1.2: the products, customers and resulting relationships of professional football clubs

As indicated in Figure 1.2, football clubs maintain various relationships with numerous customers. Of special interest in the context of this thesis is the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors, of course. Chapter 4 examines this particular relationship in greater detail. However, the football clubs' supporters are a vital part of the foundation on which the whole business of football is built. In this respect, it has to be emphasised that a lot of football supporters display a loyal and passionate attitude towards their clubs and therefore tend to make less rational purchase decisions than consumers of

other products and services. This leads economic analysts and professional investors to the conclusion that football supporters are 'captive consumers' (Pierpoint, 2000, p. 31; Banks, 2002) within a 'captive market'¹³ (Morrow, 1999, p. 169; Conn 2001).

In summary, it has to be pointed out that the football business incorporates some unique characteristics and that the product and the customers of professional football clubs are somehow different to those of other businesses. Although this thesis focuses on professional football sponsorship, it also seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the context of professional football sponsorship and therefore tries to examine the unique characteristics and the actual size of the football business as well as the general differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in commercial terms.

1.3 Rationale for choosing the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga

Various reasons speak well for choosing an Anglo-German perspective. First, football is regarded as the national game both in England and in Germany (Pepels, 2001; Key Note, 2002). Second, the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga are not only ranked within the top five European football leagues from a point of view of performance on the field¹⁴, but are also widely considered to be the most businesslike football leagues in the world (Süßmilch, 2002; Rachmann, 2002). For example, the German licensing model is widely recognised as a beneficial model and acts as a prototype for the UEFA-licensing¹⁵

¹³ Captive market has been defined as a group of consumers who have limited choice in terms of the products they can select/purchase or no other alternative but to buy a product from a specific source respectively (Learnthat, 2003; Moneyglossary, 2003).

¹⁴ According to the latest UEFA-ranking in 2005, England takes second and Germany takes fifth place. The basis for the UEFA rankings is the performance of teams in the European Cups during a five-year period. (UEFA, 2005).

¹⁵ The UEFA licensing regulations define the minimum quality of standards in five main criteria categories as follows: sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administration, legal and financial. These criteria must be fulfilled in order for a club to be admitted to any of the UEFA club competitions as from the 2004/05 season onwards. In addition, these national regulations regulate the process to be applied by the licensor when assessing their respective clubs.

scheme. Furthermore, Deloitte (2005, p. 11) notes that ‘the “big five” leagues¹⁶ differ widely in their operating performance with only the English Premiership and German Bundesliga clubs recording profits in 2003/04.’ Furthermore, both the English and the German top league record the largest growth rates (+14% and +12% from 1999/2000 to 2003/04 respectively) in comparison to other European football leagues according to Deloitte (2005).

In addition, the English Premier League qualifies for this research in view of the fact that the English clubs are the European benchmark in terms of television income, merchandising revenues and matchday income, as will be shown in the course of this thesis. The German Bundesliga qualifies in view of the fact that German clubs generate the largest income from sponsorship.

1.4 The structure of this thesis

This section introduces the structure of the thesis chapter by chapter. The structure itself reflects the nature of this thesis, as the three aspects of professional football sponsorship under scrutiny run as the main thread through the whole thesis.

Chapter 2 examines professional football sponsorship from the football clubs’ point of view by looking at the nature of sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs. The first section introduces the key income streams for professional football clubs in general and investigates television income, matchday income and merchandising revenues in the context of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. The second section focuses on sponsorship as the fourth main income stream of professional football clubs. First, a general overview of the importance of sponsorship as well as an analysis of

¹⁶ i.e. the English Premier League, the French Ligue 1, the German Bundesliga, the Italian Serie A, and the Spanish Primera Liga

football clubs' sponsor pools is presented. The chapter then moves on to an in-depth analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga, including subsections on shirt sponsors, kit suppliers, commercial partners and smaller sponsors. The information provided is mainly based on a comprehensive content analysis of more than 500 clubs' and sponsors' websites as well as 106 televised football games. The section on sponsorship in English and German football concludes with a comparison between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. The next section then compares sponsorship with the other key income streams of professional football clubs and also explains how all four revenue sources interrelate. Chapter 2 consequently concludes with implications for the primary research phase.

Chapter 3 examines professional football sponsorship from the football sponsors' point of view by dealing with (professional football) sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part investigates the nature of sponsorship in general terms starting with a review and critical appreciation of previous definitions of sponsorship on the one hand and sports sponsorship on the other hand. The various types of sponsorship and the role of sponsorship within the marketing mix will also be explained. The second part of Chapter 3 then explicitly focuses on professional football sponsorship. First, a new definition of professional football sponsorship will be presented, followed by an examination of the question why companies invest in football sponsorship. The final sections of this second part then deal with objectives of football sponsors and advantages as well as disadvantages of professional football sponsorship. Finally, implications for the primary research phase are presented.

Chapter 4 brings both sides of the sponsorship dyad together by examining professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship. The chapter starts with a comparison of the transactional and the relational paradigm before describing sponsorship

as a transaction on the one hand and a relational construct on the other hand. The second section then describes the rise of relationship marketing, the nature of business-to-business relationships and finally deals with the concept of relationship quality in general terms and in the context of sponsorship relationships. The third section of Chapter 4 focuses on the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors by dealing with the 'perfect' relationship between sponsors and sponsees and describing the 'real' picture in English and German professional football sponsorship. Chapter 4 concludes with implications for the primary research phase as well.

Chapter 5 kicks off the primary research phase by introducing the methodology on which the primary research is based. The chapter starts with the rationale for choosing the appropriate research strategy for this study, i.e. a combination of qualitative research and quantitative research methods. Then the data collection methods (i.e. qualitative in depth-interviews with football clubs' and sponsors' representatives as well as sponsorship experts in England and Germany, content analyses of clubs' and sponsors' websites and televised football games as well as a quantitative survey addressing 460 sponsors and 38 clubs of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga) are described in greater detail. Finally, special emphasis is given to the issue of anonymity and confidentiality in the third section.

Chapter 6 presents the results of the qualitative research phase. The nature of qualitative in-depth interviews is to generate an understanding of the research subject in question. Therefore, crucial statement of clubs' and sponsors' representatives as well as sponsorship experts have been compared and contrasted. The first section deals with comments and statements made about the business of football on the one hand and about sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs on the other hand. The second section analyses the qualitative data relating to professional football sponsorship as a marketing

tool. The third section then presents statements referring to the third perspective of sponsorship under scrutiny, namely the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. The fourth section highlights Anglo-German differences. Chapter 6 concludes with a summary of the qualitative findings.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings of the qualitative research phase and consequently generates research propositions for the quantitative research phase. Therefore, the qualitative data has been linked with the findings of the first four chapters in order to build principal research propositions (PRPs) and hypotheses. Furthermore, the six dimensions determining relationship quality (as identified through the literature review and the qualitative interviews) will be introduced. The last section of Chapter 7 describes the design of the questionnaire with special emphasis on operationalising the variables to be measured and selecting/developing the measurement scales relating to the concept of relationship quality in the professional football sponsorship dyad.

Chapter 8 presents the results of the quantitative survey according to the three perspectives of sponsorship under scrutiny and the respective PRPs and/or hypotheses. Chapter 8 also provides a description of statistical techniques used for analysis. Depending on the results, PRPs and hypotheses are accepted or rejected. The final section then summarises the quantitative results.

Chapter 9 discusses the results of the quantitative survey and completes triangulation by linking, comparing and contrasting the quantitative findings with qualitative findings and findings generated from the literature review.

Chapter 10 finally introduces theoretical implications and describes how this study contributes to existing knowledge on the one hand, and provides implications for

professional football clubs, for sponsors as well as for further research on the other hand. Limitations of this research are also addressed. Chapter 10 concludes with a brief summary.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the structure of this thesis.

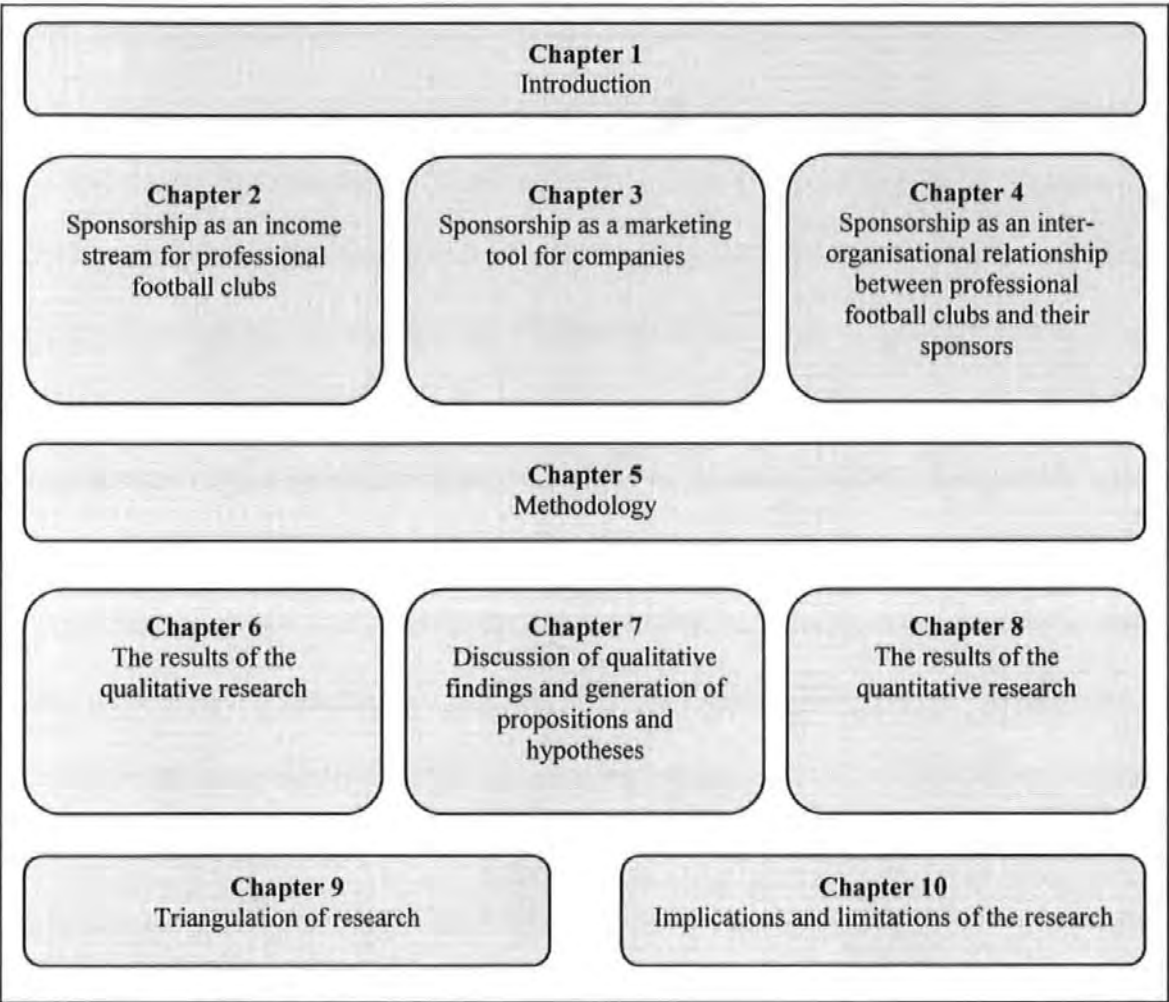


Figure 1.3: overview of the thesis

2 SPONSORSHIP AS AN INCOME STREAM FOR PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL CLUBS

This chapter examines sponsorship as an important income stream for professional football clubs. The first section, however, briefly introduces the key income streams of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs. The second part then focuses on sponsorship and the importance of sponsorship for professional football clubs in both countries' top leagues. The chapter finally discusses the interrelation between sponsorship and the other main income sources of professional football clubs.

2.1 The key income streams of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs

Chapter 1 identified ticketing, merchandising, broadcasting rights, player transfers and sponsorship as the key markets of the football business. The revenues generated from these markets are also the most important income streams for professional football clubs. This section briefly describes television income, match day income as well as revenues from merchandising with regard to the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in the 2003/04 season.

The English Premier League has the highest *television income* in Europe (€884m). The German Bundesliga, on the contrary, generates considerably fewer broadcasting revenues with €291m in 2003/04 (Deloitte, 2005).¹ This gap can be explained mainly as follows. First, the German pay-TV-channel Premiere pays 'only' €180 million for its package, because it has significantly fewer subscribers (around 3 million) than its English counterpart BSkyB (around 8 million at the end of 2005). BSkyB also gets more

¹ However, it has to be noted that the DFL secured a new television deal in late December 2005, valid from 2006/07 to 2009/10 and worth €1.26bn. Premiere surprisingly lost their bid. Instead, a new German Pay-TV consortium (called Arena) bought the rights to show live games of the Bundesliga. ARD, ZDF and DSF renewed their television agreement. This, in turn, means that the 36 professional football clubs will receive a total of €420m a season. Consequently, the DFL is rethinking the allocation formula for the next three years.

exclusivity for its money, since highlights of the Premier League games are not broadcast before 22:30 in English free-to-air TV. In Germany, however, second use of games is shown earlier at 18:10. Second, the English Premier League attracts more attention in foreign countries. A media analysis revealed that the Premier League reaches a range of 106.3 million people in the main European markets² in comparison to the Bundesliga with a range of only 10.3 million people. This leads to more revenues from the sales of international broadcasting rights, with the English Premier League generating €90m in comparison to Germany with only €15m (Klotz, 2004).

The English Premier League also acts as a benchmark in terms of *match day income*. The German Bundesliga is catching up in terms of attendances, but generating revenues from match days is a sore point in Germany.³ For example, an average Bundesliga attendance of 77,235 means that Borussia Dortmund has bigger crowds than Manchester United (67,750), but they are far less lucrative in terms of match day revenues. Deloitte (2005) revealed that the average income per attendee at an English premier League match (€44) is more than twice that at a Bundesliga match (€19). One reason is the price charged to customers. Tickets for top league football in England are more expensive than in Germany owing to the clubs' better utilisation of their stadium capacity.⁴ In addition, most English Premier League clubs own their stadiums and can therefore make calculated investment decisions. This is best illustrated in the fact that more than €1.5 billion have been spent by clubs to upgrade facilities and increase capacities since the English Premier League was formed in 1992. Apart from their huge match day incomes, some English clubs have also managed to generate significant revenues from non-match day usage of their grounds with stadium tours, conference and meetings, office space, health and fitness areas or restaurants and museums (Dix and Roberts, 2004). In contrast to England, stadium

² Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK.

³ In 2003/04, English Premier League clubs generated €588m from matchday revenues (30% of total turnover) in comparison to €207m (20%) of German Bundesliga clubs (Deloitte, 2005).

⁴ Stadium utilisation in England is around 92% compared to 70% in Germany according to Weilguny (2004a)

ownership in Germany is mainly controlled by the public sector, and therefore commercial investments had been more difficult to implement in the past. However, things have changed in the face of the World Cup 2006, and German Bundesliga clubs can now expect to benefit from pre-World Cup stadia investment (Dix and Roberts, 2004).⁵ Experts believe that the German Bundesliga cannot only learn from the English Premier League in terms of match day income but even overtake their rivals in the long-term (Suciu-Sibiano, 2002; Süßmilch, 2002).

The English Premier League is also clearly ahead of its German counterpart in terms of *merchandising revenues*. Rohlmann (2005b) revealed that the average merchandising income per English Premier League club is €8.1m compared to €4.96m in the German Bundesliga. This difference is mainly due to three reasons. First, English clubs were the first ones to copy the idea of the merchandising concept coming from the United States. They have therefore much more experience than other European clubs. Second, the English Premier League has strong links with Asia and the USA⁶, which serves as an important market, especially for high-profile clubs such as Manchester United, Arsenal or Liverpool. Third, English people have on average a different attitude towards fashion than people from continental Europe. For example, one is more likely to see English football fans wearing replica football shirts on weekdays than Spanish, Italian or German supporters, who wear their football shirts mostly on match days. However, German football clubs are keen to develop this revenue stream further, and some brand names such as Bayern München or Borussia Dortmund are doing quite well.

In summary, the English Premier League acts as the benchmark in terms of television income, match day income and merchandising revenues. However, there is one area where

⁵ Around €1.5 billion have been spent in order to modernize the 12 German World Cup stadiums. The money comes mainly from public authorities (around €650m) and private investors with around €850m. (Weilguny, 2004b)

⁶ Through official competitions such as the FA Premier League Asia Cup or individual competition such as the US Tour of Manchester United in summer 2003.

the German Bundesliga generates more revenues than any other football league in the world: sponsorship. The next section therefore deals with sponsorship as one of the main income streams of professional football clubs and provides an in-depth analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga.

2.2 Sponsorship in English and German football

The previous section described television income, matchday and merchandising revenues as important income sources for professional football clubs. This section, however, completes the list of key income streams and main markets of the football business by dealing with sponsorship. First, the importance of sponsorship in general and the structure of sponsorship pools of professional football clubs will be explained. The section then moves on to a detailed analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. The details given are mostly based on an extensive content analysis of more than 500 clubs' and sponsors' websites as well as the recordings of 106 televised English Premier League and German Bundesliga games⁷.

2.2.1 Sponsorship in general

Sponsorship⁸ is an important income stream for professional football clubs besides gate receipts, merchandising and broadcasting rights. Between fourteen and thirty-one per cent of total turnover of the Italian, Spanish, French, English, and German clubs is generated by sponsorship deals according to Deloitte (2005).⁹

The sponsorship structure of professional football clubs has changed over the years. It was mostly a local company which, in the early years, backed a single football club. The

⁷ A detailed description of the respective content analysis is provided in Chapter 5.

⁸ A comprehensive discussion of various definitions of sponsorship is provided in Chapter 3.

⁹ This goes for professional football clubs in smaller European leagues (i.e. Netherlands, Denmark, Norway) even to a greater extent, since they are more dependent on sponsorship income as a consequence of lower income from other sources such as merchandising or broadcasting rights (Suciu-Sibianu, 2002).

motivation for these sponsorship deals was mainly patronage. Football, however, attracted more and more companies as a consequence of the increasing popularity of the game and clubs soon became marketing tools for companies. This was even more the case when television fell in love with football. But not only have the sums of today's sponsorship deals multiplied several times¹⁰, the sponsorship structure has also changed. The single local benefactor of the early days has been replaced by a whole pool of club sponsors. Cowen (2001, p. 21) summarises the changes as follows:

Back in the 80s and early 90s, football sponsorship remained largely a matter of sticking your name on the team shirt and buying up a few advertising hoardings around the pitch. Now, top Premiership sides can have up to ten vertically integrated sponsors.

A lot of professional football clubs have structured their hotchpotch of sponsors in the form of a pyramid as indicated in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: sponsorship structure of professional football clubs

At the apex of the pyramid stands the main sponsor, whose name or brand logo appears on the shirts in most cases. The total annual value of shirt sponsorships in the six leading European football markets¹¹ in 2005 comes to around €341m with Germany accounting for

¹⁰ The average annual value of shirt sponsorship deals in the German Bundesliga in the 1981/82 season was 510,000 DM (~€260,400) compared to €4.83 million in 2004/05, which means an increase of nearly 1,900% within two decades.

¹¹ England, Germany, Spain, Italy, France and Holland

the largest share¹² (Sport + Markt, 2005). Shirt sponsorship is just one of various possibilities for the main sponsor to use the football club as a medium for his objectives. Perimeter hoardings, announcements before and after the games, PR-activities in and around the stadium as well as business seats and executive boxes are essential parts of sponsorship deals nowadays (Süßmilch, 2002).

In the second place usually comes the kit supplier, who equips the team with shirts, tracksuits, or boots. Besides the value in kind, manufacturers also pay a lot of money to use football clubs for promotion campaigns. In some cases kit suppliers refinance their sponsorship investments with the revenues generated from the sales of replica shirts¹³.

Commercial partners of the football clubs can be found at the following level of the sponsorship pyramid. They pay usually less than the main sponsor and kit supplier, and therefore have fewer communication rights. The sponsorship packages differ from sponsor to sponsor, and the service in return depends mainly on the volume of the deal. Sponsors usually get perimeter hoardings around the pitch as well as some business seats or executive boxes. In addition, they are often named as an official partner on the club's website or other publications.

The regional or local sponsors respectively build the basement of the pyramid. They pay less than the three other levels above, but in total contribute a significant part of sponsorship revenues. They usually place an advertisement in the match programme or buy a perimeter hoarding in the stadium.

¹² 26.9% (€91.9m) of the €341m refers to the German Bundesliga, 18.5% (€63.2m) to the English Premier League (Italy 19.1%, France 14.5%, Spain 11.3% and The Netherlands 9.7%).

¹³ Szymanski and Kuypers (1999) found out that kit supplier Reebok earned around 25 per cent from sales of every Liverpool shirt sold in 1997.

The partitioning of the pyramid can vary from club to club. Some clubs record their kit supplier on the same level as the main sponsor, though other clubs subdivide the 'commercial partners' into 'premium partners', 'exclusive partners' or 'team partners' with clear defined services in return.¹⁴

The fee of the sponsorship deal depends on many different factors, for example the components of the sponsorship package offered by the club (i.e. the service in return), the attractiveness and image of the club (clubs with a high public profile are likely to be more 'expensive' than smaller clubs) or the time on air and extent of media presence of the club (Ernst and Young, 2004). Clubs performing well on the pitch and qualifying for European cup competitions find it easier to sell their sponsorships for more money than other clubs. Sohns (2004c) notes the size of the fan base and the number of clubs' members as another crucial factor determining sponsorship fees, because the more fans/members a club has, the more potential customers it can offer to sponsors. Finally, the individual negotiation skills of the people involved in the negotiations may also determine the price of sponsorship deals.

Another aspect of professional football sponsorship is the area of naming rights. More and more clubs are selling the names of their stadiums to companies and are therefore generating significant additional income. For example, Arsenal receives £50m for a 15-years-naming-rights contract with the Middle East airline Emirates (effective from 2006 till 2014). However, some clubs still refuse to sell the name of their ground for traditional reasons. In Germany, a lot of stadiums are owned by the government and therefore clubs have no access to this source of income. Naming rights will therefore not be taken into further consideration.

¹⁴ A practical example can be found in Appendices III and IV, which show the sponsorship pyramids of Manchester United and Bayern München.

The following subsections describe the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga during the 2004/05 season, beginning with a general overview and followed by an in-depth analysis of each of the following four groups:

- **Shirt sponsors:** companies named as ‘the official shirt sponsor’ of the football club in question.
- **Kit supplier:** shirt manufacturers which supply the shirts and kits for the football club in question.
- **Commercial partners:** companies named as ‘official partners’, ‘premium partners’, ‘co-sponsors’ or ‘sponsors’ on the clubs’ websites.
- **Smaller sponsors:** companies which advertise during English Premier League and German Bundesliga games on the ground of the clubs in question and which are not engaged as shirt sponsor, kit supplier or commercial partner at the respective football club. The term ‘smaller sponsors’ might be a little bit misleading as ‘small’ is not related to the size of the sponsor. Indeed, a lot of large companies are engaged in professional football sponsorship as smaller sponsors.

It has to be noted that only companies which commit themselves for at least one season have been taken into consideration. This therefore excludes companies that just rent a perimeter board for a couple of games or even just one game because this is rather considered as buying advertising space than sponsorship.

2.2.2 Sponsorship in the English Premier League

Sponsorship revenues become more and more important for English Premier League clubs, though analysts find it very difficult to get exact figures on the amount of sponsorship deals. This is because of the traditional habit of English football clubs to subsume

merchandising, catering and conferencing revenues as well as sponsorship revenues under one category¹⁵ (Deloitte, 2005).

The history of sponsorship in English football officially started in 1979, with Liverpool being the first professional football club in England with a sponsor on its shirts (Hitachi). Nowadays professional football clubs in England are backed by a whole pool of sponsors as mentioned above. For example, for the 2005/06 season, Chelsea Football Club have Samsung as the official club sponsor, Umbro as the official sportswear sponsor, Orange as the official mobile network partner, Budweiser as the official beer, Lucozade as the official sports drink, Sky TV as an official partner, and Tourism Malaysia as the official travel destination of Chelsea Football Club (Chelsea FC 2005).

However, Premiership clubs do not only generate revenues from their individual partners, but also from the title sponsorship of the FA Premier League and its secondary sponsors. The central packages give brands exclusivity in their product category and a presence at all twenty clubs. The partners have the right to use the official Premier League logo and are granted specific designations appropriate to their status or product category. The title-sponsorship-deal with Barclays includes perimeter boards, tickets, match day sponsorship, signed merchandise, programme pages, domestic and international broadcasting branding as well as global exclusivity. Barclays is understood to pay an annual fee of £19m until the 2006/07 season in order to be the title sponsor of 'The Barclays Premiership' (Lafferty, 2004). The secondary sponsors¹⁶ of the FA Premier League pay around £1m a year. Every Premier League club gets an equal share from these sponsorship revenues. This appeals especially to smaller clubs, which are able to generate additional income without great

¹⁵ The item 'sponsorship and other commercial income' accounts for 25% of total turnover of English Premier League clubs in 2003/04 according to Deloitte (2005), though the report fails to unravel the various parts of this post.

¹⁶ BskyB and Glaxo Smith Kline (with their products Lucozade Sport and Ribena) are so-called 'Associate Partners', Budweiser and Nestlé are Website Partners in the 2004/05 season according to the FA Premier League (2004b)

effort as the FAPL itself looks for and after the league sponsors.(FA Premier League, 2004b; Karen Earl Sponsorship, 2004; Bühler, 2005a).

2.2.2.1 The shirt sponsors of English Premier League clubs

Table 2.1 lists the shirt sponsors of the English Premier League teams during the 2004/05 season and provides information about the industry sector of the respective sponsor, as well as the duration and annual value of the sponsorship deal.

club	shirt sponsor	industry sector	expiry date	£m per year ¹⁷
Arsenal ¹⁸	O2	telecommunication	May 2006	5.0
Aston Villa	DWS	financial services	June 2006	2.5
Birmingham City	FlyBe	airline	May 2006	0.75
Blackburn Rovers ¹⁹	HSA	health care insurance	May 2005	1.0
Bolton Wanderers ²⁰	Reebok	sportswear	May 2005	2.0
Charlton Athletic	all:sports	sportswear retailer	May 2006	1.1
Chelsea ²¹	Emirates	airline	May 2005	6.0
Crystal Palace	Churchill	insurance	May 2006	0.30
Everton	Chang beer	alcoholic drinks (beer)	May 2008	1.5
Fulham ²²	dabs.com	IT-internet retailer	July 2005	2.0
Liverpool ²³	Carlsberg	alcoholic drinks (beer)	May 2005	5.0
Manchester City	Thomas Cook	travel company	Feb 2007	1.0
Manchester United ²⁴	Vodafone	telecommunication	May 2008	9.4
Middlesbrough	888.com	betting/gaming	May 2007	1.5
Newcastle United	Northern Rock	financial services	May 2006	4.0
Norwich City	Proton/Lotus	automobiles	May 2006	0.35
Portsmouth ²⁵	Ty	toys	May 2005	0.33
Southampton	Friends Provident	financial services	May 2006	0.5
Tottenham Hotspur	Thomson	travel company	May 2006	2.5
West Brom Albion	T-Mobile	telecommunication	May 2006	1.0

Table 2.1: shirt sponsors of English Premier League clubs in 2004/05

Sources: Footballeconomy (2005), clubs' websites and newspaper articles

The shirt sponsors of the English Premier League clubs represent 9 different industry sectors, the predominant ones are financial services/insurances (5) and telecommunication

¹⁷ It has to be noted that statements regarding annual values of sponsorship deals differ from source to source. For example, Bolton's sponsorship deal with Reebok is valued between £500,000 (Gillis, 2005) and £2m (Footballeconomy, 2005b). Figures might vary because some statements are based on assumptions and because some sources publish just the basic fee whereas other sources publish an all-inclusive fee (basic value + premium). It is therefore rather difficult to display the actual value of sponsorship deals.

¹⁸ Arsenal changes to Emirates from 2007 on (£5.5m p.a.).

¹⁹ Lonsdale, the kit supplier of Blackburn Rovers, took over as shirt sponsor from 2005 on.

²⁰ The shirt sponsorship deal is part of a larger deal including naming rights and kit supply.

²¹ Chelsea changed to Samsung from 2005 on (£11m p.a.).

²² Fulham changed to PIPEX from 2006 on (£1.25m p.a.).

²³ Carlsberg renewed their sponsorship deal after Liverpool's Champions League triumph till the end of the 2006/07 season.

²⁴ In November 2005, Vodafone surprisingly announced the premature termination of their shirt sponsorship deal with Manchester United. Vodafone obviously changed their sponsorship strategy as they also announced to become one of the sponsors of the UEFA Champions League from 2006/07 on.

²⁵ Portsmouth's new shirt sponsor from the 2005/06 season is OKI (£350,000).

(3). Nine out of twenty sponsors are British companies, four sponsors are UK branches of overseas companies and seven sponsors come from other countries²⁶. This also reflects the international appeal of the English Premier League. A good example of the English Premiership's international appeal is the former shirt sponsor of Everton, a Chinese electronic company called Kejian, which did not even have a business outside China. They used Everton only as a promotional tool in view of the fact that Everton's appearances on Chinese television attracted a million fold audience. The new shirt sponsor of Everton, a Thai beer brand with limited UK presence, is pursuing similar objectives.

It is also interesting to note that the shirt sponsorship deals show significant differences in terms of annual value. Manchester United, again, is in a league of its own with its 4-years-deal with Vodafone worth £36 million. Crystal Palace, on the contrary, receives £300,000 a year from their main sponsor. In other words: Manchester United generates more than the thirty fold from its shirt sponsorship deal than Crystal Palace. The gap between the big clubs and smaller clubs is becoming even more evident when one compares the arithmetic average with the individual sponsorship fees. All twenty Premier League clubs generate £47.73m in total from their shirt sponsorship deals, which leads to an arithmetic average of £2,386,500. However, only seven clubs (35%) receive more than that, whereas the other thirteen clubs (65%) fall below that line. In addition, the five clubs (25%) with the most lucrative sponsorship deals (Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United and Newcastle United) generate more than half (53.2%) of all shirt sponsorship income.

That shirt sponsorship is more than just sticking the logo on the shirt is shown by the example of the agreement between Manchester United and Vodafone. Part of the deal is the establishment and development of a business venture. Vodafone is allowed to roll out a wide range of Manchester United content (including news, results, video images, ringtones

²⁶ It has to be mentioned that national dispositions are not always clear. Middlesbrough's sponsor 888.com, for example, operates on the British market but is registered in Gibraltar.

and games) to wireless devices around the world.²⁷ This deal exceeds traditional sponsorship, and can be seen as a role model for a new sponsorship trend, where companies use football clubs not only for promotional objectives but also as a revenue-generating opportunity.

2.2.2.2 The kit suppliers of English Premier League clubs

Eighteen Premier League clubs were equipped by eleven kit suppliers in the 2004/05 season, whereas two clubs used their own manufacturing brands. Four kit suppliers sponsored at least two clubs as indicated in Table 2.2.

kit supplier	number of clubs	clubs
Diadora	3	Birmingham City, Crystal Palace, West Bromwich Albion
reebok	3	Bolton Wanderers, Liverpool, Manchester City
Nike	2	Arsenal, Manchester United
Umbro	2	Chelsea, Everton
adidas	1	Newcastle United
Errea	1	Middlesbrough
Hummel	1	Aston Villa
Joma UK	1	Charlton Athletic
Kappa	1	Tottenham Hotspur
Lonsdale	1	Blackburn Rovers
Puma	1	Fulham
Own brand (Pompey Sport)	1	Portsmouth
Own brand	1	Southampton

Table 2.2: kit suppliers of English Premier League clubs in 2004/05

Source: clubs' websites

The Premiership's kit suppliers are not only UK-based, but come from all over Europe (Denmark, Germany, and Italy) and the United States. Besides the obvious motive to sell as many replica shirts as possible, kit manufacturers might also have other objectives such as growing the brand and benefiting from clubs' image (Runau, 2005).

Outstanding are the Nike-deals with Arsenal and Manchester United in terms of length and value of the contracts. Arsenal is understood to receive £130m²⁸ for its seven-year-Nike-

²⁷ In other words: Vodafone and Manchester United are trying to bring together their 125 million customer base and 53 million supporter base together in order to generate huge revenues from this business venture.

²⁸ Includes a £55m payout by 2006, to help fund the new Ashburton Grove stadium

deal, Manchester United gets £435m for its thirteen-year contract. The latter is more than an usual technical sponsorship deal, since Nike not only bought some communication rights, but also runs United's entire merchandising operation through its subsidiary Manchester United Merchandising Limited (Deloitte, 2004a; Karen Earl Sponsorship, 2004). Here again, a gap between big clubs and smaller clubs may be assumed although figures for deals between kit suppliers and smaller teams are difficult to obtain.

2.2.2.3 The commercial partners of English Premier League clubs

The analysis of all Premier League clubs' websites identified a total of 42 commercial sponsors. This relatively small number can be explained by the fact that only half of all Premiership clubs provide a section on their website dedicated to their sponsors. The other ten Premier League clubs mention no more than their shirt sponsor if anything. Whether this owns to a lack of appreciation or an actual lack of sponsors is not definable. However, subsequent analysis related to the 42 commercial partners which were listed on the ten respective websites.

Arsenal and Aston Villa present the largest number of commercial partners on their website, whereas Tottenham Hotspur listed only a single sponsor (besides their shirt sponsor and kit supplier) as indicated by Table 2.3.

	top clubs	number of commercial partners	top commercial partners	number of sponsored clubs
1	Arsenal	9	Ladbrokes	5
2	Aston Villa	9	Budweiser	4
3	Everton	8	Orange	4
4	Birmingham City	7	Carlsberg-Tetley	3
5	Manchester City	7	Lucozade	3
6	Manchester United	7	T-Mobile	3
7	Chelsea	5	Coca-Cola	2
8	Southampton	5	Lanson	2
9	Liverpool	4	MBNA	2
10	Fulham	3	Prime Time Recruitment	2
11	Tottenham Hotspur	1	Rover/MG	2
12	-	-	Sky Sports	2

Table 2.3: top clubs and top commercial partners in the English Premier League in 2004/05

12 companies are named on more than one club's website as an official partner. Ladbrokes is the top commercial partner, as the betting company associates itself with at least 5 Premiership clubs, followed by Budweiser and Orange with four clubs each. The 42 commercial partners represent 25 different industry sectors with breweries (5) and telecommunication companies (4) as the most frequent ones.

It is difficult to get hold of exact figures about the sponsorship values regarding commercial partners, especially of those associated with smaller clubs. It is doubtful whether all commercial partners pay around £1m a year, as those of Manchester United do. However, the total value of income generated from commercial partners should not be underestimated. Therefore, the fact that most studies on football sponsorship take only shirt sponsors into consideration represents a shortcoming of research. This applies even more so for the group of smaller sponsors which will be under scrutiny in the next subsection.

2.2.2.4 The smaller sponsors of English Premier League clubs

The analysis of 52 televised Premier League games during the 2004/05 season revealed that 184 different companies are advertising on perimeter boards during English Premiership games²⁹. 60 of them were already identified as shirt sponsors, kit supplier, commercial partner or overall sponsor of the Premier League. Consequently, 124 smaller sponsors of English Premier League clubs were identified.

The 124 smaller sponsors represent 26 industry sectors. Table 2.4 reflects the top ten industry sectors. Most of those companies (13) are operating in the food and drink business, 12 companies in the automobile industry (with 4 car manufacturers and 5 car dealers), ten companies are in the betting sector and nine smaller sponsors are dealing with clothing and/or shoes.

²⁹ Only visible perimeter boards of the front side opposite the camera and behind the goals were taken into consideration.

rang	industry sector	number of sponsors
1	food and drink	13 (10.5%)
2	automobiles	12 (9.7%)
3	betting	10 (8.1%)
4	clothing & shoes	9 (7.3%)
5	media	8 (6.5%)
6	building	7 (5.6%)
7	electronic	7 (5.6%)
8	retailer	7 (5.6%)
9	services	7 (5.6%)
10	finance and insurance	5 (4.1%)

Table 2.4: top ten industry sectors of smaller sponsors in the English Premier League in 2004/05

All in all, the variety of industry sectors shows the heterogeneity of football sponsors. Although some of the industry types are more male-orientated (e.g. betting and automobiles), there are also some industry types which appeal to male as well as female target groups (i.e. food and drink, clothing & shoes or financial services).

The top ten companies/brands which advertise as smaller sponsors in the Premier League are listed in Table 2.5. Again, the heterogeneity of sponsors is evident.

rang	company	number of clubs
1	betfred.com	12
2	Mansion	11
3	Nivea Men	11
4	bet365.com	10
5	Carlube	10
6	Rainham Steel	10
7	Nisa Today's	9
8	GOLA	8
9	JoeBloggs	7
10	VK Vodka Kick	7

Table 2.5: top ten companies advertising as smaller sponsors in the English Premier League in 2004/05

Appendix V provides an overview of the number of smaller sponsors for each Premier League club. The clubs with the largest number of smaller sponsors were the freshly promoted clubs West Brom Albion (32), Norwich City (25) and Crystal Palace (21). Chelsea (1), Manchester United (1) and Arsenal (6) had the lowest number of smaller sponsors. This is no coincidence but rather the reflection of a strategy. Big clubs receive a lot of money from their shirt sponsors and commercial partners and therefore provide exclusivity. Smaller clubs, however, find it difficult to attract companies which are

prepared to pay huge sums. Therefore they have to attract as many sponsors as possible to generate considerable income. This then goes at the expense of exclusivity. As a consequence, the grounds of some clubs are cluttered with advertising of too many different companies. Appendix V provides an overview of the number of perimeter boards along the pitch of each Premier League club. A negative example of advertising clutter is Tottenham Hotspur. One snapshot during the video analysis of a Tottenham game showed 28 perimeter boards (first and second row as well as upper level) with 25 different companies. This, in turn, not only diminishes the communication effect of the sponsorship but also the image of the club as clubs with too much sponsorship clutter might be perceived as 'cheap brands'.

2.2.3 Sponsorship in the German Bundesliga

It was in 1973 when commercial sponsorship made its arrival into the Bundesliga³⁰. Two years later, five out of eighteen Bundesliga teams had a shirt sponsor, and two years after that shirt sponsorship was generally accepted, with seventeen Bundesliga teams wearing the name/logo of a sponsor on their shirts. Not only has the number of sponsors increased but also the annual value of sponsorship deals. In 1993 clubs of the German Bundesliga generated around €18m from their shirt sponsorship deals. Ten years later, the value of annual shirt sponsorship deals comes to €94m, an increase of more than the fivefold (Pilot Group, 2005). Nowadays, revenues generated from sponsorship deals account for thirty-one per cent of total Bundesliga revenue, which is easily the highest proportion in Europe (Deloitte, 2005). Süßmilch (2002) confirms these figures and adds that the Bundesliga is well positioned in the area of sponsorship compared to its European competitors. Deloitte and Touche (2003, p. 12) explain the dominating position of Bundesliga clubs in the area

³⁰ The then sponsorship deal between Eintracht Braunschweig and the liquor company Jägermeister was worth 100,000 DM (approx. €50,000). The Jägermeister-owner Günther Mast admitted later that he didn't fancy football at all and used football purely for publicity reasons (Rudolph, 2002).

of sponsorship with the fact that ‘Germany is the most lucrative sponsorship market in Europe, with a population of over 80 million.’

The following subsections investigate the Bundesliga’s sponsorship situation regarding shirt sponsors, kit suppliers, commercial partners and smaller sponsors in the 2004/05 season.

2.2.3.1 The shirt sponsors of German Bundesliga clubs

Table 2.6 provides an overview of the Bundesliga clubs’ shirt sponsors during the 2004/05 season.

club	shirt sponsor	industry sector	expiry date	annual value in €m
Hertha BSC Berlin	Arcor	telecommunication	2006	6.0
Arminia Bielefeld	Krombacher	alcoholic drinks (beer)	2007	2.2
VfL Bochum	DWS Investment	financial services	2006	2.5
Werder Bremen	KiK	clothing retailer	2006	5.0
Borussia Dortmund	E.ON	energy supplier	2006	12.0
SC Freiburg	Suzuki Automobile	automobiles	2007	2.5
Hamburger SV	ADIG Investment	financial services	2007	4.2
Hannover 96	TUI	travel company	2007	2.8
1. FC Kaiserslautern	Deutsche Vermögensberatung	financial services	2007	3.2
Bayer 04 Leverkusen	RWE	energy supplier	2007	8.5
FSV Mainz 05	DBV Winterthur	insurance	2007	2.8
Borussia Mönchengladbach ³¹	Kyocera	alcoholic drinks (beer)	2007	4.5
1. FC Bayern München	Deutsche Telekom	telecommunication	2008	17.0
1. FC Nürnberg	Mister + Lady Jeans	clothing	2006	2.3
1. FC Hansa Rostock	Vita Cola	soft drinks	2005	2.8
1. FC Schalke 04	Victoria Versicherungen	insurance	2007	6.0
VfB Stuttgart ³²	debitel	telecommunication	2006	3.5
VfL Wolfsburg	Volkswagen AG	automobiles	undated	5.0

Table 2.6: shirt sponsors of German Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05

Sources: SPONSORS (2005), Transfermarkt (2005), clubs’ websites and newspaper articles

The shirt sponsors of the 18 Bundesliga clubs represent eight industry sectors, with financial services/insurances (5) and telecommunication (3) being the predominant ones. Except Freiburg’s Suzuki as a Japanese based company, all shirt sponsors are German companies although they differ in their international orientation and activity. A regional

³¹ Kyocera took over from former shirt sponsor Jever (brewery) in the middle of the season. Jever, however, remained as a commercial partner of Mönchengladbach.

³² Stuttgart changed to EnBW (energy) from 2005 on (€4.5m). Debitel, however, remained as a commercial partner.

closeness can be assumed when the headquarters of the company and those of the football clubs are close. This is the case with seven sponsors. The partnership between Wolfsburg and the Volkswagen AG is outstanding given the fact that the car manufacturer has supported the local Bundesliga team since 1952.

Considering the length of the sponsorship deals, it is noteworthy that the majority of contracts run until 2007, the season following the World Cup tournament in Germany. The sponsorship deal between Bayern München and Deutsche Telekom can be considered to be long-term-orientated, and is only topped by the undated Volkswagen-Wolfsburg-agreement. However, there is a trend towards long-term contracts as Berlin's commercial manager Dieter Hoeneß (cited in Sport1.de, 2004) points out:

The main sponsor plays an important role in times of reduced television money. Having long-term agreements gives you certainty.

The annual value of the various sponsorship deals varies considerably between the Bundesliga clubs. Bayern München can generate up to €20m a season³³ compared to clubs like Bielefeld or Nürnberg, which earn significantly less. Though the average annual value of Bundesliga shirt sponsorship contracts is €5.15 million in 2004/05, only five clubs lie above the average level but account for 53.3% of the Bundesliga's total shirt sponsorship income. Süßmilch (2002) explains this gap in sponsorship income with the fact that brand names such as Borussia Dortmund or Bayern München are able to negotiate with several companies about a shirt sponsorship, whereas smaller clubs find it more difficult to attract companies who are able and willing to pay millions of Euros for a sponsorship deal.

2.2.3.2 The kit suppliers of German Bundesliga clubs

Seven different kit suppliers equipped the eighteen Bundesliga teams during the 2004/05 season. Six of them were sponsoring at least two clubs as indicated in Table 2.7.

³³ Based on best-case performance (i.e. winning the German Championship, the German Cup competition and the UEFA Champions League)

kit supplier	number of clubs	clubs
Nike	5	Berlin, Bochum, Dortmund, Hamburg, Wolfsburg
adidas	4	Leverkusen, München, Nürnberg, Schalke
JAKO	2	Rostock, Freiburg
Kappa	2	Bremen, Kaiserslautern
Uhlsport	2	Bielefeld, Hannover
Lotto	2	Mainz, Mönchengladbach
Puma	1	Stuttgart

Table 2.7: kit suppliers of German Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05

Source: clubs' websites

Four kit suppliers are German companies, two are Italian brands, and one kit manufacturer comes from the United States. It is interesting to note that Nike is trying to defeat its German counterpart adidas on its own territory. Adidas dominated football sponsorship for ages, but now it seems that Nike is catching up with regard to the World Cup 2006 in Germany.

However, large kit manufacturers are changing their strategy from the principle of indiscriminate all-round sponsoring to a more selective approach. This is evident in the case of adidas, which used to supply nearly every Bundesliga team a couple of years ago, but is now reducing the number of clubs step-by-step. In order to supply only the big and most attractive clubs, large kit manufactures are prepared to pay huge sums and/or invest into football clubs strategically³⁴. However, smaller clubs are finding it increasingly difficult to sign lucrative supply deals (Rohlmann, 2005a). This, in turn, means that smaller kit manufacturers (e.g. JAKO, Uhlsport) now also have the opportunity to associate themselves with Bundesliga clubs.

2.2.3.3 The commercial partners of German Bundesliga clubs

The website analysis revealed a total of 236 companies named as 'commercial partners', 'official sponsors', 'co-sponsors' or 'premium partners' on the Bundesliga clubs' website during the 2004/05 season. It is interesting to note that all German Bundesliga clubs

³⁴ For example, adidas invested €75m in a 10%-stake of their partner Bayern München which gives them more rights to say.

provide a separate section on their website where the sponsors and commercial partners are listed at least. Some clubs often link the name of the sponsors with their respective website address or even introduce their commercial partners with a little text.

The sponsor pools of German Bundesliga clubs differ in quantity as well as quality of sponsors. Schalke has the largest pool of sponsors with 48 commercial partners³⁵ as indicated by Table 2.8. On the other hand, clubs such as Kaiserslautern or Dortmund have considerably fewer sponsors. A smaller sponsorship pool might be because either clubs *can* not or *do* not want to attract more companies. Some clubs show a clear tendency towards fewer but more exclusive partners. A brand name like Bayern München attracts national and international brands such as Siemens Mobile, Audi or Sony. They provide exclusivity in exchange for higher sponsorship revenues. Smaller clubs, who have more difficulties to attract high-profile sponsors, try to compensate this disadvantage by a larger amount of companies in their sponsor pools.

clubs	number of commercial partners
Schalke	48
Freiburg	24
Hannover	22
Bremen	21
Mönchengladbach	19
Stuttgart	17
Leverkusen	16
München	16
Hamburg	15
Mainz	15
Bochum	12
Nürnberg	12
Berlin	10
Rostock	10
Bielefeld	8
Wolfsburg	8
Kaiserslautern	6
Dortmund	5

Table 2.8: number of commercial partners per Bundesliga club in 2004/05

Source: content analysis clubs' websites

³⁵ It can be doubted that Schalke has so many commercial partners despite the statement on its website as some of the companies stated in the section 'sponsors and partners' are companies which rent an executive box or some business seats only and therefore are not considered as commercial sponsors. However, it is difficult to tell how many of those 48 'partners and sponsors' are commercial partners in the true sense, and therefore they remain for further analysis.

The commercial partners of German Bundesliga clubs are heterogeneous in terms of industry sectors they represent. Most of them belong to the food and beverages industry (17.8%), financial services and insurances (10.6%), as well as trade (9.8%) as indicated by Table 2.9. Interestingly, every Bundesliga club has at least one brewery as a commercial partner.

rang	industry sector	number of sponsors
1	food and drink	40
2	financial services/insurance	30
3	services	23
4	trade	21
5	energy	17
6	media	15
7	building	13
8	automobile	12
9	transport	9
10	electronics	7
11	IT	7
12	pharmacy	5
13	telecommunication	5
14	clothing & shoes	4
15	betting	3
16	entertainment	2
17	any other	23

Table 2.9: industry sectors represented by the 236 commercial partners of German Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05

Source: content analysis, sponsors' websites

Another interesting point is the fact that twenty-four companies sponsor at least two Bundesliga clubs. The presence of Coca-Cola is outstanding, with fourteen sponsorships in the Bundesliga (Table 2.10).

rang	company/brand	industry sector	number of clubs
1	Coca-Cola	soft drinks	16
2	Oddset	betting	7
3	Mercedes-Benz	automobiles	5
4	Langnese	food	4
5	LTU	tourism	4
6	McDonald's	restaurants	3
7	Audi	automobiles	2
8	BILD	media (newspaper)	2
9	Böklunder	food	2
10	Ernst&Young	consultancy	2
11	Gelsenwasser	energy	2
12	Hasseröder/Dinkelacker	brewery	2
13	Karlsberg	brewery	2
14	Mercure	hotels	2
15	RPR Eins	media (radio)	2
16	RWE Umwelt	services	2
17	Signal Iduna	insurance	2
18	Spoerle Electronic	electronics	2

19	SWR1	media (radio)	2
20	T-COM	telecommunication	2
21	Würth	retailer	2

Table 2.10: commercial partners sponsoring more than one Bundesliga club in 2004/05

Source: content analysis, clubs' and sponsors' websites

While nearly all shirt sponsors were German companies, the picture regarding the origin of the commercial partners is a different one. Although the vast majority (209) are domestic companies, commercial partners also come from nine different countries, most of them from the United States or Japan.

2.2.3.4 The smaller sponsors of German Bundesliga clubs

All in all, 181 companies advertising on perimeter boards during Bundesliga games were identified by the analysis of 54 televised Bundesliga games during the 2004/05 season. However, as 120 companies were already identified as shirt sponsors, kit suppliers or commercial partners, 61 companies were consequently identified as smaller sponsors of Bundesliga clubs.

Table 2.11 indicates the number of companies advertising on perimeter boards and the number of smaller sponsors for each Bundesliga club. The differences in both columns result from the fact that not only smaller sponsors but also shirts sponsors, kit suppliers or commercial partners use perimeter advertisements around the pitch to transfer their message. For example, all perimeter boards at Bayern München are used by members of Bayern's sponsor pool, in contrast to Freiburg, where more than half of the perimeter boards are used by companies which do not belong to any of the groups mentioned above.

rang	club	number of companies advertising on perimeter boards	number of smaller sponsors
1	Freiburg	19	11
2	Stuttgart	22	10
3	Wolfsburg	16	9
4	Bremen	13	9
5	Mainz	20	8
6	Berlin	18	8
7	Bielefeld	17	8
8	Dortmund	14	7
9	Rostock	14	7
10	Mönchengladbach	12	7
11	Bochum	11	6
12	Nürnberg	16	5
13	Hamburg	16	4
14	Kaiserslautern	11	4
15	Schalke	12	3
16	Hannover	9	2
17	Leverkusen	6	1
18	München	11	0

Table 2.11: number of companies advertising on perimeter boards and number of smaller sponsors for each Bundesliga club in 2004/05

Source: content analysis, 54 televised Bundesliga games 2004/05 season, Bundesliga clubs' and companies' websites

The 61 smaller sponsors represent twenty different industry sectors, proving the heterogeneity of Bundesliga sponsors once again. The top five industry sectors are indicated by Table 2.12. Here, as in the case of commercial partners, food and drink and financial services/insurance are well represented.

rang	industry sector	number of sponsors
1	food and drink	10
2	building	7
3	industrial goods	7
4	financial services/insurance	6
5	services	5

Table 2.12: top five industry sectors represented by smaller sponsors of German Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05

Source: content analysis, sponsors' websites

Five of the 61 smaller sponsors identified advertise at more than one Bundesliga ground as indicated by Table 2.13.

rang	companies advertising at more than one Bundesliga clubs	industry sector	number of clubs
1	Bauhaus	DIY superstore	11
2	Kabel Deutschland	media (television)	3
3	DKB	financial services	2
4	Mobil Akut	pharmacy	2
5	Rothaus	brewery	2

Table 2.13: companies advertising at more than one Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05

Source: content analysis, 54 televised Bundesliga games 2004/05 season, Bundesliga clubs' and companies' websites

2.2.4 Analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga

This subsection explains the main differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship.

First and foremost, clubs of the German Bundesliga generate considerably more income from sponsorship than the English Premiership clubs, although figures are difficult to compare owing to the fact that English clubs publish sponsorship income in combination with other commercial income (Deloitte, 2005). However, differences become evident when one compares the value of shirt sponsorship deals in both leagues. The twenty English Premier League clubs generated a total of €63.2m from shirt sponsorship deals in 2005, whereas the eighteen clubs of the German Bundesliga generated €91.9m (Sport + Markt, 2005). The different levels of shirt sponsorship income are also supported by the fact that nine English Premier League clubs generate less money from their shirt sponsorship deals than the club with the lowest shirt sponsorship deal in the German Bundesliga (Arminia Bielefeld). However, a similarity can also be noted as a clear income gap exists between big clubs and smaller clubs within both leagues. The big football brands such as Manchester United, Arsenal or Chelsea in England and Bayern München or Borussia Dortmund in Germany attract large companies and consequently generate significantly more income from shirt sponsorship deals than smaller clubs. Another difference in terms of shirt sponsorships becomes evident when it comes to the international appeal of both leagues. The English Premier League attracts far more foreign shirt sponsors than its German counterpart as a consequence of its international orientation and its popularity in key markets like China, Japan or the USA.

Differences in terms of sponsorship are evident in the number of sponsors as well. A total of 315 sponsors (including shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors) were

identified for the German Bundesliga in comparison to only 186 for the English Premier League for the 2004/05 season. The main difference occurs in numbers of commercial partners and smaller sponsors as indicated by Figures 2.2 and 2.3, showing the number of sponsors for each club.

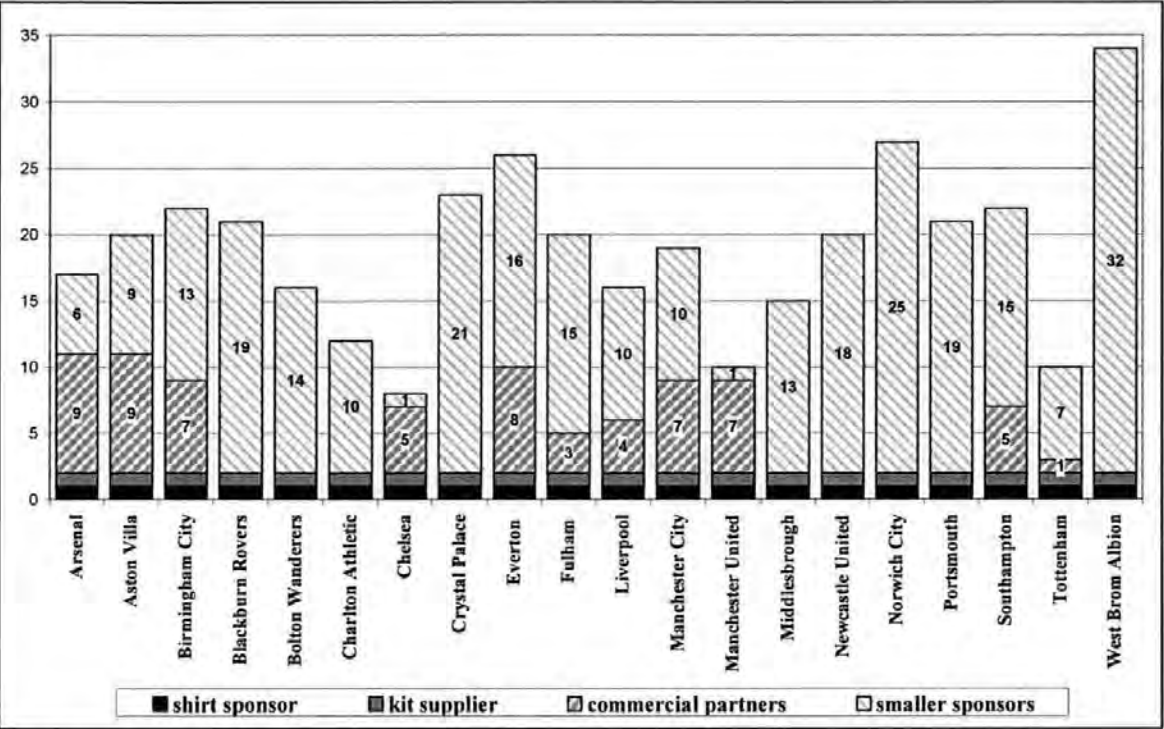


Figure 2.2: compilation of sponsor pools of English Premier League clubs in 2004/05
Source: content analysis clubs' websites and televised games

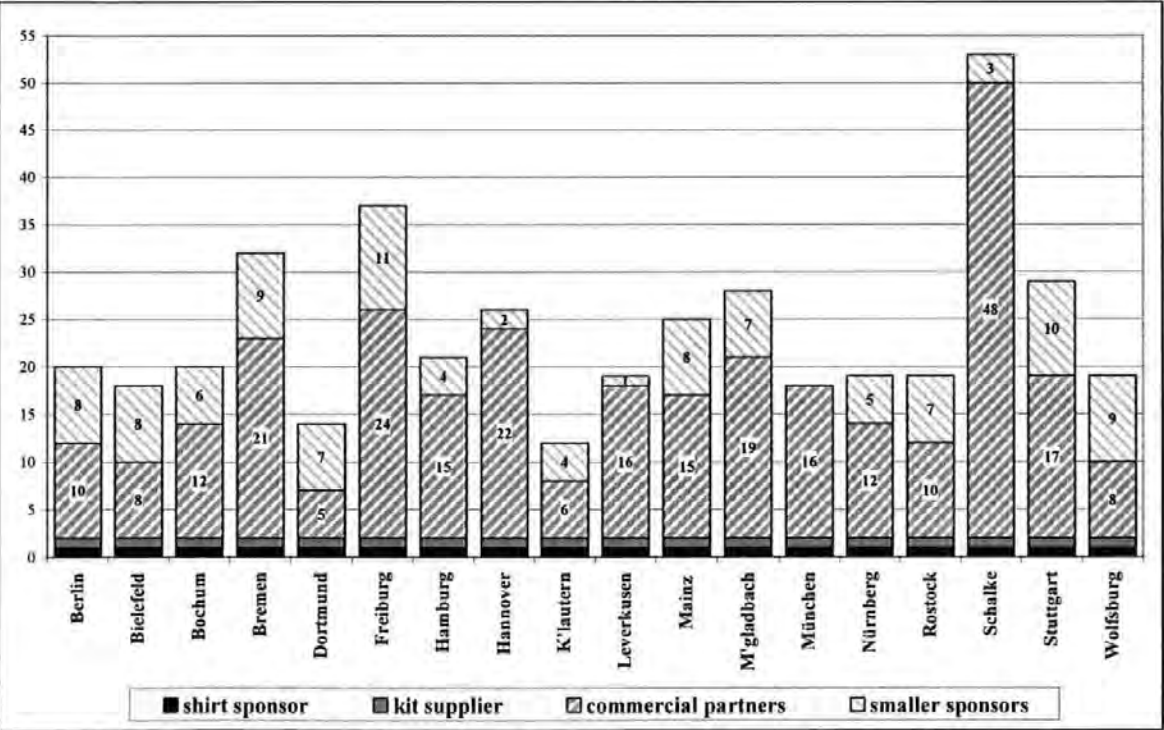


Figure 2.3: compilation of sponsor pools of German Bundesliga clubs in 2004/05
Source: content analysis clubs' websites and televised games

The website analysis revealed considerably more companies named as 'commercial partners', 'official sponsors', 'co-sponsors' or 'premium partners' on the Bundesliga clubs' website during the 2004/05 season than on the English Premiership clubs' website (236 vs. 42). Mainly two reasons account for this fact. First, all Bundesliga clubs had a separate section on their website presenting their sponsors in comparison to only half of all English Premiership clubs. This, in turn, shows a different degree of appreciation for the sponsor. Second, and even more important, German Bundesliga clubs simply attract more commercial partners than English Premier League clubs. The reasons for that are manifold. For example, Germany itself is a big market, located in the middle of Europe and hosting a lot of multinational companies. In addition, one could assume that German Bundesliga clubs serve their sponsors better than English clubs do. However, an implication for the primary research phase was that further investigation of the reasons for the dominant position of the German Bundesliga clubs in terms of sponsorship became necessary.

Differences in the number of commercial partners have an impact on the number of smaller sponsors. Although nearly the same amount of companies advertising on perimeter boards in both leagues (184 for the English Premier League and 181 for the German Bundesliga) were identified through the analysis of a total of 106 televised games, a difference in number of smaller sponsors is evident. A total of 124 companies which advertise on perimeter boards in the English Premiership and which are not shirt sponsors, kit suppliers or commercial partners of the respective clubs, were identified in comparison to only 61 smaller sponsors in Germany. This could lead one to assume that German clubs have a wider portfolio of sponsors than English clubs do. A major problem with regard to companies advertising on perimeter boards is reflected in Appendix V as well. Generally speaking, the English Premier League has simply too much advertising clutter. German Bundesliga clubs show – on average – a more sophisticated approach to perimeter boards. The problem in England is not only that too many sponsors advertise around the pitch, but

also that perimeter boards are too small and often not recognisable. The reason for that might be the stadium design on the one hand as stands are really near to the pitch in England, or might also owe to a lack of skills and appreciation. In Germany, on the other hand, advertising clutter and poor visibility has been reduced over the last years with the introduction of more advanced techniques and a wider range of perimeter boards (i.e. XXL-boards, round boards, cam carpets³⁶). However, clubs such as Chelsea or Manchester United, in England, now use more sophisticated perimeter boards (i.e. rotating boards, video boards), and therefore make their sponsors more visible.

Similarities and differences occur with regard to the industry sectors represented by the sponsors of both leagues. The heterogeneity of sponsors is evident in both leagues as they represent a wide range of different industries. Food and drink are the top industry sector in both leagues. It is interesting to note that a lot of breweries associate themselves with English or German clubs. A typical industry sector in the English Premiership seems to be betting and online games, whereas financial services and insurance companies are represented by a lot of German Bundesliga sponsors.

One major difference between both leagues is the matter of league sponsors. The English Premier League generates additional income for its members (i.e. the clubs) through its million-pound-sponsorship-deals. However, implementation of a title sponsor (or other major league sponsors) is a controversial issue in Germany right now. The problem is not only to find an appropriate company which is able and willing to invest a lot of money, but also to find a consensus among the clubs. They, in turn, want to protect the interests of their sponsors, and therefore it seems unlikely that the German Bundesliga is going to accept an overall sponsor in the near future.

³⁶ Examples of XXL-boards, round boards and cam carpets can be found in Appendix VI

2.3 Sponsorship in comparison with other income streams

This section highlights the main findings of the previous sections by comparing sponsorship as an income stream with the other main income sources of professional football clubs.

Table 2.14 summarises the current situation, the opportunities and threats as well as the future prospects of each income stream.³⁷

	Television	Matchday	Merchandising	Sponsorship
current situation	Television income in the PL is considerable higher than in the BL as there are more Pay-TV-subscribers than in Germany and more exclusivity for Pay-TV.	Although the BL attracts larger audiences than the PL, the PL generates higher matchday income because ticket prices are considerably higher and people are prepared to spend more on matchdays.	PL clubs generate more revenues from merchandising than BL clubs owing to different consumer behaviour and stronger links to foreign markets.	The BL is the absolute benchmark in terms of sponsorship generating the highest income from sponsorship, whereas sponsorship is only the third important income stream for English PL clubs.
future opportunities	Broadcasters (especially Pay-TV) need football in order to attract audiences.	Stadiums are becoming bigger and better in both countries. Therefore larger capacity and higher revenues from executive boxes and business seats.	Foreign markets could be a real opportunity for high-profile clubs.	Football is still the number one sports in England and Germany and therefore attracts sponsors on all levels.
future threats	Broadcasters find it difficult to refinance their investments (either through subscribers or advertising). It is also unclear whether the EU Commission allows collective selling or forces the leagues to sell TV rights on an individual base.	There are limitations in terms of capacity and ticket prices. The PL might face decreasing attendance because of high ticket prices. The BL might face a post-World-cup-trauma.	Merchandising is based on fashion and every fashion has its end. Merchandising is a low-income stream and seldom really profitable. Smaller clubs will find it difficult to operate merchandise profitable.	As a consequence of the economic downturn, few companies are able to spend millions of Euros. Only high-profile clubs are able to attract big sponsors. Companies might scrutinise their investments.
future prospects	Television income will still remain an important income source although revenues might be lower than in the past.	Matchday income will still remain an important income source as long as people are prepared to pay for watching live games.	Merchandising will be an important income source only for few clubs and remain a low-margin income stream for the majority.	The importance of sponsorship income will increase for those clubs which provide a commercial relevant service in return for sponsors.

Table 2.14: current situation, opportunities/threats and future prospects for the four key income streams of professional football clubs.

³⁷ The reader's attention is drawn to Bühler (2006b) for a detailed discussion of all four income streams relating to the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga.

So far, the four main income streams have been examined individually within this chapter.

However, all of them are interrelated one way or the other, as Figure 2.4 illustrates.

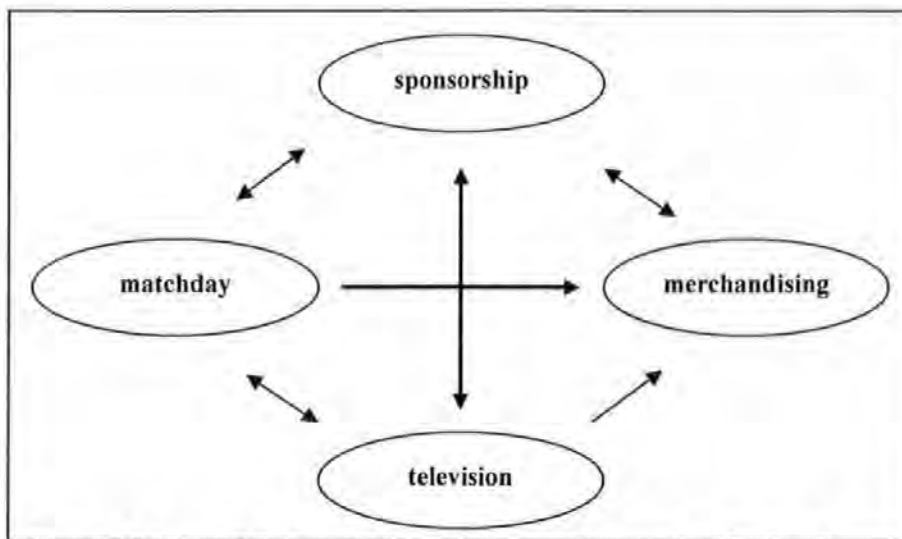


Figure 2.4: interrelatedness of the main income streams of professional football clubs

Consequently, the following ten correlations can be examined:

- Impact of television on matchday: as outlined earlier, the number of televised games can influence the number of live attendances. People might decide to stay at home to watch a game on television rather attending a live game. Often smaller clubs suffer from too many televised football games.
- Impact of matchday on television: The attractiveness of a televised game depends partially on the atmosphere in the stadium and therefore on high attendances. In future, the quality of support and the number of spectators might be an even more important criterion for broadcasters to select televised games.
- Impact of television on merchandising: football clubs can grow their brand by televised football games and therefore indirectly motivate television audiences to buy merchandising.
- Impact of television on sponsorship: The number of televised games and the range of audiences can be important criteria for companies to sponsor football clubs. Clubs which are shown on television on a frequent basis might find it easier to attract sponsors than clubs which are seldom on television.

- Impact of sponsorship on television: Sponsors are interested in wide audiences and therefore prefer free-on-air-channels to Pay-TV-channels. Because sponsorship revenues are likely to decrease when football is only shown on Pay-TV, leagues and clubs have to weigh up the benefits of selling their broadcasting rights to Pay-TV-channels (higher television income) and the opportunity costs involved (fewer sponsorship income)³⁸.
- Impact of sponsorship on matchday: Income from sponsorship not only subsidises ticket prizes indirectly but also help the club to finance their squad and buy good players which, in turn, might increase attendances.
- Impact of matchday on sponsorship: High attendances and a great atmosphere during the game might be a reason for companies to invest in football clubs and could serve as an emotional justification for the sponsors' decision-makers.
- Impact of sponsorship on merchandising: sponsors might develop joint merchandising products or sell them to their staff as well (for example, Deutsche Telekom has an own merchandising shop for its employees where it sells joint merchandising products of Bayern München).
- Impact of merchandising on sponsorship: replica shirts (or other merchandising products with the name/logo of the sponsors on it) are important for shirt sponsors as fans increase the shirt sponsors' awareness by wearing those merchandising products on the street.
- Impact of matchday on merchandising: more spectators in the stadium imply more potential buyers of merchandising.

All these correlations show that the interrelatedness of the main income streams of football clubs are quite complex. Football clubs have to consider carefully the impact of each

³⁸ This was exactly the reason why the DFL decided not to renew their sponsorship deal with Premiere at the end of the 2005/06 season as Premiere insisted on more exclusivity. The DFL therefore decided in favour of sponsors and the majority of football fans who are still able to watch the highlights of the games early on Saturday evening on free-to-air TV.

income stream on the other as the example of sponsorship and television shows. The clear aim for football clubs is therefore to manage all income streams in a proper way. However, sometimes it seems that short-term profit maximisation is more common in professional football than a long-term strategy.

2.4 Implications for primary research

This chapter examined sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs and revealed a clear gap in terms of sponsorship income as well as number of sponsors between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. In addition, the current importance of sponsorship for both leagues has been assessed. However, in view of the fact that only little research has been done on sponsorship as an income stream in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga, the following research question are due for further research:

- How important is sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs?
- How could the importance of sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs develop?
- What are the reasons for the differences in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga?
- How could the gap in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga progress according to the protagonists?

These four questions will be addressed in the primary research phase from Chapter 5 on.

3 SPONSORSHIP AS A MARKETING TOOL FOR COMPANIES

The previous chapter examined sponsorship as an important income stream from the football clubs' point of view, whereas this chapter describes and analyses sponsorship from the sponsor's point of view. The first part describes sponsorship in general terms by discussing and reviewing various definitions of the term, presenting various types of sponsorship and explaining the role of sponsorship within the marketing mix. The second part, however, deals with sponsorship in professional football and therefore presents a new definition of professional football sponsorship. The questions why companies go into football sponsorship and what objectives they are trying to achieve will be addressed as well.

3.1 Sponsorship in general

This section describes (sports) sponsorship from a general point of view, starting with a review of previous definitions, followed by a list of the various types of sponsorships before explaining the role of sponsorship within the marketing mix.

3.1.1 Review and critical appreciation of previous definitions

This subsection reviews the most popular definitions of general sponsorship on the one hand, and sports sponsorship on the other. The distinction between general sponsorship and sports sponsorship makes sense in view of the fact that professional football sponsorship is a specific form of sports sponsorship although the principles of general sponsorship apply, of course.

3.1.1.1 Defining sponsorship

Sponsorship is defined in numerous papers, articles and books by various authors. Walliser (2003) notes that the majority of definitions was produced in the 1980s and early 1990s. It

is indeed difficult to find a ground-breaking definition of sponsorship in more recent papers though the nature of sponsorship has changed significantly. Walliser also states that a generally accepted definition does not exist to date, though some definitions are often quoted. Köster (2003) likewise emphasises the lack of a clear definition since the nature of sponsorship is changing permanently. Therefore a critical review of the most popular and most cited definitions will be presented in chronological order. Since a lot of definitions are more general and do not apply in the context of football, a new definition will be developed in section 3.2.1 in order to do justice to the recent status of professional football sponsorship.

One of the earliest definitions of sponsorship in the English-speaking area comes from the *Sports Council of the UK*, who defined sponsorship in 1971 as follows:

Sponsorship is a gift or payment in return for some facility or privilege which aims to provide publicity for the donor.

This definition already emphasises the principle of reciprocity, though the word gift is somehow misleading, since a gift should normally be given without expecting a service in return. Besides, the identity of the donor remains as vague as the receiver of the payment/gift.

Meenaghan (1983, p. 9) becomes clearer when he states that

sponsorship can be regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organisation for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives.

He clearly highlights the commercial intention behind the sponsorship decision. The service of the commercial organisation is defined as financial or 'in kind' assistance, whereas the service in return remains just as unclear as the provider of it. Meenaghan's definition has nevertheless become one of the most quoted ones in research papers.

The most frequently cited definition in Germany comes from *Bruhn* (1987, p. 16), and remains one of the most sophisticated definitions so far:

Sponsorship is the planning, organisation, implementation and evaluation of all those activities, which are linked with the supply of money, goods or services by companies to support individuals and organisations in the sports, cultural or social area in order to reach commercial marketing and communication objectives.

The advantage of this definition is the differentiation of the sponsorship process on the one hand and the service supplied by the sponsor on the other. Bruhn was also the first author who linked the supportive intention of the sponsor with commercial objectives.

By far the shortest definition comes from *Bearchell* (1988, p. 24) who summarises the whole sponsorship idea in three words: 'Helping others profitably.' Though this definition is of course simplified, it already combines the supportive and commercial intention of the sponsor.

One year later, *Sleight* (1989, p. 4) published a book called *Sponsorship – what it is and how to use it*. It was the first British marketing book which was completely dedicated to sponsorship. It describes sponsorship as a

business relationship between a provider of funds, resources or services and an individual, event or organisation which offers in return some rights and association that may be used for commercial advantage.

The most important term in this definition is 'business relationship', since it has never been used in a definition before. With that sponsorship has been clearly distinguished from patronage¹ or charity donations.

Gillies (1991, p. 1) specifies the service in return as follows:

the sponsoring company pays a fee for a multitude of benefits that only the sponsored organisation can give and, in return, receives financial and perhaps other support enabling it to operate successfully.

¹ Patronage is defined as 'an altruistic activity carried out with no expectation or return other than the satisfaction of knowing that good is being done.' (Meenaghan, 1983, p. 10)

With other words, the sponsee has to offer something unique which makes the sponsor pay.

Sponsorship has been defined in a more sophisticated manner over the years as the example of *Wragg* (1994, p. 11) shows:

Sponsorship can be defined as the support of an activity or an event from which the sponsor expects to derive a tangible benefit. The support must add substantially to the economics of the activity. Essential to any worthwhile sponsorship is an agreement between the organisers and the sponsor. In exchange for accepted levels of financial support, the organisers agree to fulfil certain criteria. Commercial concerns sponsor to meet definite objectives, not simply for the sake of it.

He not only emphasises the commercial nature of sponsorship, but is also one of the first commentators to note that sponsorship should be based on an agreement between the two parties.

Walliser (1995) states some key characteristics of sponsorship in his definition, according to which sponsorship is characterised by the principle of exchange. The sponsee receives money, goods or services and commits himself in a counter move to make the support of the sponsor known with medial help. Walliser's novelty lies in the differentiation of the sponsor, who must not necessarily be a commercial company. Non-profit organisations, local authorities or a single person can also be a sponsor. He also argues that sponsorship is a communication tool which has to be integrated into the promotional mix of the sponsor.

In 1998 *Bruhn* published a list of what he thinks are the five main characteristics of sponsorship. First, sponsorship is based on the principle of service and service in return. Second, sponsoring is not pure purchase of advertising space, since the sponsor always has a supportive intention and in addition identifies himself with the tasks of the sponsee in terms of content. Third, sponsorship fulfils communicative functions, which the sponsee delivers, the media transports or the sponsors create themselves. Fourth, sponsorship should go through a systematic planning and decision making process. And finally,

sponsorship is an element of integrated communication from the sponsor's point of view. All in all, these characteristics emphasised by Bruhn are acceptable though some points do not necessarily reflect modern sponsorship. For example, it can be doubted that every sponsor has a supportive intention. It seems that in some cases the one and only intention is purely an economic one. Another controversial point is the question as to whether sponsorship only serves communicative functions, since some companies may have other objectives in mind.

As mentioned above, recent definitions are rarely innovative since they are more or less modifications of already existing definitions. However, *Waldner and Brockes* (1998) expand the list of sponsorship characteristics by the type of initiation. They argue that sponsorship is always initiated by someone else (unlike other commitments which are initiated by the company/sponsor itself, such as sales promotion or event-marketing). In case of football sponsorship it is not the sponsor itself who runs the event, but the sponsee, i.e. the football association or the club.

Though the definitions mentioned above differ from each other, some common characteristics can be found in nearly every one of them. Numerous authors agree that sponsorship is a relationship between two contracting parties. In most cases one of the two parties is a commercial entity, whereas the other party can be an organisation, an individual or the organisers of an event. They also agree that there is a clear difference between sponsorship and patronage or charity donations, since sponsorship is a reciprocal relationship in which both parties give as well as receive. The commercial party mainly provides money though some authors also list products, services, or know how. There is, however, some disagreement about the objectives of the sponsor. Some authors stress the supportive intention, some others speak of marketing issues and some others of commercial reasons. The clear implication for further research in the course of this thesis is

therefore to examine on which motives professional football sponsorship is based and what kind of objectives sponsors are trying to achieve with their sponsorships in professional football.

3.1.1.2 Defining sports sponsorship

Older publications mostly equate general sponsorship with sports sponsorship (Coulson-Thomas, 1983). At the beginning of the 1990s a differentiation into social sponsorship, cultural sponsorship, and other forms of sponsorship took place. One of the first definitions of sports sponsorship comes from **Roth** (1990, p. 44), who notes that sports sponsorship is

the supply of money, goods, know-how and organisational services for sportsmen, sports clubs, sports associations and sports events for the purpose of receiving a commercial, relevant service in return.

Although he specifies the service of the sponsor, he remains vague with regard to the service in return delivered by the sponsee.

Dibb, Simkin, Pride, and Ferrel (1994, p. 389) are more clear about the service in return by saying that defining sport sponsorship is the

financial or material support of an event, activity, person, organisation or product by an unrelated organisation or donor in return for prominent exposure of the sponsor's generosity, products or brands.

In addition, **Shilbury, Quick and Westerbeek** (1998, p. 197) emphasise the commercial motives of the sponsor by defining sports sponsorship as

a business relationship between a sponsor and a beneficiary which offers in return some rights and association that may be used for commercial advantage.

Shank (1999, p. 368), however, considers sports sponsorship from the sponsor's point of view by saying that sports sponsorship is 'investigating in a sport entity to support overall organisational objectives, marketing goals and/or strategies.'

Van Heerden (2001, p. 138) offers a comprehensive definition 'that should enhance understanding of sport sponsorship as a theoretical construct' by combining *Pope's* (1998) sponsorship definition² with the sponsorship agreement or contract aspects defined by *Mullin, Hardy and Sutton*³ (2000):

Sport sponsorship is the provision of resources (e.g. money, people, equipment) by an organization (the sponsor) directly to a sponsee (e.g. sport personality, sporting authority or sport body or code), to enable the sponsee to pursue some activity (e.g. participation by the individual or event management by the authority or sport body or code) in return for rights (as expressed by Mullin et al. (2000) to be included in a sponsorship agreement) contemplated in terms of the sponsor's marketing communication strategy (cross-impact and leverage between sponsorship and other marketing communication variables employed before, during, and after the sponsorship campaign), and which can be expressed in terms of corporate, marketing, sales and/or media objectives and measured in terms of linking the objectives to be the desired outcome in terms of return on investment in monetary and non-monetary terms.

Despite its length, the above definition seems to be a good one, because it is specific and covers the main elements of sports sponsorship as practised nowadays.

However, another interesting – and one of the most recent – sponsorship definitions comes from *Dinkel* (2002, p. 44) who equates sports sponsorship with a 'partnership which is laid down in a contract'. He is one of the first authors using the term partnership in order to describe the relationship between the sponsor and the sponsee. Dinkel also pays attention to the task of the sponsee, who provides not only commercial rights but who also has to take care of making the sponsorship known.

² 'Sport Sponsorship is the provision of resources (e.g. money, people, equipment) by an organisation (the sponsor) directly to an individual, authority or body (the sponsee), to enable the latter to pursue some activity in return for benefits contemplated in terms of the sponsor's promotion strategy, and which can be expressed in terms of corporate, marketing, or media objectives.' (Pope, 1998, p. 1)

³ Mullin *et al.* (2000, p. 255) suggest that the following aspects should be included in any sponsorship agreement/contract: '1) The right to use a logo, name, trademark, and graphic representations signifying the purchaser's connection with the product and event. These rights can be used in advertising, promotion, publicity, or other communication activities employed by the purchaser. 2) The right to an exclusive association within a product or service category. 3) The right of entitlement to an event or facility. 4) The right to use various designations or phrases in connection with the product, event, or facility such as "official sponsor", "official supplier", "official product", "presented by", or "official broadcaster". 5) The right of service (use of the product or exclusive use of the product) or the right to use the purchaser's product or service in conjunction with the event or facility. 6) The right to conduct certain promotional (marketing communication) activities such as contests, advertising campaigns, or sales-driven activities in conjunction with the sponsorship agreement.'

The above definitions are more or less modifications of existing sponsorship definitions applied to the context of sports. Noticeable is the frequent use of commercial terms and the focus on reciprocity. However, despite the raise of numerous sponsorship definitions in general terms or in the context of sports, it has to be noted that a specific definition of professional football sponsorship does not exist. For the purpose of this thesis it is felt that a specific definition of professional football sponsorships is needed. Therefore a new definition will be developed in section 3.2.1.

3.1.2 Various types of sponsorship

With regard to the various types of sponsorship, Smith and Taylor (2002, p. 452) note that

all sectors of society can be targeted and reached through sponsorship. Just about anyone or anything can be sponsored. (...) The range of sponsorship opportunities is only limited by one's imagination.

Sport was the first target area of sponsorship in the early 1970s, followed by the area of art and culture in the 1980s. In the 1990s social, environmental and educational sponsorship became more and more popular. Table 3.1 lists the current sponsorship types.

sports	cultural	social	educational	environmental	media
sponsorship					
e.g. - clubs - associations - teams - individuals - various sports	e.g. - art - music - films - exhibitions - museum - concerts - festivals	e.g. - community projects - orphanages - hospitals - campaigns	e.g. - schools - universities - research projects	e.g. - organisations - projects - campaigns	e.g. - TV programmes - columns in print media - website presenting

Table 3.1: various types of sponsorship

Various authors disagree on the question whether media (and especially programme) sponsorship is sponsorship or just another form of advertising.⁴ In view of the fact that companies simply buy advertising-time on air when presenting a particular programme it

⁴ For example, Bruhn (1998) takes the view that programme sponsorship is indeed a manifestation of sponsorship, whereas Köster (2003) rejects this opinion.

can be concluded that programme sponsorship is indeed not sponsorship in a narrower sense.⁵

However, sport is not only the area with the longest history but it is also the single largest market for sponsorship. Around 74% of all sponsorship expenditures in Europe account for sports according to the Sportfive study "*Europäisches Sponsoring-Barometer 2003*". Companies are willing to pay a lot of money since sport delivers huge interest and awareness levels. Football marks up the biggest part with more than 70% of the entire European sport sponsorship market attributed to football (Sportfive, 2003b).⁶

For the purpose of this research the further considerations are limited to the area of sports sponsorship in general and professional football sponsorship in specific as indicated in Figure 3.1.

⁵ Dinkel (2002) also refuses to accept media/programme sponsorship as real sponsorship, since payments go directly to TV stations or publisher's and not to sports, cultural or social institutions.

⁶ Another market research report states that 63% of the sponsorship budget in Germany goes into sports sponsorship, in which football marks up for more than half of it (Pilot Group, 2005).

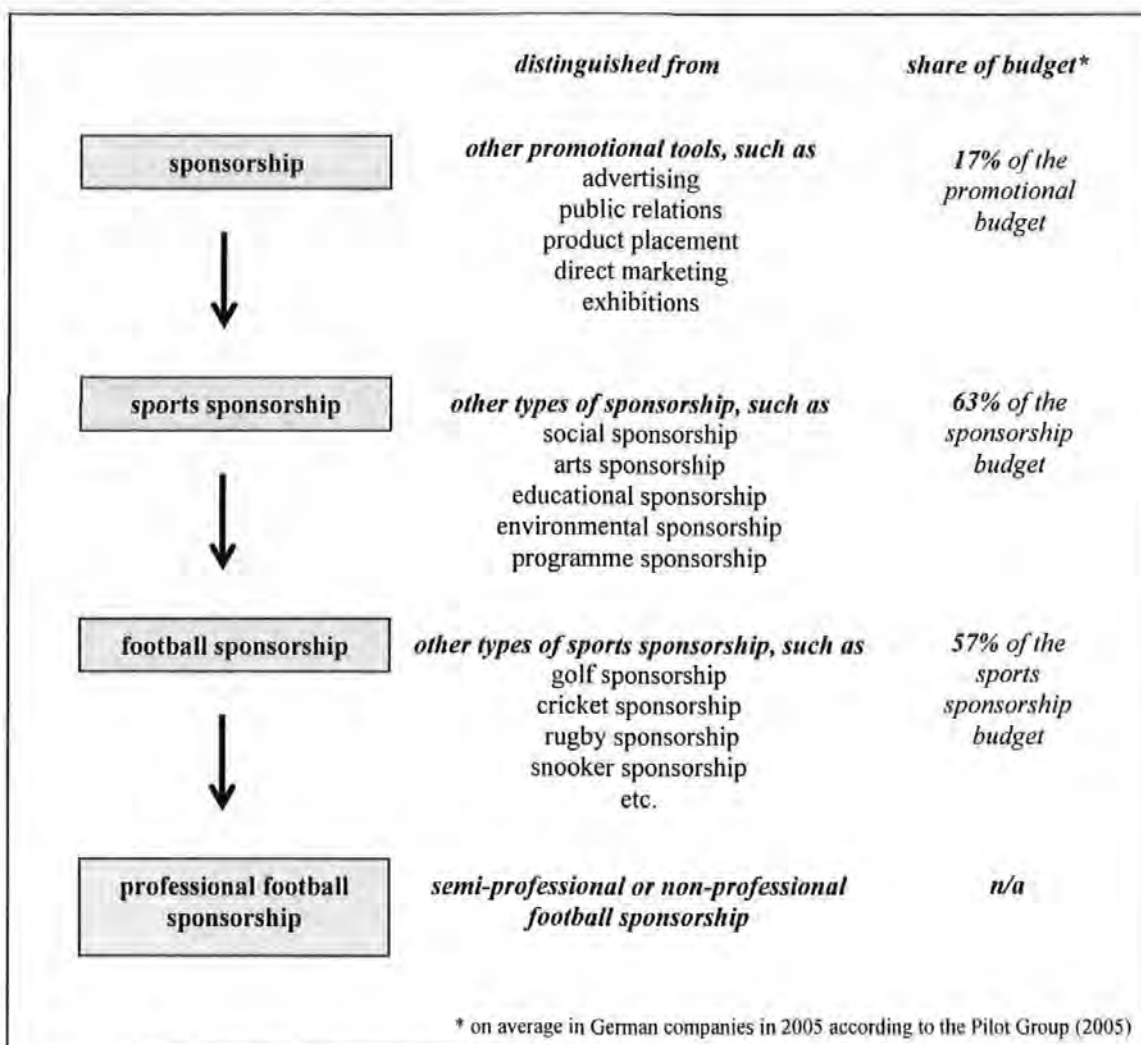


Figure 3.1: subdivision of sponsorship

3.1.3 Sponsorship within marketing

Companies have to sell their products and/or services. That is what they exist for in the first place. Nearly every industry sector is crowded by numerous competitors, which makes the primary aim even more difficult.⁷ Since products and services become more and more alike, companies have to be creative in order to stand out from the competition. That is what marketing is all about. The marketing department has traditionally used various tactics based on the ‘marketing mix’⁸ in order to put its marketing strategy into action.

⁷ And even an industry sector where are only a handful of competitors (such as the aeroplane industry with Airbus and Boeing competing in a worldwide market), is highly competitive.

⁸ The ‘marketing mix’ has probably been the most popular phrase ever used in marketing, including the so-called ‘4Ps’ (product, price, place and promotion) as the marketing tactics.

Using this approach, in order to define their unique selling proposition (USP)⁹, companies can modify their products/services (product strategy). They could also make their product exceptional cheap or expansive (price strategy), or improve their distribution channels (place strategy). Since products, prices and distribution channels of competitors are not that different anymore, promotion as a marketing tactic has become even more important. Companies need to get their name, their brands and their USP known. Advertising is not only the oldest but also the most popular promotion tool. Most companies place print advertisements or television commercials. And that is at the same time the greatest disadvantage of advertising, because there is too much advertising 'noise' and 'clutter' out there. Every consumer receives around a thousand commercial messages a day, from which he or she can seldom remember a single one (Smith and Taylor, 2004). Marketers were aware of that problem and so they developed other promotional tactics. Over the years alternative tools such as sales promotion¹⁰, direct marketing¹¹, public relations (PR)¹², product placement¹³ and sponsorship have developed.¹⁴ Sponsorship has been defined classically as a below-the-line-tool within the promotional mix (Figure 3.2).

⁹ Zikmund and D'Amico (1999, p. 486) explain that 'the basic idea of the USP is to identify and promote an aspect of the product that the competition does not offer or, because of patents or other reasons, cannot offer easily. The USP tells buyers that if they buy the product, they will receive a specific, exclusive benefit.'

¹⁰ Jobber (2001, p. 353) defines sales promotion as 'incentives to consumers or the trade that are designed to stimulate purchases.'

¹¹ Direct marketing is defined as 'the distribution of information, products or services through any advertising medium that invites the individual to respond directly to the advertiser'. Direct marketing mainly includes direct mail, telemarketing, door-to-door selling, direct response advertising, computerised homes shopping, home shopping networks. (Smith and Taylor, 2002, p. 364)

¹² PR is 'the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to institute and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics' according to the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) (cited in Brassington and Pettitt, 2003, p. 793), whereas Jobber (2001, p. 353) defines publicity as 'the communication of a product or business by placing information about it in the media without paying for the time or space directly.'

¹³ 'Product placement is a promotional tactic used by marketers in which characters in a fictional play, feature film, television series, music video, video-game or book use a real commercial product. Typically either the product and logo is shown or favorable qualities of the product are mentioned. The product price is not mentioned nor are any negative features or comparisons to similar products. Very generally, product placement involves placing a product in highly visible situations. The most common form is movie and television placements.' (Wikipedia, 2005)

¹⁴ Smith and Taylor (2002) also add selling, exhibitions, packaging, point-of-sale and merchandising word of mouth, e-Marketing and corporate identity to the promotional mix.



Figure 3.2: the classical subdivision of the marketing mix with sponsorship as a promotional tool

The above subdivision seems to be obsolete nowadays. Nufer (2006), for example, doubts that sponsorship is still a non-classical instrument, since it has established itself over the years. Apart from that, the line between classical and non-classical marketing tools is vanishing and does not play a role in practice anymore.

In the 1990s the concept of ‘integrative communication’ (perhaps more popularly known as ‘integrated marketing communications’) came up. In order to become more effective in their promotional campaigns, companies linked the available tools. Sponsorship was not an isolated tactic anymore, but became a complementary tool (Figure 3.3).

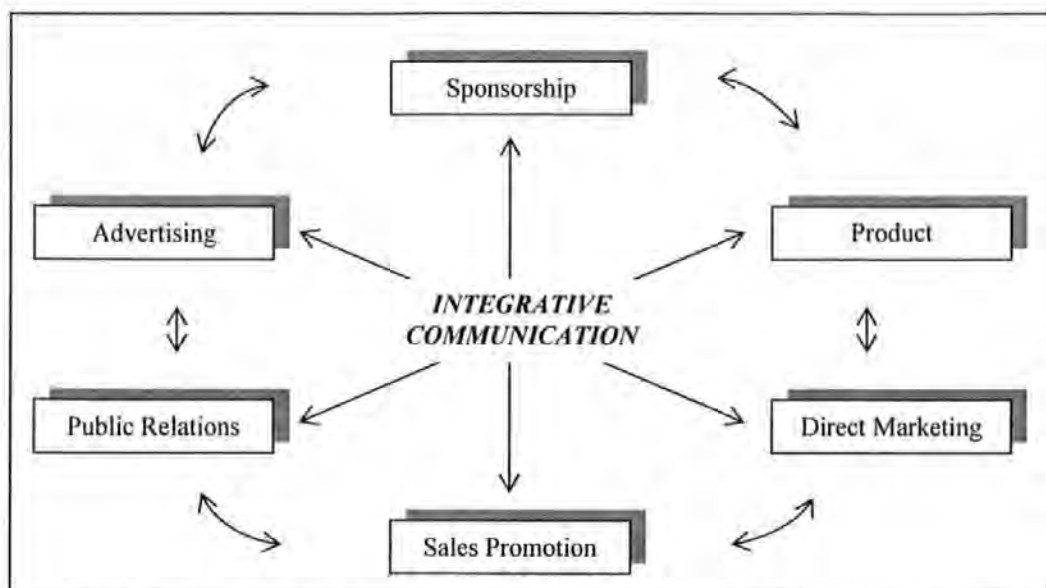


Figure 3.3: sponsorship as a promotional tool in an integrated communication approach

The concept of sponsorship being a complementary tool within an integrative communication approach is widespread and highly popular among companies nowadays.

Van Heerden (2001, p. 130) addresses the problem that the existing marketing literature is inconclusive about where (sports) sponsorship fits into the marketing mix and that marketing texts ‘do not seemingly acknowledge that sponsorship is a new and vibrant addition to the marketing communication mix.’ He also points out that sponsors have to understand where sponsorship fits into the marketing communication mix in order to maximise sponsorship effectiveness.

However, a new trend can be identified. Considering some recent examples in practice, it must be recognised that the role of sponsorship has been enhanced from that of a supporting marketing tool to the foundation of a marketing strategy, with sponsorship increasingly being a sales-orientated tool (Figure 3.4). In this respect, sponsorship has also been identified as a brand building tool for sponsors (Gwinner and Eaton, 1999; Tripodi, 2001; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2002; Smith, 2004; Cliffee and Motion, 2005).

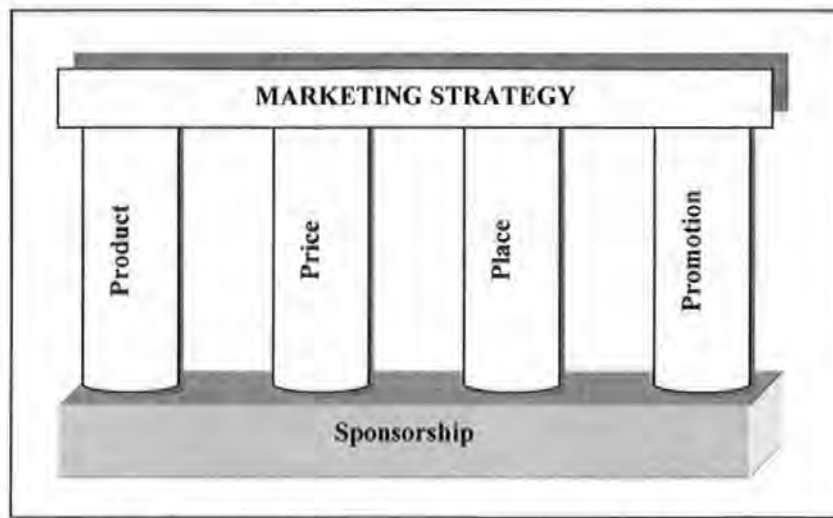


Figure 3.4: sponsorship as the foundation of the marketing strategy

A handful of companies already build their entire marketing strategy around their sponsorship deal. For example, if a company sponsors a football club, it could offer special products or services for a special price exclusively for fans of the club. It could also use the distribution channels of the club¹⁵, for example the websites or the merchandising shops of the clubs, as a point of sale. In conjunction with an integrative communication approach, all '4 Ps' of the marketing mix are linked, then, with sponsorship.¹⁶

3.2 Professional football sponsorship

The previous section described sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies in a general sense. This section, however, focuses solely on professional football sponsorship. It starts with the presentation of an own definition before looking at reasons and motives for professional football sponsorship. The section then moves on to examine the main objectives of football sponsors and then concludes with an overview of the main advantages and disadvantages of football sponsorship.

¹⁵ For example, VfB Stuttgart and its main sponsor by the time, the communication company debitel, opened a joint shop in August 2004 in the city centre of Stuttgart, where they sell official club merchandise as well as products/services of debitel.

¹⁶ One of the pool sponsors of Bayern München is the German bank 'Hypovereinsbank', which offers a special savings book for Bayern fans. Therefore the interest rate increases by 0.01% with every 10th goal Munich scores. They offer this financial service on the Bayern Website and advertise it with promotional tools such as advertising, PR or sales promotion.

3.2.1 A (new) definition

Every definition has its right to exist, though some definitions are more likely to be accepted than others. After all, it depends on the context to which the definition relates. As shown in section 3.1.1, some definitions have a general meaning, some others relate specifically to sports sponsorship. As every definition represents the insights of the particular time and stage of development, it is felt necessary to use the most appropriate definition in the context of modern professional football for the purpose of this research. Section 3.1.1 also concluded that there is no such appropriate definition. Therefore, a new one was developed by combining elements of various definitions. As a result, the following definition reflects the ideal manifestation of sponsorship in the context of professional football from the author's point of view:

Professional football sponsorship is a business-related partnership between a sponsor and a sponsee based on reciprocity in the context of the football business. The sponsor provides financial or non-financial resources directly to the sponsee and receives a predefined service in return in order to fulfil various sponsorship objectives.

In order to understand the above definition, the main terms have to be redefined:

- *professional sponsorship*: this term has to be used in order to distinguish from so-called sweetheart-deals¹⁷, which might exist as well in professional football.
- *business-related partnership*: the term 'business-related' emphasises the commercial motives of both parties. The term 'partnership' involves an obligation for both parties to reach for mutual benefit and is therefore just more than a simple contractual agreement. Both terms combined refer to the nature of inter-organisational relationships or business-to-business relationships respectively. Chapter 4 deals with that issue in greater detail.
- *sponsor*: is in most cases a business company, but can also be a non-profit-organisation, individuals or even state facilities.

¹⁷ Sweetheart-deals are sponsorship activities where the chairman's passion is the main reason to sponsor a particular football club. These sponsorships are rather based on personal and emotional involvement of the decision-maker(s) than on commercial issues.

- *sponsee*: can be associations, single teams or individuals, but above all football clubs. However, the author would argue that the use of individuals (football players, managers or officials) is rather a form of (testimonial) advertising than professional football sponsorship in contrast to sponsoring a football club/association. Whereas individuals just provide image or awareness, football clubs/associations have more to offer as a service in return (e.g. the event/game, hospitality).
- *reciprocity*: the principle of reciprocity incorporates exchange of service and service in return and is therefore a clear distinction to patronage or charity donations. The definition thereby acknowledges that there are transactional as well as relational elements in most professional football sponsorship agreements.
- *context of the football business*: as outlined in Chapter 1, the business of football incorporates some unique characteristics (related to the environment, the product and the consumers) which have to be considered in professional football sponsorships and which might be the main difference in comparison to other areas of sponsorship.
- *non-financial resources*: for example services, equipment, or know-how.
- *predefined service in return*: it is important that the service in return is listed in detail in the contract in order to prevent potential conflicts. Therefore, the sponsor knows what he/she receives and the sponsee knows what he/she has to deliver. A service in return can be specific communication rights, access to players or databases, or the right to produce and sell a joint product.
- *various sponsorship objectives*: can be overall marketing objectives, communication objectives, sales objectives or corporate objectives all based on a commercial intention.

This definition covers more or less all elements of professional football sponsorship as investigated in this thesis. However, deals which lack one of the above elements are still sponsorship deals, of course, but not necessarily professional ones. For example, it can be assumed that some sponsorship deals in professional football are still based on supportive

intentions or personal emotional involvement of the decision-maker. It could be argued that it does not make any difference for the sponsee as long as he or she receives the financial or non-financial services. This point of view would be too simplified in view of the fact that in a professional relationship between sponsor and sponsee the objectives of both sides should be clear and be understood in order to make sure that these objectives are mutually fulfilled. As a matter of fact, sponsees have to work harder for sponsors with commercial objectives than for sponsors who pay just for the sake of being supportive. The next subsection looks at professional football sponsorship in greater detail by examining the reasons and motives for companies to go into football sponsorship.

3.2.2 Reasons to go into football sponsorship

This subsection seeks to answer the question of why football is such a popular sponsorship object for companies and how football differs from other sports.

‘Soccer continues to represent by far the most heavily sponsored sport in both the number and total value of reported deals¹⁸,’ according to Sports Marketing Surveys (2004, p. 14). And the Pilot Group (2005, p.15) concludes that ‘football is the number 1.’ Their market report *Sponsors Visions* revealed that more than half (57%) of Germany’s top advertising companies are into football sponsorship. SPORTFIVE, one of Europe’s leading sports consultancies, presents on their website eleven good reasons for companies to invest in football sponsorship (Figure 3.5).

¹⁸ The *World Sponsorship Monitor* tried to include all sponsorship deals with a minimum value of US\$75,000 reported in international specialist and general press during the period January to December 2004.

Why sponsorship in football?

- Football is the number one sports in numerous European countries
- Football reaches national as well as international wide ranges
- Football provides continuity throughout the year
- Football is the dominant theme in the daily press and provides new topics of conversation on a daily base
- Football provides a number of positive characteristics such as 'team performance', 'fighting spirit' or 'endurance'
- Football provides pure emotion
- Football sponsorship can be planned and evaluated in quantitative and qualitative terms
- Football is rated highly in sociopolitical terms and addresses all target groups
- Football clubs are strong brands with great value of identification
- Football incorporates some sense of cultism from which sponsorship benefits
- Sponsorship in football is organised highly professional and provides a lot of opportunities.

Figure 3.5: reasons to go into football sponsorship according to an advertisement on the SPORTFIVE-website in 2005

Three of the reasons stated in the SPORTFIVE advertisement are mentioned quite frequently in the relevant literature as well (Carrigan and Carrigan, 1996; Seydel, 2005; Röttgermann, 2005). These reasons are:

- The mass appeal of football: no other sport attracts more people than football. More than 70% of Germans who have an interest in sports follow football on a regular base according to a report of the German-based market research company Sport + Markt (2004). Röttgermann (2005) notes that companies are keen on going into football sponsorship because football fascinates crowds around the world and therefore provides a platform for emotional identification.
- The media coverage of football: Chapter 1 already mentioned that football is a popular theme for media coverage. A fact which is also recognised by sponsors. Mark Seydel, a representative of Germany's top football sponsor Deutsche Telekom, explains why his company is investing in football sponsorship:

Football is the most popular televised sport. Whether as the favourite sports of television viewers, on the radio or in the print media, football knows how to play the game of public interest. No other sports regularly reaches such high television ratings and wide ranges. Result: football delivers a perfect pitch for companies which are active in mass markets (Seydel, 2005, p. 55).

- The expansion of the European leagues to other markets such as Asia or the US is quite important for international companies as well. Televised Premier League games, for example, attract huge television audiences in China and therefore make it 'cheap' advertising for companies trying to gain a foothold in those markets (Ridding, 2002). Vodafone's £9m sponsorship deal with Manchester United paid back in terms of cost per media impression alone (Davies, 2004).
- The passion of its audience: Chapter 1 described football supporters as passionate, sometimes irrational and often very loyal. Companies invest huge sums to benefit from their passion in order to transform the fans of the football club into their customers (Bühler, 2005b). Indeed, market research shows that supporters' loyalty towards a club can be transformed into loyalty towards the club's sponsor (Seydel, 2005).

All these reasons, which play an important part in helping companies decide to invest their sponsorship budget in football, were already mentioned in Chapter 1 as the peculiarities of the football business. Therefore, it seems that companies are looking for something which they cannot find somewhere else. In addition, Röttgermann (2005) claims that effectiveness, the popular touch and mass appeal of football (and therefore penetration of the target group) as well as value for money are the main reasons why sponsorships in football are superior to sponsorships in other sports. Grünitz and von Arndt (2002) confirm the view that football sponsorship can be cost-effective, as companies can reach high numbers of contact through football sponsorships in comparison to traditional television or print advertisements.

All these characteristics of football (sponsorship) can help companies to reach their objectives (Röttgermann, 2005). The next subsection deals with possible objectives of football sponsors and examines the motives behind professional football sponsorships.

3.2.3 Objectives of football sponsors

Sponsorship is a 'commercial investment' (Walliser, 2003, p. 5) and 'has, or should have, nothing whatsoever to do with charity or patronage' (Sleight, 1989, p. 4). The motive behind sponsorship decisions should therefore be based on commercial motives rather than personal reasons. However, there is some agreement that the so-called 'sweetheart deals' or the 'chairman's whim syndrome'¹⁹ still play a role in corporate sponsorship (Sleight, 1989; Randall, 1993; Wragg, 1994; Brassington and Pettitt, 2003). Ridding (2002, p. 4), for example, assumes that the sponsorship deal of Kejian with Everton FC in 2002 was 'partly a reflection of the football fanaticism of Hao Jianxun, the company's chief executive.' The question whether sponsorship decisions in professional football are based on commercial or personal reasons is an issue for further analysis in the primary research phase. This subsection, however, focuses on commercial objectives rather on personal ones.

Companies invest in professional football sponsorship for a multitude of benefits. Various authors tried to create categories of objectives. Hermanns (1997), for example, differentiates between economic and psychological objectives. Economic objectives have a positive impact on monetary financial aspects such as profit, turnover or expenses and can only be achieved through psychological objectives such as increase of awareness levels, improvement of image, staff motivation and human relations. Shank (1999) categorises sponsorship objectives as either direct (having a short-term impact on consumption

¹⁹ 'This arises when sponsorship is perceived to be undertaken on the whim of a senior executive, usually the chairman or managing director, rather than for genuine commercial reasons,' according to Sleight (1989, p. 9)

behaviour and focusing on increasing sales) or indirect (leading to the desired goal of enhancing sales). Gillies (1991) distinguishes between marketing objectives and corporate objectives, Sandler and Shani (1993) add a third category with media objectives. Pope (1998) examined the academic literature on sports sponsorship and summarized the various objectives named in those papers using the three categories proposed by Sandler and Shani (1993) (Table 3.2).

Corporate objectives	Marketing objectives	Media objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ public awareness ▪ corporate image ▪ public perception ▪ community involvement ▪ financial relations ▪ client entertainment ▪ government relations ▪ employee relations ▪ compete with other companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ business relations ▪ reach target market ▪ brand positioning ▪ increase sales ▪ sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ generate visibility ▪ generate publicity ▪ enhance ad campaign ▪ avoid clutter ▪ target specificity

Table 3.2: aggregated objectives for corporations involved in sponsorship of sport
Source: Pope (1998, p. 2)

It is debatable as to whether such a differentiation makes sense, since basically all objectives can be linked to commercial intentions. However, Walliser (2003), who examined more than 230 papers on sponsorship, revealed that most studies name awareness and image transfer as the most popular sponsorship objectives. Sleight (1989, p. 67) explains:

Central to all these different ways of exploiting and targeting a sponsorship campaign are, however, two fundamental features that are intrinsic to the way in which any audience perceives your company or brand. These features are awareness and image. Virtually any objective for communication can be boiled down to these two fundamentals. Unless your audience is aware of you or your product they cannot make any of the decisions, purchasing or otherwise, that you would like them to make. Equally, without awareness there can be no perception of image, so these two messages are inextricably linked despite the fact that they are usually considered separately when discussing communication requirements.

Shank (1999, p. 372) explains that ‘for a new company or product, sponsorship is an important way to generate widespread awareness in a short period of time.’ For example,

the vision behind Emirates' sponsorship deals in English professional football²⁰ is to make 'Emirates' the generic term for 'airline' and therefore drive accelerated international brand awareness (Karen Earl Sponsorship, 2004). Sleight (1989), however, points out that a lot of companies that have product or company awareness high on their list of objectives, already start out from a position of having high awareness.

Enhancing the image of the company or the brand is another important objective amongst sponsors. The image of a company is 'the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions held by consumers about the company and its products,' according to Ries and Trout (1986, cited in Stotlar, 2001, p. 33). Walliser (2003, p. 15) concludes from the review of numerous studies on image effects of sponsorship that 'there is ample evidence that sponsorship can contribute to the modification of certain image dimensions, at least.' As mentioned on many occasions, football provides passion and popularity. Therefore, business entities invest in football sponsorship in order to benefit from football's image. Research shows that supporters of football clubs perceive the sponsors of their club as more likeable than companies operating in the same marketplace (Seydel, 2005).

However, variance of sponsorship objectives depends on numerous specific factors such as company size, degree of internationalisation or industry sector of the company (Walliser, 2003). Mack (1999), for example, revealed that small businesses are mainly into sponsorship in order to give the community something back. Commitment to the local area is not only limited to small companies but can also be an objective of larger corporations as the example of Reebok's involvement with Bolton Wanderers shows. Despite being a global player, Reebok became the main sponsor of Bolton Wanderers and title sponsor of the club's new stadium in 1997 because Reebok was founded in Bolton (Busby, 2004).

²⁰ Emirates was the shirt sponsor of Chelsea till the 2004/05 season and will be the new shirt sponsor of Arsenal as well as the naming sponsor of Arsenal's new stadium from 2006 on.

Although sponsorship objectives are a popular theme amongst studies on sponsorship, only few studies examined the objectives of companies engaged in football sponsorship. One of the few exceptions comes from Chadwick and Thwaites (2005), who asked the shirt sponsors of England's top two football divisions for their objectives. Chadwick and Thwaites revealed the failure amongst companies to set specific objectives for their sponsorship programmes, with only 54% of all sponsors claiming to set formal sponsorship objectives. However, the most popular objectives of those setting objectives were linked to public awareness, media attention and image of the company. Objectives relating to public relations (e.g. enhancing business and trade relations, improving employee motivation or promoting community involvement) were named less frequently. A similar picture was revealed by a study of the Pilot Group (2005) investigating the objectives of German football sponsors. Image and awareness objectives were named quite frequently (88% and 78% respectively), followed by objectives relating to employee and customer relations (70% each). 'Entertaining business associates' ranks surprisingly high (85%) but can be explained with the development of new stadiums in Germany in view of the forthcoming World Cup 2006. More and more companies use hospitality as part of their sponsorship packages in order to build or maintain links with business partners. Another study (Bembenek and Meier, 2003) investigated sport sponsorship in the area of professional football, handball, and basketball in Germany. Awareness and image objectives have been named as the most popular objectives as well. However, it is necessary to examine further the objectives of sponsors in English and German professional football, and this is therefore a clear implication for the primary research phase.

3.2.4 Advantages and disadvantages of football sponsorship

Professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool has its advantages and disadvantages just as any other marketing instrument. This section examines the main advantages of

professional football sponsorship over other marketing tools and also lists the disadvantages.

The main advantages of sponsorship generally and professional football sponsorship specifically are:

- Sponsorship is highly accepted amongst target groups. Sportfive (2003a), for example, revealed that 74% of the German population has a positive attitude towards sponsorship and attaches high quality attributes to products of sponsors.
- Gillies (1991, p. 2) explains 'the beauty of sponsorship' with the unique advantage that it 'can reach people in numerous different ways and often when they don't expect it.' Companies can target their audience at the point of consumers' attention in a highly emotional situation (Grünitz and von Arndt, 2002).
- Sponsorship can be cost-effective considering the media exposure of shirt sponsors or companies advertising on perimeter boards (Pepels, 2001). In addition, the desired message is likely to be spread in view of the wide audiences.
- Sponsorship is flexible and allows a variety of audiences to be targeted (Sleight, 1989). Sponsorship packages in professional football provide a lot of opportunities (e.g. advertising in and outside the stadium, public relations, hospitality) and can therefore be used to reach a lot of various objectives.

The main disadvantages are:

- Shirts and perimeter boards can transfer only a limited message and are often reduced to brand names or logos only (Pepels, 2001; Grünitz and von Arndt, 2002). Therefore, sponsorship has to be linked with other promotional tools in order to get the desired message right. This, of course, could be an expensive task and therefore requires a huge marketing budget.

- Sleight (1989, p. 129) mentions the problem of clutter as the most significant disadvantage of (professional football) sponsorship because football as a 'sports that can deliver an audience of sufficient size (...) [is] already crowded with sponsors all trying to put their message across.' Mediaedge:cia (2003, p. 1) notes in its market research report:

One of the major factors driving the initial development of sponsorship was the fact that it provided a relatively clutter-free environment particularly when compared to media advertising. Success has begun to erode this critical advantage, in that increased levels of sponsorship activity have led to perceptions of a cluttered environment.

- The main question for companies involved in professional football sponsorship is how to stand out. Here, again, a lot of money and creativity is needed. As a rule of thumb, sponsors should back up their sponsorships with at least as much again for supporting activities. However, other sources say, that 'for every dollar spent on sponsorship, between two and three times more needs to be spent on supporting marketing' (Joy, 2005). However, reality paints another picture according to the Pilot Group (2005) who revealed that 60% of the sponsorship budget goes directly to the respective sponsee whereas only 40% are spent on supporting activities.
- Image transfer, as a desired objective, implies that a negative image can also be transferred. This can lead to problems when the image of the sponsored property becomes damaged. The former shirt sponsor of Hamburger SV, the 'Milchstrassenverlag'²¹, decided to abandon the logo of their brand 'TV Spielfilm' from the Hamburg shirts in 1995 after the team lost a couple of games in a row and the sponsor worried about people associating the loser image of Hamburger SV with their brand (Pepels, 2001).
- The passion and loyalty of fans of a specific club are good reasons for companies to sponsor the respective club. But sponsors must also fear a negative reaction from fans of other clubs, mainly from their direct rival (Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football

²¹ A publishing company based in Hamburg/Germany

Research, 2003). For example, the local Vodafone shop in Liverpool reported a significant decrease in turnover after Manchester United announced its sponsorship deal with Vodafone (Bühler, 2005b).

- A main problem of sponsorship seems to be the measurement and evaluation of sponsorship effects²². Isolating the sponsorship effect may be difficult because sponsorship is often linked to other promotional activities (Brassington and Pettitt, 2003, Pepels, 2001). However, the problems may be solved with the newly introduced convention of the German *Fachverband für Sponsoring & Sonderwerbeformen*²³ (FASPO) which makes the evaluation of sponsorship effects clearer and more comparable (Sohns, 2005).

3.3 Implications for primary research

This chapter described (football) sponsorship as a marketing tool. Reasons and motives to invest into sponsorship have been listed as well as objectives of sponsors. In view of the fact that only few studies deal with football sponsorship it is necessary to examine professional football sponsorship in the context of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in greater detail.

Therefore, the following research questions for further investigations are proposed:

- What kind of objectives do football sponsors have?
- Why do companies invest in football sponsorship?
- What are the reasons for successful sponsorship deals?
- What are the current trends in the area of football sponsorship?

²² Sponsorship effects can be measured by means of various methods, e.g. media exposure measurement, assessing communication results, measuring sales results and feedback from participating groups. The reader's attention is drawn to Brassington and Pettitt (2003) for more information.

²³ Association of Sponsorship and Specific Advertising

- What can be improved in the area of football sponsorship?
- Can sponsorship be measured, and what do companies actually measure?

4 SPONSORSHIP AS AN INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL CLUBS AND THEIR SPONSORS

The previous two chapters contextualised sponsorship from the perspective of professional football clubs on the one hand and from the sponsors' perspective on the other hand. This chapter brings both sides together by focusing on the relationship between sponsors and clubs.

4.1 Sponsorship as a transaction and a relational construct

This section deals with (professional football) sponsorships as transactions on the one hand and as a set of relational constructs on the other hand. It therefore contributes to an ongoing debate between the transactional paradigm and the relational paradigm in the marketing and sponsorship literature.

4.1.1 Transactional paradigm vs. relational paradigm

Two perspectives have come to predominate in the general marketing literature. One view is the transactional marketing paradigm, which is based on the transaction cost theory as postulated by Coase (1991) and Williamson (1979). According to the transaction cost theory, organisations engage in relationships with each other in order to minimise the costs associated with transactions. The theory is based on the assumption that humans are opportunistic and rational economic decision makers and therefore look for lucrative and discrete transactions. McNeil (1980) notes that discrete transactions are usually short-term exchange events, characterised by limited interaction and a lack of concern for the exchange partner's identity. In addition, Thorelli (1986) argues that the use of power is a major factor governing behaviour in association with discrete transactions. Support for this view comes from Hopkinson and Hogarth-Scott (1999, p. 829), who continue to say that in

discrete exchange, bilateral power is exercised at the time of the contract and that the contract itself 'establishes a stable power balance that holds within the shorter time frame until completion.'

However, some authors (e.g. Grönroos, 1989, 1990, 1994; Achrol, 1991; Morgan and Hunt, 1994, Stone and Mason, 1997) question the relevance of the transactional perspective in an ever-changing world where relationships are becoming more and more important in a complex and globalised business environment. Instead, they claim to establish a relational paradigm which emphasises the importance of inter-organisational relationships. Lee and Wong (2001, p. 54) explain that in relational exchange

partners have long-term perspectives, focus on the relationship itself rather than on a single transaction, make efforts to preserve the relationship, try to resolve conflicts in harmonious ways, and engage in multi-dimensional roles rather than simple buying and selling.

Lages, Lages and Lages (2005, p. 1041) emphasise that relational exchanges 'are guided by the context of interaction, including past, present and (expected) future experiences' in contrast to discrete transactions, which are usually market driven and short-term-orientated.

However, although 'transactional and relational exchanges occupy opposite ends of a continuum' (Keating *et al.*, 2003, p. 217), they are not mutually exclusive. Grönroos (1994), for example, notes that all relationships begin with a transactional exchange and Wong and Sohal (2002b, p. 34) add that relationships are 'a series of transactions'.

It is not only in the general marketing literature that a shift from a transaction-based to a relationship-based marketing paradigm has taken place. It has also been well documented in a range of other more specific contexts (Rust and Zahoric, 1993, Liljander and Strandvik, 1995; Keating *et al.*, 2003; Woo and Ennew, 2004). However, the sponsorship literature has trailed behind this development, even though sponsorship is likely to

incorporate both transactional and relational elements, as the following two subsections will show.

4.1.2 Sponsorship as a transaction

Most studies on sponsorship perceive sponsorship as a discrete transaction (Cornwell and Maignan, 1998; Walliser, 2003). Indeed, at the heart of any sponsorship deal lies the exchange of service and service in return (Meenaghan, 1983; Bruhn, 1987; Sleight, 1989). This is also reflected in most sponsorship definitions (as outlined in Chapter 3) which reduce the nature of sponsorship to a discrete transaction involving the exchange of financial resources and some communication rights. The single-sided nature of most sponsorship definitions is a disadvantage of the sponsorship literature and is a problem addressed by Chadwick (2004), who argues that the element of social exchange is irrelevant in a transactional view of sponsorship. Another limitation of the transactional view – and one reflected in many sponsorship definitions – is related to the role of the sponsee, who is little more than the receiver of a payment and the provider of some communication rights.

However, it has to be emphasised at this point that the transactional view of sponsorship reflects reality to some extent, as some actual (professional football) sponsorships are mainly transactional in nature. For example, there are definitely some sponsors looking for short-term sponsorships rather than long-term agreements, because they have short-term objectives in mind. This is also reflected in the way that sponsors measure the success of their sponsorship. Evaluative practice is mainly reflective and objective-driven in view of the fact that most sponsors evaluate the success of their sponsorship on the basis of increasing sales figures or an improved awareness level rather than taking relational aspects into consideration (Chadwick, 2004). Some sponsors also tend to be opportunistic in their behaviour by assessing the relative costs relating to the respective sponsorship deal.

The same is true for sponsees. Some sports properties need short-term money and therefore look for the best deal in financial terms on a short-term basis. Support for this view comes from studies undertaken by Thwaites (1995) and Chadwick and Thwaites (2005), who note that many sponsorship deals in professional English football are rather short-term orientated. They also point out that many sponsors and sponsees move on to other sponsorship partners once the contractual obligations have been fulfilled. This leads Chadwick (2004) to conclude that a lot of sponsorship deals are little more than contractual obligations between sponsees and sponsors who have convergent objectives or interests at a particular point in time. In other words, sponsees and sponsors might try to exploit each other's attractiveness for a short period of time and therefore reduce the relationship to a purely opportunistic one.

In summary, it has to be noted that there are likely to be transactional elements in the relationship between sponsors and sponsees. However, it seems that the relational paradigm developed in the marketing literature has considerable relevance in the context of (professional football) sponsorships, as the next subsection will show.

4.1.3 Sponsorship as a relational construct

The relationship between a professional football club and its sponsor can be seen as a business-to-business (B-2-B) relationship in view of the fact that both the sponsors and the clubs are business entities, although their relational exchange is based on the supplier-customer-concept¹. This view is supported by Farrelly and Quester (2003, p. 545) who note that 'the type of alliance that exist between sponsors and properties is more akin to horizontal relationships than to vertical ones such as supplier-reseller relationship.'

¹ After all, football clubs sell communication rights to sponsors, which in return are prepared to pay money for that.

Therefore, recent authors (Olkonnen, 2001; Farrelly, Quester and Mavondo, 2003; Chadwick, 2004; Farrelly and Quester, 2005) propose that sponsorship is not a discrete transaction but a relational exchange involving a series of interrelationships and interactions. To reduce sponsorship to a simple transaction may be somewhat limited as to do so ignores the consideration that sponsors and sponsees may commit other resources than money and communication rights to the sponsorship deal. For example, they invest their time, their people, and their know-how in order to make the sponsorship work. Farrelly *et al.* (2003, p. 130) put it as follows:

once the sponsorship fee passes from the sponsor to the sponsored firm, the 'exchange' becomes far less easily defined. It encapsulates many exchange processes that can happen simultaneously, or can only be performed over time. It may even involve less apparent or tangible benefits including the sharing of commercial wisdom, experience, creativity, and skills.

Consequently, Chadwick and Thwaites (2005, p. 337) advise both sponsors and sponsees not to view 'sponsorship as an exclusively short-term transaction' in view of the fact that 'greater long-term benefits may be attainable from a closer, more strategic, network related association'. Support for this view comes from Cheng and Stotlar (1999, p. 1), who suggest that it is important to 'reconsider sport sponsorship as a durable partnership.' They also compare sponsorship with marriages and conclude that 'both require long-term commitments to assist each other in reaching mutual fulfilment.'

However, the relational aspect of professional football sponsorship has attracted only little academic interest. Notable exceptions come from Farrelly and Quester (2003, 2005) and Farrelly *et al.* (2003), who investigated the relationship between clubs of the Australian Football League and their sponsors, and Chadwick (2004), who examined the nature of commitment in collaborative sport sponsorship relations in the context of English soccer clubs' shirt sponsors. Farrelly and Quester (2003, p. 530) also note that 'despite an increasing academic interest in the area of relationship marketing on the one hand and [s]ponsorship on the other, there have been very few attempts to consider sponsorship from

this emerging perspective.' Chadwick (2004) argues that the sponsorship literature has started to realise that sponsorships are based upon social relations and to incorporate elements relating to relationship marketing such as longevity and durability. However, he also identifies a need for further academic research in this area, preferably from a dyadic perspective by incorporating both sponsors and sponsees. This view is supported by Olkonen *et al.* (2000, p. 14), who claim that 'broader perspectives are also needed to paint a more in-depth picture of sponsorship as a social phenomenon' and that these perspectives 'should be primarily built on the study of various relational aspects of sponsorship.'

This section has emphasised that (professional football) sponsorships incorporate both transactional and relational elements. This leads to the question of which paradigm – the transactional or the relational – is more likely to make the sponsorship successful. In this respect it has to be emphasised that different sponsors approach (professional football) sponsorships in varying ways. Some sponsors invest in (professional football) sponsorship in order to achieve short-term objectives, while others would like to build long-term alliances with sponsees. According to suggestions made by Garbarino and Johnson (1999) and Hsieh and Hiang (2004), football clubs would be well-advised to analyse the position of their sponsors on a continuum of transactional to collaborative exchanges. Therefore, football clubs should segment the high/low relational orientation of their sponsors and should then be able to apply the transactional or relational marketing approach depending on the sponsor's relationship orientation.

However, the main contention of this section is that a deeper understanding of the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorships is necessary because the sponsorship literature has focused so far on the transactional paradigm despite a shift from the transactional paradigm to the relational paradigm in the marketing literature. The next section will therefore deal with the relational aspects of (professional football)

sponsorships and focus primarily on the concept of relationship quality, as this is a research area which has been widely ignored in the context of professional football sponsorships despite popular interest in the relationship marketing literature.

4.2 Conceptualising relationship marketing, business-to-business relationships and relationship quality

Before examining the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors, it is necessary to introduce the concept of relationship marketing as it sets the frame when researching relational aspects in a marketing context. In addition, a theoretical conceptualisation of business-to-business relationships is provided before focusing on the concept of relationship quality, which is crucial in the football club-sponsor relationship as well.

4.2.1 The rise of relationship marketing

As mentioned earlier, a shift from a discrete-transaction paradigm to a relationship-based marketing paradigm took place in the late 1980s (Grönroos, 1989; Woo and Ennew, 2004). Therefore, relationship marketing (RM) is a relatively new concept and ‘widely cited as the future of marketing’ according to Butler (1996, p. vii). Stone and Woodcock (1995, p.11) note that RM ‘is becoming one of those fashionable terms that every marketer uses but defines in a different way – or not at all.’ Indeed, there are a lot of various definitions in the existing literature. Some authors (e.g. Gordon, 1998; Butler, 1996) see RM as a process of identifying new value with selected customers and developing long-term relationships for the benefit of both the supplier and the individual customer. Gummesson (1999, p. 1) speaks of ‘marketing seen as relationships, networks and interaction.’ One of the most popular definitions comes from Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 22), who define RM as ‘all

marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges.'

RM is not just a thing to do, it is a means to an end because of its financial benefits. Butler (1996) emphasises that it is not as expensive to retain an existing customer as it is to win a new one. Establishing, developing and maintaining relationships becomes even more important in today's increasingly competitive markets (Anton, 1996). Morgan and Hunt (1994) believe that one has to be a trusted cooperator in order to be an effective competitor.

Companies have different relationships and these relationships can take many different forms. Sometimes they are described as associations or affiliations, sometimes as partnerships or relational exchanges (Diller and Kusterer, 1988; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Anton, 1996; Gummesson, 1999). Dwyer, Schurr and Oh (1987) compare some companies' relationships even with marriages. In addition, the opinion about the focus of RM varies from author to author. Anton (1996) notes nine different managing relationships², Gummesson (1999) identifies even thirty-two different types of relationships in four areas³. Diller and Kusterer (1988) differentiate between horizontal (e.g. joint ventures), vertical (e.g. franchising, outsourcing) and lateral (e.g. to authorities) cooperations, whereas Morgan and Hunt (1994) present a model, where the focal firm at its centre maintains four different relationships with ten different target groups⁴. Butler (1996, p. 9) differentiates between 'sick' and 'healthy' relationships and concludes that 'RM is about healthy relationships which are characterised by concern, trust, commitment and

² Managing relationships with dealers, OEMs, end-users, community, employees, shareholders, suppliers, services, and distributors (Anton, 1996, p.9)

³ The four different areas are: classic market relationships, special market relationships, mega relationships, and nano relationships. (Gummesson, 1999, p. 20)

⁴ (1) buyer partnerships with ultimate customer or the intermediate customer respectively. (2) lateral partnerships with competitors, non-profit organisations or the government. (3) supplier partnerships with service or good suppliers. (4) the internal partnerships involving functional departments, business units and employees. (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, p. 21)

service' opposed to sick relationships, which 'have traditionally been characterised as confrontational or adversarial.' The section on relationship quality will describe in detail which dimensions can lead to a healthy relationship. Beforehand, the nature of business-to-business relationships will be explained bearing in mind that professional football sponsorship is a business-to-business (B-2-B) relationship.

4.2.2 The nature of business-to-business relationships

This section investigates inter-firm relationships. A business-to-business relationship is every interactive process between two organisations based on commercial reasons according to Diller and Kusterer (1988).

Inter-firm relationships differ widely in their characteristics. Some are loose and centre a discrete transaction, some others are much more close and complex (Ford, 1998). B-2-B relationships also vary from consumer market places in various dimensions. For example, inter-firm deals involve usually more money than everyday-transactions of ordinary customers. Shirt sponsorship deals in English and German professional football can be worth a couple of million Euro, for example. Gordon (1998) identified some other criteria such as the market structure, the distribution channels or the relationship reciprocity as the main differences between ordinary supplier-consumer relationships and B-2-B relationships. In addition, buyer-seller relationships are considered to be more short-term, adversarial and not as complex as B-2-B relationships, which, on the contrary, tend to be more long-term orientated. An important general property of commercial relationships is the degree of collaboration between the parties. Anton (1996, p. 15) argues that 'the degree of collaboration could be combined with the degree of competition.' For example, a low degree of competition and a high degree of collaboration could 'provide a base for a long-term and harmonious relationship.'

Diller and Kusterer (1988) provide a deeper investigation of B-2-B relationships by differentiating between four levels:

- (1) The functional level, where all the transactions of goods, services or information take place based on reciprocity. The authors emphasise that a specific level of balance between both partners has to be ensured in order to stabilise the relationship.
- (2) The organisational level, where the formal and informal rules and regulations for the business transactions are agreed on.
- (3) The power level, where all those disagreements are argued out, which cannot be solved on the functional level.
- (4) The human-emotional level, where values are exchanged. These values can take different shapes from openness to gratitude and trust.

Hakansson (1982) and Brennan and Turnbull (1998) present another B-2-B-relationship-model, which focus on the interaction process (Figure 4.1). Relationships between supplier and buyer are characterised by various exchange episodes such as the exchange of services, products and money, but also exchange of information or social contact. Brennan and Turnbull (1998, p.27) emphasise that 'social exchanges are important in the development and maintenance of the relationship.' The interaction process between supplier and buyer is determined by the particular atmosphere, which in turn depends on the power dependence between both parties, the state of cooperation or conflict and the distance or closeness of the relationship (Hakannsson, 1982). 'The atmosphere of the relationship influences each exchange episode, and each episode potentially affects the atmosphere' explain Brennan and Turnbull (1998, p. 27). The relationship is also affected by the broader business environment (e.g. the structure of the market, regulations, degree of competition) in which the relational exchange takes place.

As indicated in Figure 4.1, the interaction process not only takes place between the organisations but also – and mainly – between the individuals presenting both parties. Therefore, when looking at relational aspects of B-2-B relationships one has to take not only the organisational level but also the personal level into consideration. The next section introduces the concept of relationship quality which is essential for the success of inter-organisational relationships.

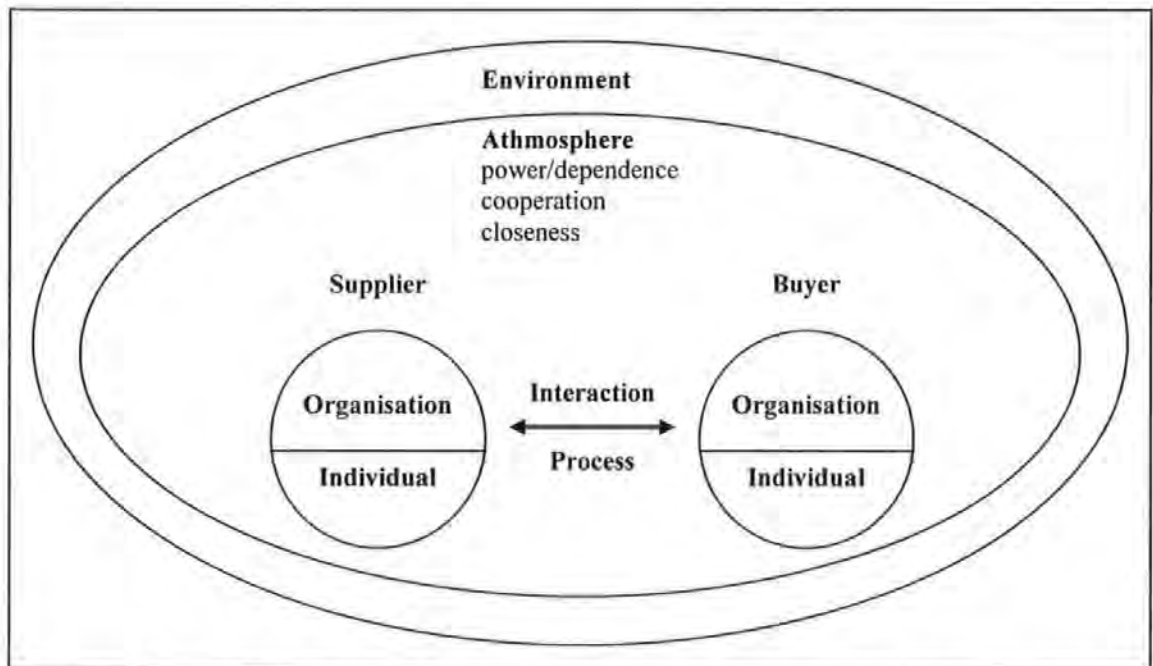


Figure 4.1: the inter-firm relationship as an interaction process according to Hakansson, (1982, p. 21) Brennan and Turnbull (1998, p. 28)

4.2.3 The concept of relationship quality

This subsection introduces the concept of relationship quality in general terms and in the context of sports/football sponsorship.

4.2.3.1 Relationship quality in general terms

Relationship quality (RQ) has been considered to be an important indicator of relationship success (Bejou, Wray and Ingram, 1996; Kiedaisch, 1997; Werner, 1997; Hennig-Thurau, 2000; Ivens, 2004) and business performance (Lee and Wong, 2001). Other authors argue that RQ can build or destroy business relationships and therefore it would be crucial that

companies consider not only the quality of the product or service they provide, but also the quality of the relationship with their customers and business partners (Roberts, Varki and Brodie, 2003; Lages *et al.*, 2005).

RQ attracted academic interest in the late 1980s and early 1990s respectively as a consequence of the move from the transactional view to the relational view as mentioned earlier. Gummeson (1987) was one of the first academics to consider the issue of relationship quality when he proposed that it could be interpreted in terms of accumulated value. Among the first to describe the concept of RQ were Dwyer and Oh (1987) and Crosby, Evans and Cowles (1990). Since then, a number of research papers have been published on RQ. It therefore seems somehow strange that the relevant literature not only provides just a few definitions of RQ, but also no general accepted one. Appendix VII presents four different definitions of RQ exemplarily. However, Henning-Thurau (2000) explains this lack of definitions and sophisticated discussion of this issue with varying ideas of what RQ actually involves.

Early research on RQ was primarily carried out in industrial and service sectors and covered mainly the traditional company-customer-relationship. For example, RQ has been measured between salespersons and customers (Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Lagace, Dahlstrom, and Gassenheimer, 1991) or service firms and customers (Roberts *et al.*, 2003). Research on RQ in a business-to-business-context followed gradually (e.g. Leuthesser, 1997, Ivens, 2004, Lages *et al.*, 2005; Woo and Ennew, 2004). Appendix VIII provides a chronological listing of studies on relationship quality in different business contexts.

However, most of research focuses on the customer's perspective only and therefore ignores the perspective of the other side of the dyad. A good example is the work of Wong (2004, p. 368), who links relationship quality 'to the overall impression that a customer has

concerning the whole relationship'. In this respect, Holmlund and Strandvik (1999, p. 686) note that 'in a business setting both parties are active in the interactions and have a perception of the quality of relationship.' Consequentially, RQ can be analysed either from the seller's or the buyer's perspective or by combining both. The latter approach is used in this study by incorporating both sides of the sponsorship dyad, as is explained later.

It is generally agreed that RQ is a higher-order construct made of various distinct – but related – dimensions (Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Roberts *et al.*, 2003; Ivens, 2004; Woo and Ennew, 2004). However, there is less of a consensus regarding the applicable dimensions since different researchers operationalise RQ differently. Woo and Ennew (2004, p. 1255) explain this lack of consensus with 'the variety of different types of relationships which can be observed across a range of different consumer and business markets.'

Previous studies (e.g. Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Lagace *et al.*, 1991; Wray, Palmer and Bejou, 1994; Hsieh and Hiang, 2004) have revealed that RQ can be viewed as a higher-order construct incorporating at least two dimensions: satisfaction and trust. Some others (e.g. Garbarino and Johnson, 1999; Ivens, 2004) describe RQ as a three-dimensional construct including satisfaction, trust, and commitment. In this respect, Wong and Sohal (2002b) argue that these variables are rather antecedents of RQ than part of the relationship quality construct. In addition, Garbarino and Johnson (1999) show that trust, satisfaction and commitment are not only important indicators of RQ, but also distinct, complementary variables. It therefore seems appropriate to view the various variables not as integrative RQ-elements but as dimensions and determinants of relationship quality.

Besides commitment, trust and satisfaction, a number of other dimensions of RQ have been proposed by various authors, for example the ethical orientation and expertise of the seller (Bejou *et al.*, 1996), minimal opportunism (Dwyer and Oh, 1987; Dorsch, Swanson,

and Kelly, 1998), mutual understanding of needs (Naudé and Buttle, 2000; Keating, Rugimbana, and Quazi, 2003), joint problem-solving (Mohr and Spekman, 1994), conflict (Kumar, Scheer, and Steenkamp, 1995; Lang and Colgate, 2003), cooperation (Keating *et al.*, 2003; Woo and Ennew, 2004), power (Naudé and Buttle, 2000), relationship duration or long-term orientation (Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Lages *et al.*, 2005), and communication (Mohr and Spekman, 1994; Keating *et al.*, 2003; Lages *et al.*, 2005).

The above studies on relationship quality were undertaken in various different industry sectors as Appendix VIII shows. The next section therefore focuses primarily on relationship quality in the context of sports sponsorship and football sponsorship respectively.

4.2.3.2 Relationship quality in the context of sponsorship relationships

Sponsorship has been widely ignored in the context of relationship quality research and relationship quality has been widely ignored in the context of sponsorship research. However, section 4.1 showed that the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorship need to be further established, because a transactional view has predominated in the sponsorship literature despite a shift from the transactional paradigm to the relational paradigm in the marketing literature. Furthermore, some papers on relationship quality (e.g. Wray *et al.*; 1994; Hopkinson and Hogarth-Scott, 1999; Lee and Wong, 2001; Wong and Sohal, 2002b; Hsieh and Hiang, 2004; Keating *et al.*, 2003; Lages *et al.*, 2005; Woo and Ennew, 2004) also refer to the shift from the transactional paradigm to the relational paradigm and emphasise the importance of relationship quality relating to the latter paradigm. The need for a stronger focus on the relational aspects of sponsorships is therefore based on the belief that long-term relationships between sponsors and sponsees are a key element in successful sponsorship deals and that a deeper understanding of the concept of relationship quality in a (professional football) sponsorship context is necessary.

In this respect it has to be emphasised once more that there will always be sponsorship deals which are transaction-based, because sponsors and/or sponsees have short-term objectives in mind and are perfectly happy to exchange financial resources and some property rights without engaging into a proper relationship. However, for all other sponsors and sponsees who see sponsorship not only as a transaction but as a long-term relationship where both partners trade off advantages in order to meet long-term objectives, a deeper understanding of the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorship is necessary. In this respect, the concept of relationship quality is likely to play an important role in the context of (professional football) sponsorship in view of the fact that relationship quality has been considered to be an important indicator of relationship success and business performance in other business contexts (Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Kiedaisch, 1997; Werner, 1997; Hennig-Thurau, 2000; Lee and Wong, 2001; Ivens, 2004). Therefore, this subsection provides a deeper understanding of the concept of relationship quality in the context of (professional football) sponsorship.

As mentioned earlier, the sponsorship literature has widely ignored the concept of relationship quality so far. The notable exception comes from Farrelly and Quester (2005), who examined RQ in the context of (Australian football) sponsorship. They mainly focused on the factors of commitment and trust as well as economic and non-economic satisfaction. For the purpose of their study, commitment has been defined as 'a willingness of the parties in the sponsorship relationship to make short-term investments in an effort to realise long-term benefits from the relationship' (p. 212). This definition is at least questionable in view of the fact that investments in order to leverage the sponsorship could be part of the sponsorship strategy, which could have been set up in the beginning of the sponsorship where commitment has not been incisive. It can be argued that additional investments reflect commitment to some extent but not exclusive. With regard to trust, Farrelly and Quester note that sponsors bestow trust if they believe the sponsee to be

‘reliable, knowledgeable about the relationship, and open in its dealing with them’ (p. 216). Satisfaction, however, is seen as the sponsors’ global evaluation of the relationship, which binds them to their sponsee. In this respect, the authors emphasise that satisfaction acts both as an outcome of the sponsorship process as well as an antecedent of it. Therefore the role of satisfaction in business relationships remains somehow unclear. Figure 4.2 reflects the conceptual model of sponsorship relationship quality according to Farrelly and Quester.

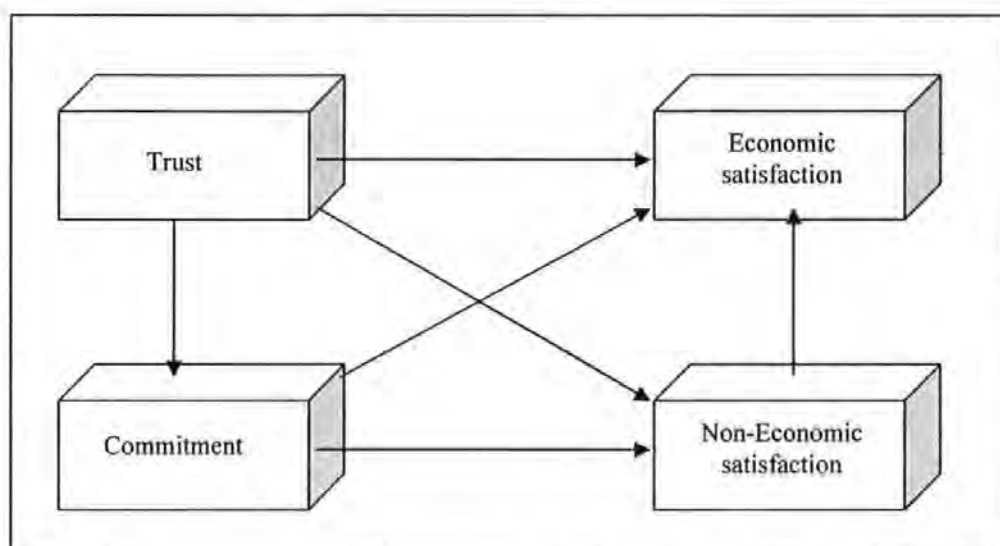


Figure 4.2: conceptual model of sponsorship relationship quality according to Farrelly and Quester (2005, p. 214)

The results of their study proved that commitment is a crucial antecedent of economic satisfaction while trust is a crucial antecedent of both satisfaction types and therefore the essential variable in the sponsorship relationship. Farrelly and Quester’s research, however, has two major shortcomings. The first limitation refers to the small sample size and the number of unique characteristics of Australian football sponsorship as their context of research. Therefore, results might not be so easily transferable to other research contexts. The second limitation is that the authors only take the sponsors’ perspective into consideration. It is fair enough to mention that Farrelly and Quester emphasise the importance of a dyadic perspective and the need for further research in this area:

The role of the sport entity in the [sport sponsorship] relationship has been all but completely overlooked in empirical research. Clearly, more dyadic analyses are required in future sponsorship studies (p. 217).

This is a clear implication for the primary research phase.

In summary it might be said that commitment, trust and satisfaction are established and well researched determinants of RQ as noted above. According to Farrelly and Quester (2005) they apply to sponsorship as well. Two questions are brought up in this respect. First, do these determinants mentioned above apply for the relationship between professional football clubs and sponsors in the context of this research as well? And second, are there any other factors which determine relationship quality in the sponsorship dyad in English and German football? Both questions are implications for the primary research phase. However, whereas this section mainly dealt with general theoretical concepts, the next section will take a stronger emphasis on sports sponsorship and professional football sponsorship by examining the 'perfect' and the 'real' situation in English and German football sponsorship.

4.3 The relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors

Of special interest in the context of professional football sponsorship is the quality of the relationship between sponsors and the football club. It is therefore important to know how a 'perfect' relationship between sponsor and sponsee can be achieved and how the 'real' situation of the relationship between clubs and their sponsors in English and German professional football looks like.

4.3.1 Working towards a 'perfect' relationship between sponsors and sponsees

Various authors make suggestion in order to improve the relationship quality between sponsors and sponsees in the context of sports sponsorship (e.g. Cheng and Stotlar, 1999;

Farrelly and Quester, 2003; Chadwick and Thwaites, 2005). The responsibility to make the relationship work is primarily born by the sponsees since they are the suppliers which have to serve the customer. Therefore the sponsee has to be mindful of various things before, during and after the initial sponsorship. A good sponsorship relationship already starts with honest negotiations of the deal. Cheng and Stotlar (1999) point out that sponsees have to present the accurate numbers and should avoid promising more than can be offered. During the negotiation process, sponsess should also listen to their potential partner and trying to see their perspectives and objectives (Anton, 1996). Once a sponsorship deal is signed, sponsees must not stop to serve and communicate but rather keep their sponsors involved and informed frequently with up-date information. Chadwick and Thwaites (2004) emphasise the need for the right people to manage the deal after the contract has been signed. Anton (1996, p.8) speaks of 'delivering service above and beyond the expected [and] developing a spirit of teamwork.' In addition, sponsees should be proactive in advancing the sponsorship relationship (Farrelly and Quester, 2003).

The sponsor, however, should rather act as a partner than a customer. This involves the attempt to understand where the other party (i.e. the sponsored property) comes from and the knowledge of both parties' requirements and objectives (Ford, 1998). Chadwick (2002) points out that the sponsee will view the sponsor as a partner and try to realise the full value from a sponsorship deal if the sponsor is prepared to work at building and developing the relationship. Regularly meetings, ideas exchange and open communication lead to a committed relationship, which in turn benefits both.

Bembennek and Meier (2003) suggest in their dissertation that the implementation of relationship management between sponsor and sponsee is necessary in order to make the sponsorship successful.

4.3.2 The 'real' picture in English and German professional football sponsorship

In theory, the ideal sponsorship situation is a relationship where both partners work together in order to fulfil mutual objectives. However, reality often shows a different picture. For example, Farrelly and Quester (2003) found out through their investigation of Australian Football sponsorships that some sponsorship properties (i.e. sponsees) have not been as proactive as necessary. Van der Schalk (1993) analysed the sponsorship situation in professional golf sport and made out a significant lack of professionalism on the part of sponsored properties. This view is supported by Mussler (2001) who identifies a deficient marketing mentality (which is reflected in a lack of understanding what the sponsor needs and wants), too little creativity and not enough emphasis on the benefit of sponsorships as the main shortfalls of sport properties. Nevertheless, he also rates the professionalism of sponsors as sometimes dissatisfying. However, the results of Bembennek and Meier's study (2003) disproved their anticipated hypothesis that the sponsees are not as professional as they are supposed to be, although the interviewed sponsors rated commercial competence and marketing-know-how as the main weakness of their sponsored properties.

Although the research papers mentioned above relate to sports sponsorship, they do not reflect the real picture of English and German football sponsorship. Indeed, there is little empirical research that examines the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors neither in England's nor in Germany's top football league. One of the few papers comes from Chadwick and Thwaites (2005), who investigate the practice of sponsorship management in English professional football⁵. Their research reveals a rather strange picture with some football clubs behaving like they are actually the customer and not the other way round. This seems to be even more grotesque bearing in mind that a lot of sponsors are large corporations in contrast to football clubs, which are small to medium

⁵ i.e. the clubs of the English Premier League and the former First Division (now Coca-Cola Championship) and their respective shirt sponsors.

sized businesses at the most. Football clubs, nevertheless, seem to dictate the terms owing to their appeal and their power. As a result, sponsors are sometimes forced to agree to short-term deals involving poor terms and conditions. However, the authors also emphasise that sponsors are not as innocent as this because some of them walk out of the contract or decide at short notice not to renew the deal. In addition, some companies negotiate the sponsorship deals on a strategic, senior level but then leave it to junior managers on the middle level or sometimes simply to the wrong people. In this respect, Chadwick and Thwaites (2005, p. 336) note that 'a number of sponsorship managers interviewed were either unqualified to hold the post of sponsorship manager, lacked experience or were disinterested in the medium.' Another problem revealed by their research is the different degree of professionalism. The authors state that too many football clubs lack both marketing orientation and commercial managerial competence. In addition, they are constantly seeking to sign better and bigger deals. Their attitude contrasts strongly with the profile of their sponsors, who are market-orientated and market-led and have a much stronger sense of strategic direction.

Bembennek and Meier (2003) published a dissertation (for a diploma) investigating the relationship between professional team sport clubs in Germany and their respective shirt sponsors. Although the clubs of the Bundesliga were included into the survey, the results can not describe explicitly the situation in Germany's top football league since basketball and team handball clubs were also included. The description of the relationship between German Bundesliga clubs and their sponsors is therefore restricted to articles in German sport business magazines such as *Horizont Sport Business* or *SPONSORS*. A survey of the latter magazine created quite a stir. In the June-issue 2003 all Bundesliga shirt sponsors were asked to rate their relationship. Seventeen out of eighteen shirt sponsors took part in the survey. The main criticism referred to the public appearance of clubs representatives. Some sponsors criticised the showmanship of some Bundesliga managers. Another

disputed issue was the perceived lack of professionalism and market/consumer orientation on the part of the clubs. One sponsor complained that they are only seen as financial backers. As an explanation serves the obvious lack of marketing experts on senior level of some football clubs which rather employ former football players with little marketing skills. The survey concludes that Bundesliga clubs have to rethink their market orientation and improve their relationship management towards their sponsors (Sohns and Weilguny, 2003).

Six month later, in the February-issue 2004, some clubs' representatives took a stand and vindicated themselves under the headline 'Wir sind besser als unser Ruf' ('We are better than our reputation'). The reactions were quite different but the bottom-line is nearly the same: football clubs made some mistakes and were not as professional in the past but have learned a lot over the last years. The interviewed clubs' representatives expressed a clear willingness to try to understand the sponsor and to help him to meet his objectives. However, the problem seems to be the manpower and the size of the marketing departments of Bundesliga clubs, which are sometimes simply understaffed. Therefore, good ideas can not be put into action. Some clubs also expressed the concern that not all sponsors have the skills and the experience to make their sponsorship successful. The survey concludes that communication between clubs and sponsors is an important issue, which has to be further improved (Sohns, 2004b).

A recent study by the Pilot Group (2005) revealed a slightly different picture. The interviewed sponsors of German Bundesliga clubs attest that Bundesliga clubs are highly professional in terms of market orientation and creativity. However, they also note a need for improvements in terms of transparency, flexibility, advice and servicing.

All in all, it can be said that the 'real' relationship between most professional football clubs and their sponsors both in the English Premier League and in the German Bundesliga seems to provide much room for improvement and the need for further analysis.

4.4 Implications for primary research

This chapter examined professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between clubs and sponsors. The relational aspect of professional football sponsorship has attracted only little academic interest despite a shift from the transactional paradigm to the relational paradigm in the general marketing literature and the resulting rise of relationship marketing as a serious research subject. In addition, the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship has been widely ignored despite its importance for the success of B-2-B relationships. Consequently, the clear aim for the primary research phase is to examine the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors in greater detail. The main research questions for further research are:

- How would an ideal relationship between clubs and sponsors look?
- How do clubs and sponsors actually perceive their relationship?
- What are the specific and current dimensions of these relationships?

All these questions will be addressed in the course of the primary research. The next chapter introduces the methodology on which the primary research is based on.

5 METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology which forms the basis of the thesis. It gives a rationale for choosing the methodology, describes the data collection and data analysis process and, finally, addresses the issue of anonymity and confidentiality. Additionally, Appendix IX provides an introduction of social research in general (addressing different research philosophies, research strategies, time horizons, data collection methods, triangulation approaches and important criteria in business research) in order to put the chosen research strategy and the selected research methods for this study into context.

5.1 The appropriate research strategy for this thesis

Business researchers can select from a wide range of research methodology (including the research paradigm, the research strategy, the research approaches and finally the methods for data collection) as Appendix IX shows. The right selection of the research methodology is essential for the outcome of the thesis and depends on various factors, first of all on the nature of the research and the research questions. The selected research methodology should ensure that the right data are generated in order to answer the research questions.

This is supported by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003, p. 85), who say:

It would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that one approach is 'better' than another. This would miss the point. They are 'better' at doing different things. As always, which is 'better' depends on the research question(s) [the researcher is] seeking to answer.

In addition to that, other factors and practical considerations play an important role as well, for example the amount of resources (i.e. money, time or access to data). Some research methods might be the key to useful and worthy data but are inappropriate because they are time consuming and/or prove to be too expensive. Therefore, the researcher has to decide very carefully which research methods are most appropriate regarding his/her research

question and resources. The following subsection lists the main research questions resulting from the previous chapters. The next subsections then present the research methods selected for the purpose of this research and justify their selection.

5.1.1 Areas of research and research questions

With regard to the previous chapters the following five research areas and research questions of specific interest have been defined:

Football as a business

Chapter 1 described the main characteristics of the football business as well as its main peculiarities according to the relevant literature. It will now be interesting to see how some of the main market players define the environment they are working in. The research questions will therefore be:

- What are the main characteristics of the football business?
- Is football a 'big' business or not?

Sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs

Chapter 2 described sponsorship as a revenue source related to the other income streams. Various reports show that the importance of sponsorship to professional football clubs has increased within the last years and that sponsorship has still potential to increase further. Therefore, it would be interesting to see how the club's representatives as well as sponsorship specialists rank sponsorship as a source of revenues. The research questions in this area are:

- How important is sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs?
- How could the importance of sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs develop?

Football sponsorship as a marketing tool

Chapter 3 described (football) sponsorship as a marketing tool according to the relevant literature. It would be interesting to see how the sponsors as well as the clubs and sponsorship experts rate football sponsorship as a marketing tool. The following questions seek to do that:

- What kind of objectives do football sponsors have?
- Why do companies invest in football sponsorship?
- What are the reasons for successful sponsorship deals?
- What are the current trends in the area of football sponsorship?
- What can be improved in the area of football sponsorship?
- Can sponsorship be measured, and what do companies actually measure?

Relationship between clubs and sponsors

The relationship between football clubs and sponsors is critical to this study, and was discussed in Chapter 4. Among other sources, a survey of the technical magazine *SPONSORS* was cited, which gives the German Bundesliga clubs a poor testimonial and therefore provides a reason for further investigation. Of special interest are the following questions:

- How would an ideal relationship between clubs and sponsors look?
- How do clubs and sponsors actually perceive their relationship?
- What are the specific and current dimensions of professional football sponsorship relationships?

Anglo-German differences

Chapter 2 already summarised the main differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga with regard to the main income streams in general and

sponsorship in specific. It seems that sponsorship is more important in Germany than in England. Therefore the following questions occur:

- What are the general differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in commercial terms?
- What are the reasons for the differences in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga?
- How could the gap in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga progress according to the protagonists?

5.1.2 The right choice of research methods

As already indicated, Appendix IX provides an overview of the research process and describes various elements of the process. This subsection presents the researcher's point of view and gives a rationale for the research methods which have been selected for the purpose of this study.

- *Research philosophy:* the world is not black and white and therefore social research is not a choice between two extremes as indicated by the two paradigms of positivism and phenomenology. It can be argued that research in the field of football sponsorship is never positivistic because it depends on human beliefs, thoughts and actions. Sponsorship as a phenomenon is shaped by the people dealing with it, and research involving people (rather than physical laws or mathematical equations) tends to be more phenomenological. In addition, the author of this thesis believes that researchers in the field of football sponsorship themselves shape the subject of research. This is best illustrated by the fact that some interviewees of the qualitative research phase reconsidered some aspects of professional football sponsorship after (or during) the

interviews¹. Furthermore, research is biased and value-laden from the author's point of view, although interpretations and analysis of data was carried out as value-free and unbiased as possible. All in all, the author's research philosophy is located between positivism and phenomenology with a tendency to the latter paradigm.

- *Research approach:* Sekaran (2000, p. 26) notes that 'answers to issues can be found either by the process of deduction or the process of induction, or by a combination of the two.' The latter is exactly the approach that the researcher uses in this thesis. First, an inductive approach has been selected as there is little existing literature on professional football sponsorship in an Anglo-German context. The inductive approach resulted not only in a broader picture of the sponsorship situation but also in the generation of principal research propositions (PRPs) and hypotheses². Subsequently, a deductive approach was selected in order to test these PRPs and hypotheses.
- *Research strategy:* Social research offers a wide range of possible research strategies as described in Appendix IX. The most appropriate strategy is the one which is most likely to generate satisfying answers to the research questions. Therefore experiments, ethnography and action research were not even considered in the first place. However, other strategies such as case studies or observations were considered but then rejected. One of the objectives of this research is to give an overall picture of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. Case studies, however, provide only a particular view and not necessarily an overview. In addition, there is always the problem of which cases to select and how to access the organisations (i.e. the clubs and the sponsoring companies). Consequently, case studies were also rejected. Therefore it seemed most appropriate to apply a combination of

¹ For example, one interviewee said after the interview that it wasn't quite obvious for him that there is such a wide gap between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship income. As a consequence of the interview, he/she considered implementing a strategy in order to become more sophisticated about sponsorship.

² The difference between PRPs and hypotheses will be explained in Chapter 7.

research strategies, incorporating elements of grounded theory and a survey in order to test the PRPs and hypotheses which have been generated from the former one.

- *Time horizon:* Given the restricted (and relatively short) period of time in order to complete a doctoral thesis as well as the obvious lack of secondary data in order to carry out a longitudinal study, the decision was taken to carry out a cross-sectional study with a snapshot of the 2004/05-season.
- *Data collection methods:* The recommendations of Saunders *et al.* (2003, p. 281) 'to evaluate all possible data collection methods and to choose those most appropriate to the research questions(s) and objectives' were followed. Accordingly, the decision was taken to use a multi-method approach involving qualitative interviews in the form of exploratory conversations with experts and also a quantitative survey as the main data collection instruments. In addition to these research methods, a quantitative content analysis was used in order to prepare the questionnaire survey and provide additional data.

The rationale for selecting *in-depth interviews* was the belief that, in order to seek answers to the research questions, it would be most appropriate to talk to the people in charge, i.e. relevant representatives of the clubs and sponsors. The aim was to generate a range of constructs and items from both sides in order to understand both perspectives. This is in line with Oppenheim (1992), who identifies developing ideas and understanding how people think and feel about the topics of concern to the research as the principal purpose of exploratory interviews. In addition, sponsorship and/or football experts have been taken into consideration as a third group in order to add another – more neutral – perspective. As a result of the interviews and in combination with the findings of the literature review, PRPs and hypotheses have then been built up.

In addition, a *content analysis* was chosen in order to generate the sample size for the questionnaire survey in view of the fact that there is a considerable lack of data regarding sponsors in the English Premier League and German Bundesliga. However, the possibility of visiting the grounds of Premier League and Bundesliga clubs on match days in order to investigate the sponsorship situation (i.e. the perimeter boards) on the spot was considered but then abandoned in view of the costs and time. The problem was not only travelling to and attending at least 38 games³ over a period of several weeks, but getting hold of tickets, which can be a real difficulty, since some clubs allocate tickets only to their members⁴. Also, observing one single game would not necessarily reflect the overall sponsorship situation of the club in question, because some companies rent perimeter boards for one or two games only. Therefore it was decided to use recordings of televised English Premier League and German Bundesliga games as well as a content analysis of clubs' and sponsors' websites in order to generate a broader picture of the sponsorship situation in both leagues. The content analysis also served as a basement for the questionnaire survey by providing a valuable list of contacts and addresses.

Consequently, a *quantitative survey* using structured self-administered questionnaires, which were sent by post and by e-mail, was selected in order to collect the type of data which enables testing the PRPs and hypotheses. Questionnaire surveys are the most popular form of data collections methods used by deductive researchers according to Saunders *et al.* (2003). On the other hand, the use of questionnaires and subsequent data analysis has predominated in previous studies on relationship quality (e.g. Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Lang and Colgate, 2003; Roberts *et al.*, 2003; Lages *et al.*, 2005) and sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship (e.g. Farrelly and Quester, 2003, 2005; Chadwick, 2004).

³ Involving the grounds of all 20 Premier League and 18 Bundesliga clubs.

⁴ At this point a myth has to be cleared up: doing a PhD on football sponsorship does not necessarily mean that one has access to all football games, as wrongly assumed by the peer group of the researcher. In fact, getting hold of tickets proved to be as difficult for the researcher as for any other non-member of football clubs.

The research methods selected for the purpose of this research also reflect the nature of the research, as it investigates sponsorship from *different* perspectives. Therefore, it is more than fair to do so by the means of *different* methods.

All in all, it can be concluded that the research philosophy (as applied to this study) is essentially pragmatic, whilst recognising the critical importance of phenomenological contributions. Figure 5.1 summarises and illustrates the research process of this study on the following page. The next section, however, describes the collection of data and the subsequent analysis in greater detail.

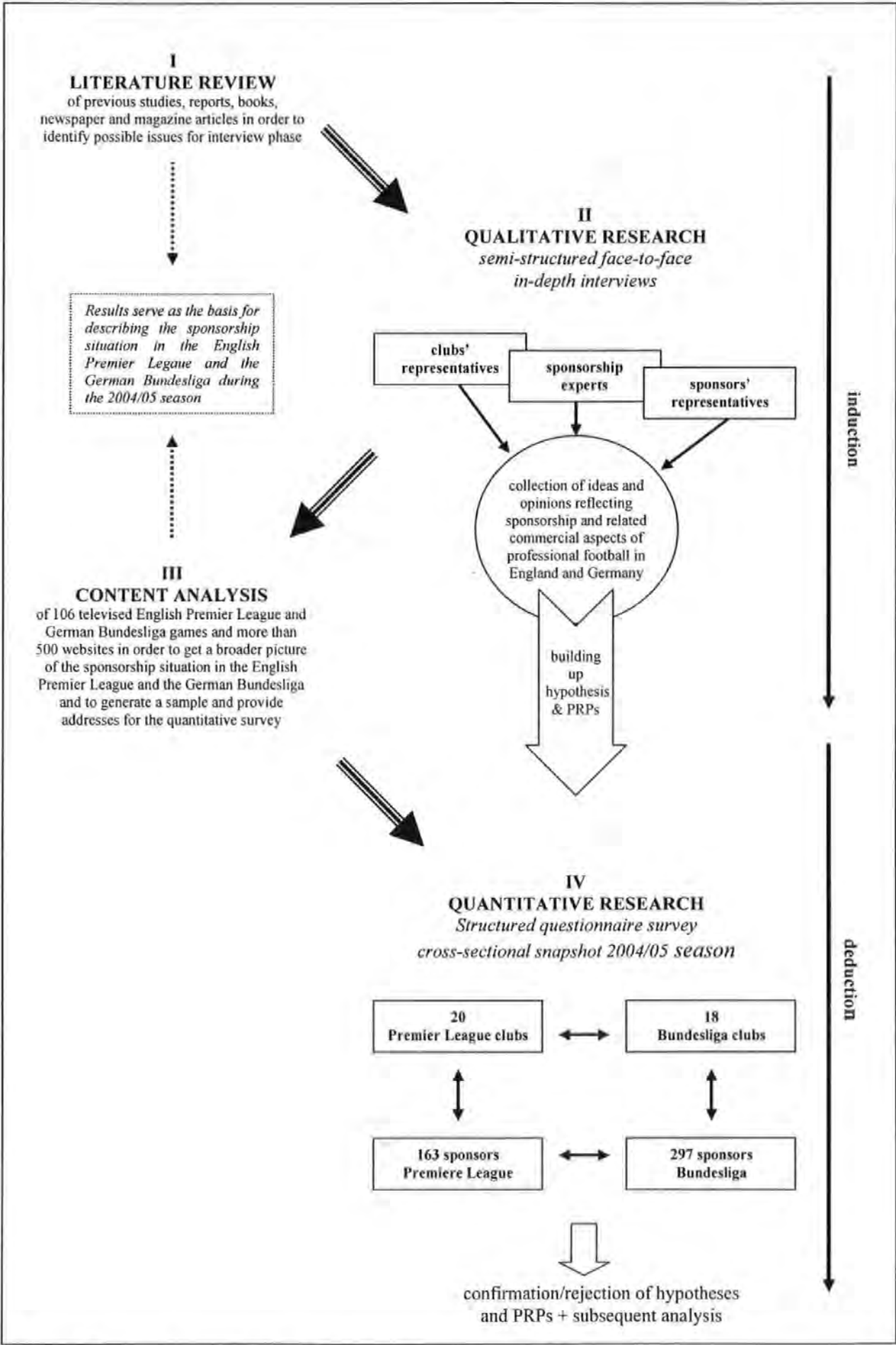


Figure 5.1: graphic representation of the data collection process

5.2 Data collection and analysis

This section describes the preparation and realisation of the data collection process as well as the data analysis in chronological order, starting with the qualitative in-depth interviews, followed by the content analysis and concluding with the quantitative survey.

5.2.1 Qualitative interviews

The whole process of collecting qualitative research data over a period of sixteen months can be divided into three phases: the pre-interview phase, the original interview and the analysis of the data. Although there seems to be a logical sequence, at a particular point in time the phases overlapped or even ran parallel. For example, when the first bunch of interviews had already been carried out and partly transcribed, other interviews were just in preparation. The following sections describe the various phases in greater detail.

5.2.1.1 The pre-interview phase

The initial plan was to carry out several interviews with clubs' representatives, sponsors representatives as well as football and sponsorship experts in England and Germany in order to generate a range of opinions and ideas. With regard to time and financial resources, a sample size up to a maximum of eighteen interviews had been set, ideally representing an equal share of the three groups as well as both countries. Therefore, a list with potential interview candidates was produced in June 2003. Some of the candidates made it on to the list simply because of their position, for example as a Marketing Director of a professional football club or a sponsoring company. Some others attracted attention by publishing books or articles with regard to the subject. In July 2003, the first potential German interviewees had been contacted by a letter asking for an interview. The letter contained a formal enquiry, a brief description of the project as well as the invitation to contact Professor David Head in order to cross-check the seriousness of this enquiry.

However, the response rate of the first batch of enquiries was surprisingly good, with seven out of eight candidates responding immediately.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002, p. 90) note that 'an important factor underlying the effectiveness of social interaction within qualitative interviewing' is trust and that 'the first point is to ensure that one is well clued up' about the interviewee. Therefore, as soon as an interview appointment had been arranged, information about the respondents and/or the institution they represent was collected and read prior to the interview.

Since the interviews took the form of semi-structured one-to-one conversations, individual interview guides had been created in advance for two reasons. On the one hand, interviewees expect that the researcher is prepared. It would be a disaster to sit there not knowing what to ask. On the other hand, the interview 'should also be flexible enough to allow the discussion to lead into areas which may not have been considered prior to the interview but which may be potentially relevant to the study', according to Goulding (2002, p. 59). The structure recommended by the various interview guides was more or less the same including the following parts:

- 1) Introduction: information about the researcher and the research project, use of findings, confidentiality and the permission to record.
- 2) Questions: around ten open questions starting with general/background information regarding the respondent's role and then leading to more specific questions. The question as to whether the respondent wishes to add or ask anything completed the list of questions.
- 3) Presentation of interim findings and discussion: time permitting and off the records.

In February 2004, the first English interview candidates had been contacted. Although the response rate was as good as in Germany, the actual outcome, with just four out of eight candidates agreeing to arrange a meeting, was less satisfying. The interview appointments had then been arranged in a way to ensure minimum time and cost expenses (for example

three interviews on one day in the same city). Although some of the interviews even generated additional contacts, as some interviewees opened the door to other potential candidates, arranging interviews with English football sponsors proved to be a real difficulty. A lot of companies responded negatively to the enquiry for various reasons, i.e. lack of time/resources, general company policies, or confidentiality. All in all, seventeen interviews were arranged and carried out.

5.2.1.2 The initial interview

The first group of interviews was carried out during a field trip to Germany in September 2003. Some other German respondents were interviewed in a second field trip three months later. The first interviews with English participants were carried out in March 2003. Over the next couple of months, several other interviews were held in England and Germany.

Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2002, p. 92) refer to the issue of the effects of using tape to record interviews. Their advice to hand 'over the responsibility for switching the tape on and off to the interviewee, so that when he or she does not wish certain parts to be recorded, they can just switch off the machine' has been followed. However, all of the respondents were happy to give information and had no problem whatsoever about being taped and/or cited.

The pre-prepared list of questions proved to be a good guide through the interview and confirmed observations made by Meuser and Nagel (1991, p. 449), who note: 'Even though this may sound paradoxically, it is precisely the fact that you are using a pre-prepared list which ensures that the interview flows freely.' However, sometimes some questions were dropped during the interview in favour of more important questions which arose during the course of the interview, and sometimes the sequence of questions was changed spontaneously.

By October 2004 the phase of collecting primary data through qualitative interviews had been completed. Of the initially planned eighteen interviews, seventeen had been carried out. The composition of the interviewees was as follows:

- Six interviews with sponsorship and/or football specialists. Three from Germany, two from England and one Anglo-German expert.
- Six interviews with club's representatives with regard to marketing/sponsorship, covering three Premier League clubs and three Bundesliga clubs.
- Five sponsors' representatives who represent the shirt sponsors of two Premier League clubs and three Bundesliga clubs.

Figure 5.2 on the following page introduces the participants in greater detail.⁵

⁵ For issues regarding anonymity and confidentiality the reader's attention is drawn to section 5.3

	England	Germany
football clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Andy Hosie, Head of Marketing at Everton FC, who is responsible for all sponsorship activities ▪ Annie Tufte, Suzanne Elliott, Marie-Louise Culbert, brand managers of Liverpool FC, who work on a daily base with sponsors of the club ▪ Steve Sutherland, PA to the chief executive of Charlton Athletic FC, who is involved in all levels of sponsorship at Charlton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peter Leible, Marketing Director of TSV 1860 München* and responsible for all sponsorship activities of the club ▪ Jochen A. Rotthaus, managing director of VfB Stuttgart Marketing GmbH, and therefore responsible for all sponsorship activities of the club ▪ Katja Kraus, board of directors at Hamburger Sportverein, responsible for marketing and sponsorship
shirt sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Daragh Persse, Senior Sponsorship and Media Manager at Vodafone UK, who is responsible for the sponsorship deal with Manchester United ▪ Scott Stevens, Head of Marketing at DWS Investments, who is responsible for the sponsorship deal with Aston Villa Football Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joachim Schlien, Head of Sponsorship – debitel AG who is responsible for the sponsorship deal with VfB Stuttgart ▪ Peter Baumann, Marketing Director– Liqui Moly, who is responsible for the sponsorship deal with TSV 1860 München* ▪ Astrid Wittorff, Head of Marketing – Fraport AG, who is responsible for the sponsorship deal with Eintracht Frankfurt*
football & sponsorship experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Rogan Taylor, Director of the Football Industry Group at the University of Liverpool and widely recognised specialist in all fields of English football ▪ Richard Busby, CEO of BDS Sponsorship, one of Europe's leading sponsorship consultancies ▪ Stefan Ludwig, Senior Consultant at the Deloitte Sports Group and specialist in the English and German football market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jürgen Holder, founder and owner of sponsorcom, a sponsorship consultancy which deals with 14 Bundesliga clubs ▪ Professor Dr. Arnold Hermanns, a widely recognised sponsorship specialist at the University of the Bundeswehr in Munich ▪ Dr. Michael Schaffrath, sponsorship and football business specialist at the Technical University of Munich

* = at the particular point of time when the interview has been carried out, both TSV 1860 München and Eintracht Frankfurt belonged to the German Bundesliga. They were relegated after the 2003/04-season. Frankfurt, however, has been promoted to the Bundesliga after the 2004/05 season again.

Figure 5.2: list of interviewees taking part in the qualitative research phase

5.2.1.3 Analysing the qualitative data

Once primary data have been collected, it has to be analysed in order to answer the research question. A key issue in qualitative data analysis is rigour. The first choice to make is whether computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as NUD*IST (Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising) shall be used or not. Leybourne (2002, p. 102), in his thesis, compares the advantages and disadvantages of using CAQDAS and concludes that 'qualitative analysis software can only assist, rather than undertake, the level of rigorous analysis required.' Therefore, the use of CAQDAS has not been taken into further consideration. Nevertheless, a rigorous way of analysing the data from the qualitative interviews had to be found. There are many approaches to qualitative analysis, and two of them are described in the following.

According to Meuser and Nagel (1991) qualitative interviews with specialists and experts are most effective when analysed by using six subsequent steps. First, the interview has to be transcribed. Meuser and Nagel point out that only the relevant passages have to be transcribed and that a system of notification is not essential. Second, the interview has to be paraphrased and relevant passages have to be clustered regarding the various subject matters. Third, a headline should then be added to the paraphrased passages. This again applies only for the individual interviews. With the fourth step, the researcher leaves the level of the individual case by comparing the headlines and passages of the individual interviews with each other. After that, sociological drafting takes place by linking the primary data with sociological terminology. The final step is the theoretical generalisation of the results.

In comparison to that, Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) use an interactive data analysis model. They state that the analysis of the collected data consists of the following three elements:

- data reduction, which ‘refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcription’.
- data display, which ‘is designed to assemble organised information into an immediately accessible, compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move on to the next step of analysis the display suggests may be helpful’.
- conclusion drawing/verifying, using various techniques such as noting patterns, clustering, making metaphors, making contrasts/comparisons, finding intervening variables and noting relations between variables, building a logical chain of evidence, or making conceptual/theoretical coherence.

Miles and Huberman point out that data reduction and data display are not separate from analysis. They are part of the analysis. The three streams of qualitative data analysis together with the process of data collection can be represented either in parallel form or in a cyclical interactive model as indicated in Figure 5.3. Therefore, the model clearly differs from the sequential Six-Step-Analysis-Guide according to Meuser and Nagel.

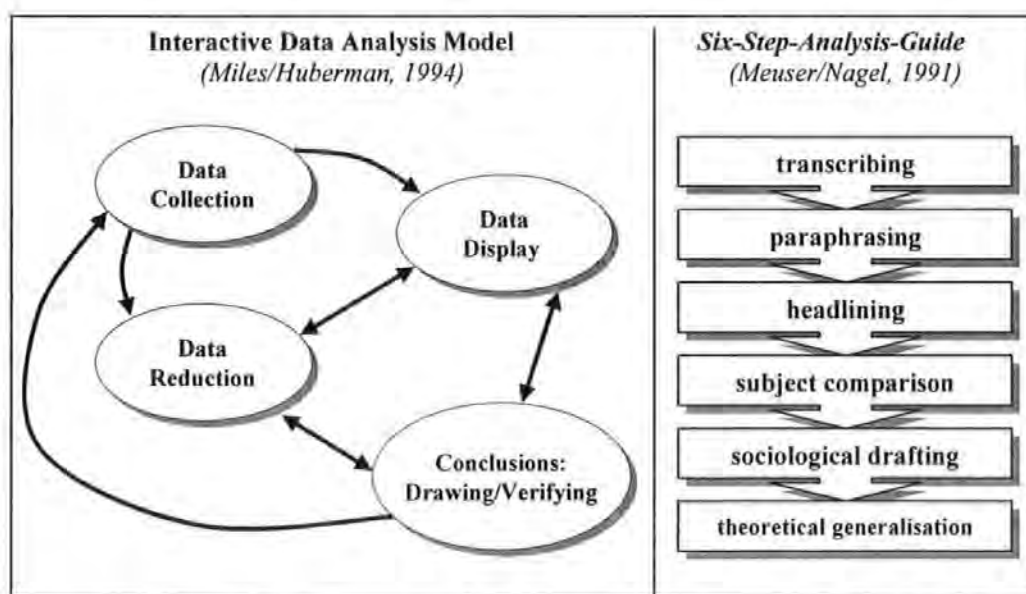


Figure 5.3: depiction of the Interactive Data Analysis Model according to Miles and Huberman (1994) and the Six-Step-Analysis-Guide according to Meuser and Nagel (1991)

Both concepts seem to provide useful techniques in order to analyse the collected data. For the purpose of this research, both concepts have been combined in a five-step-analysis-process.

Step 1: Transcription

After the interviews had been carried out, the tapes were transcribed. Linguistic characteristics such as dialect or fillers have been cleared up as far as they had no relevance to the content. Although the literature suggests that interviews can be transcribed by other people than the researcher, all the interviews have been transcribed by the author himself in order to get a feeling for the data.

Step 2: Creation of subject areas

The transcribed interviews were read through several times in order to get a feeling for the data and the content. During this stage some comments have been made for each individual interview. These comments then led to the creation of relevant subject areas in combination with the already existing research subjects/questions mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Step 3: Selection of statements and allocation to the specific subject areas

After the subject areas had been created, the transcriptions were read through again in order to select relevant statements. These statements then were allocated to the specific subject areas.

Step 4: Comparison of the statements within the specific subject areas

The individual statements within the specific subject areas were then compared with each other in order to filter differences and/or similarities. Of special interest was the question as to whether there were any gaps between sponsors' and clubs' statements.

Step 5: Conclusions

From the data generated in the previous stages, conclusions were then drawn. These conclusions then were used to build principal research propositions and hypotheses as described in greater detail in Chapter 7.

5.2.2 Quantitative survey

The qualitative research phase was followed by a quantitative research phase, which took several months and involved a content analysis and a survey. This quantitative research process has been carried out in various stages. First, a sample had to be created by means of a content analysis. Then the questionnaire had to be designed and pilot tested before it was actually distributed and collected. The last stage incorporated the data preparation and consequent analysis in order to test the PRPs and hypotheses. All these stages will be described in the following sections.

5.2.2.1 Creating the sample

In order to carry out a survey, researchers need to have a suitable sampling frame (Denscombe, 2003). They also have the choice between conducting a census or carrying out a sample survey. Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 93) define census as ‘the enumeration of an entire population. This involves the collection of data in relation to all units in a population, rather than in relation to a sample of units in that population’.

The initial plan was to conduct a census of clubs and sponsors in the context of the top football leagues in England and Germany. Therefore an accurate and up-to-date database (i.e. a suitable sampling frame) of both sponsors and clubs needed to be constructed. It was not difficult to create such a list for the clubs, as their number was limited to 20 English Premier League clubs and 18 German Bundesliga clubs. In the case of sponsors, the task was more challenging, as there is a clear lack of useful and public available data concerning sponsors of English Premier League clubs and/or German Bundesliga clubs.

That is not to say that such collections do not exist, but there are two main limitations. First, published lists of sponsors are mainly reduced to shirt sponsors or kit suppliers only. Second, market research companies have detailed lists of names and addresses, but do not make them available to third parties as a matter of fact. Consequently, a list had to be specially created by the researcher. Therefore a *content analysis*, consisting of the following four steps, has been carried out:

Step 1: Review of relevant sources

Various compilations and articles published in newspapers, technical magazines, and on websites have been collected. The analysis of these sources then resulted in a full list of shirt sponsors and kit suppliers of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs as provided in Chapter 2.

Step 2: Websites analysis

Although Step 1 identified some other sponsors besides the shirt sponsors and kit suppliers, the number of sponsors was not sufficient enough. Therefore the clubs' websites were checked for further sponsors. The results were informative, with all eighteen Bundesliga clubs presenting their official partners on their website, whereas only ten English Premier League clubs listed their sponsors on their homepage. As a consequence, a total of 236 commercial partners were identified for the German clubs and only 42 commercial partners for the English clubs. In order to gain a broader picture and identify as many companies as possible associated with clubs of the English and German top league, an additional content analysis had to be carried out.

Step 3: Video analysis

In order to identify companies advertising on perimeter boards, an analysis of television coverage of English Premier League and German Bundesliga games was carried out.

Therefore, broadcasts of BBC1 *Match of the Day* and BBC2 *Match of the Day 2* as well as ARD *Sportschau* were recorded and the tapes analysed. The content analysis of the recordings turned out to be a difficult task owing to the poor quality of the recordings, poor visual angles, small perimeter boards (especially on English grounds) or simply because the information on the perimeter board was too small to be recognizable. Therefore, the recordings of some games had to be wound back and forth a number of times in order to identify the name or logo of the companies advertising on the perimeter boards. However, a reasonable number of sponsors (186 for the English Premier League and 182 for the German Bundesliga) were identified as a result.

Step 4: Collection of further details and addresses

All in all, 185 companies associated with English Premier League clubs⁶ and 312 companies associated with German Bundesliga⁷ clubs were identified. In order to generate a broader picture of the sponsorship situation in England and Germany (as presented in Chapter 2) and to collect the addresses of the companies for the purpose of the questionnaire survey, a second website analysis was carried out. Therefore, all available websites of sponsors have been visited in order to generate additional information such as the sector of industry, the country of origin, and the contact details. In the case of companies which did not have a website at the time of the analysis, complementary sources (for example the Yellow Pages or the UK business credit reports⁸) were used. A helpful source of information proved to be the *Hollis Sponsorship & Donations Yearbook 2005*, which provides some useful key contacts of English football sponsors. Step 4

⁶ Although 20 shirt sponsors, 42 commercial partners and 186 smaller sponsors were identified as companies associated with English Premier League clubs, owing to the fact that some companies are shirt sponsor of club A, commercial partner of club B and a smaller sponsor for club C, the adjusted segmentation reads like this: 20 shirt sponsors, 39 commercial partners and 126 smaller sponsors.

⁷ Although 18 shirt sponsors, 236 commercial partners and 182 smaller sponsors were identified as companies associated with English Premier League clubs, the adjusted segmentation reads like this: 18 shirt sponsors, 234 commercial partners and 60 smaller sponsors.

⁸ <http://www.ukdata.com/>

generated the addresses of 460 sponsors, with 163 companies attached to English Premier League clubs and 297 companies associated with German Bundesliga clubs.

As a result of the content analysis, the overall sample involved 38 clubs and 460 sponsors, as indicated by Table 5.1.

	Both leagues	English Premier League	German Bundesliga
Clubs	38	20	18
Sponsors	460	163	297
<i>Shirt sponsors</i>	38	20	18
<i>Commercial partners</i>	283	39	234
<i>Smaller sponsors</i>	149	104	45
Total	498	183	315

Table 5.1: sample size of quantitative survey

In view of the relatively small sample size (especially the defined population of 38 professional football clubs), consideration needs to be given to the problems and limitations relating to small-scale research.

There are three main problems with small sample sizes. First, small samples might not be representative of their populations (though in this case the total populations, of clubs in particular, are not large). The question is therefore, how well do these samples represent the populations as a whole. In this study the populations under scrutiny are the professional football clubs of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga and their respective sponsors. In the case of clubs, the sample was drawn from a complete census (with N=38). In addition, the proportion of clubs responding (55.3% as presented in subsection 5.2.2.4) supports the conclusion that the sample is representative. However, in the case of sponsors, the sampling frame represents the population only partially, because it can be assumed that the content analyses did not identify all sponsors of English Premier League clubs and German Bundesliga clubs, as already described in Chapter 2. Furthermore, the relatively low response rate of sponsors is likely to have had, in fact, a negative impact on the representativeness of the sponsors' sample. In other words, the

findings of this research might not represent the exact sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in view of the fact that not all of the actual sponsors are involved in the sampling frame on the one hand, and on the other hand that the response rate falls below 100 per cent.⁹ This limitation has to be taken into consideration when making statements about the generalisability of the findings. The extent to which generalisations can be made on the basis of the research findings is the second main limitation in relation to small-scale research. With respect to this study, it has to be emphasised that the results of this research are not likely to be generalisable with regard to other forms of (sports) sponsorship or to contexts of professional football sponsorship other than the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. However, this was never a main objective of this study. The third limitation of small sample sizes relates to the actual data analysis in view of the fact that small samples incorporate only limited use of statistical techniques. For example, sophisticated and well-established analysis techniques (e.g. Structural Equation Modelling – SEM) could not be used, as most of them require relatively large representative samples. A key point in this respect, as a number of statisticians point out, is that the crucial factor to be considered is the absolute size of the sample rather than the relationship between sample size and population size (Denscombe, 2003).

The main limitations of small-scale research have to be taken into consideration when dealing with small samples. One option would have been not to include a quantitative stage at all, being put off by the small populations. However, it was felt that a number of the factors emerging from the qualitative stage merited measurement. Therefore, other strategies to overcome the above problems had to be found. Hoyle (1999, p. xvi), for example, identifies three options for researchers dealing with small samples:

⁹ $N_{clubs}=38$ (response rate 55.3%) – $N_{sponsors}=460$ (response rate 22.8%)

- (1) Find a way to increase the size of their samples.
- (2) Use a statistical approach that may not be a good fit to their research questions but is appropriate for small samples.
- (3) Re-orient their research so that their research questions can be addressed by statistical methods appropriate for smaller samples.

However, Hoyle calls the above options 'unsatisfactory' for researchers, because it is not always possible to increase the sample size owing to the limited size of the population or limited resources such as time or money. In relation to this study, option number one (expanding the universe by incorporating football clubs from lower leagues) has been considered, but was then rejected in view of the belief that it would have compromised the overall aim of this study to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship in the context of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. This decision was based on the belief that top professional football incorporates unique characteristics which have an impact on professional football sponsorship and which do not exist in lower leagues to such an extent. For example, only the top professional football leagues attract huge media coverage and extensive public interest. Consequently, it is assumed that professional football sponsorship is concentrated in the top leagues. However, it is appreciated that there might be some lower league clubs which are more professional in the area of sponsorship than some top league clubs, but they are rather the exception than the rule. Consequently, it has to be stated that the defined population and the resulting sample size are relatively small in view of the fact that there are only a limited number of football clubs and sponsors in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. In view of the small sample size, a number of techniques were employed to increase the response rate. Subsections 5.2.2.2 and 5.2.2.3 will deal with these techniques in greater detail.

The third option to deal with small sample sizes as suggested by Hoyle also seems not to be a good option. Hoyle (1999, p. xvi) notes that altering the research questions to conform to the assumptions of a statistical method and therefore basing the statistical strategy on

sample size rather than the research question 'is to put the proverbial cart before the horse'. Consequently, the decision was made not to alter the research questions. Therefore, option number two seemed to be the less unsatisfactory strategy to overcome the limitations of small-scale research. In this respect, Hoyle (1999, p. xvi) suggests applying statistical strategies 'that offer the flexibility and sophistication of large-sample strategies without the requirement of prohibitively large samples'. Hoyle's suggestion has been followed and the decision was made to apply multiple regression analysis (MRA) and factor analysis to test the hypotheses. The decision was based on the fact that all statistical requirements were met by the data on the one hand, and that, on the other hand, MRA and factor analysis are well established statistical techniques used in previous studies on relationship quality (e.g. Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Wray *et al.*, 1994; Bejou *et al.*, 1998; Wong and Sohal, 2002a; Lages *et al.*, 2005; Wong, 2004). In addition, non-parametric tests (e.g. Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test) have been applied whenever the number of cases was not sufficient for parametric tests. All tests used are described in greater detail in Chapter 8.

Another strategy to overcome the problems of small-scale research is the use of a multi-method approach combining qualitative research with quantitative measures of population as proposed by Silverman (2000). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the methodology applied in this study is based on a multi-method approach involving qualitative interviews, content analysis and a quantitative survey. Furthermore, the application of triangulation is an additional option to overcome the issues and problems of small scale research. Denscombe (2003, p. 133) explains the beauty of methodological triangulation as follows:

Seeing things from a different perspective and the opportunity to corroborate findings can enhance the validity of the data. They do not prove that the researcher has 'got it right', but they do give some confidence that the meaning of the data has some consistency across methods and the findings are not too closely tied up with a particular method used to collect the data. Effectively, they lend support to the analysis.

In addition, Denscombe notes that researchers could triangulate findings coming from documents (e.g. books, journals, newspapers or magazines), interviews and questionnaires.

Triangulating results from different data collections methods such as a literature searches, semi-structured interviews and questionnaire surveys is common practice in social science, as previous studies show (e.g. Simon, 1994; Holmberg, 2000; Pelizzari, 2004). Therefore, triangulation was applied in Chapter 9 as a means of obtaining a larger, more complete picture of professional football sponsorship in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga by comparing the results of the literature review, the findings of the qualitative research phase and the quantitative survey results.

In summary, the problems of small-scale research were taken into consideration, limitations relating to this study were recognized, and strategies were followed in order to overcome these limitations.

5.2.2.2 Designing the questionnaire

This section deals with the formal issues of questionnaire design (i.e. lay-out considerations, length of questionnaire, covering letter, pilot testing), whereas specific details relating to the actual content of the questionnaire (i.e. the initial questions according to the research areas and actual scales used in the questionnaire) will be dealt with in Chapter 7.¹⁰

Saunders *et al.* (2003) note that the design of the questionnaire will not only affect the response rate, but also the validity and reliability of data. They emphasise that a careful design of individual questions, a clear layout of the questionnaire form, a lucid explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire, pilot testing and carefully planned and executed administration of the questionnaire are crucial points in reaching a good response rate and ensure reliability and validity. Hague (1992) identifies poor layout/sequence, inappropriate

¹⁰ Appendices XIV to XVII provide a copy of the clubs' and sponsors' questionnaire (in English/German)

length of questionnaire, inconsiderate questions and questions which miss the mark as the major pitfalls of questionnaire design.

Concerning an appropriate length of the questionnaire, Saunders *et al.* (2003) recommend 6-8 A4 pages. This is confirmed by Sharp, Peters and Howard (2002, p.156), who explain that 'it would usually be considered unwise to have a questionnaire requiring more than about twenty minutes to fill in or covering more than, say, six A4 pages.' The length of the questionnaire has always been considered an important issue in this study, assuming that it has an impact on the response rate. The aim of the research was therefore to restrict the questionnaire to four A4 pages in order to produce a user-friendly booklet (two A4 pages each on an A3 paper front and back and then folded). This, in turn, is linked to lay-out-issues. In order to be manageable for the respondents, the questionnaire should be orderly and the instructions should be clear, according to Hague (1992), who continues to say that the convenience factor for the respondents is a major issue in self-completion questionnaires and determines the response rate. Therefore, everything was done to make it easy for the respondent to fill in the questionnaire and reply to it even if that meant additional work on the part of the researcher. Various studies (e.g. Dillman, 1978; Nederhof, 1988) revealed that pictures, logos or images on the cover of the questionnaire are likely to prompt responses. Therefore, an eye-catching heading was created that included the image of a football and the logo of the University of Plymouth. In this respect, Edwards *et al.* (2002) note that questionnaires originating from universities are more likely to be returned than questionnaires from other sources (such as commercial organisations). Other lay-out-techniques (for example using coloured paper or coloured ink) were considered, but abandoned owing to limited resources.

May (2001, p.100) emphasises that 'the most important part of the actual design of questions is to construct them unambiguously and to be clear in your own mind what the

question is for, who it is to be answered by and how you intend them to interpret it.' Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997) differentiate between five kinds of questions. First, there are questions referring to facts, i.e. situations or characteristics that have existed in the past or still exist such as income, sex, age, etc.. Second, there are questions referring to knowledge or awareness of some phenomenon or object. Third, there are questions representing intentions (i.e. anticipated or planned behaviour) of people. Fourth, there are questions relating to opinions and attitudes, indicating the preferences, views and feelings of people towards some phenomenon or objective. Fifth, and finally, there are questions referring to the motives of respondents. Motives are described as internal forces (such as impulses, urges, needs, desires and wishes) that channel behaviour in a particular way. With the exception of the second category, all other question types have been used in the questionnaire. Chapter 7 will deal with this issue in greater detail.

The actual process of question wording was based on recommendations made by May (2001), who rates the following points as important: ensuring that questions are not too general, using the simplest language possible to convey the meaning of the question, avoiding using prejudicial language and ambiguity, eliminating vague words in order to avoid vague answers, avoiding leading and hypothetical questions, and ensuring that the respondents have the necessary knowledge to answer the questions.

Questionnaires can be pre-coded to allow the classification of responses into meaningful categories and therefore to make the questionnaire easier to analyse (May, 2001). Pre-coding was considered but then abandoned in the belief that respondents might be confused by additional numbers. Here again, the convenience factor for the participants was more important than the convenience factor for the researcher.

The cover letter is as important as the questionnaire itself according to Czaja and Blair (1996, p. 82), who explain that the covering letter ought to help obtain cooperation. Therefore it 'must be eye-catching (yet professional), clear (but brief), and compelling (but neutral). The letter must stand out from the welter of junk mail most people receive and must speak for the researcher to the respondent, addressing the key obstacles to cooperation.' A polite and clearly formulated cover letter was designed following the recommendations of Dillman (1978), Hague (1992) and Czaja and Blair (1996), including a personal salutation (whenever the name of the contact was known), a quotation as an eye-catching device in order to lead to the subject of research, a brief description of the research project, a rationale for selecting the club/company in question, clear instructions what to do, a reassurance of confidentiality and anonymity, and finally contact details of the 'research team'. The statement of confidentiality was made explicit, as this not only protects respondents' identity, but also increases their willingness to take part in surveys (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Saunders *et al.*, 2003). Following recommendations made by Gillham (2000), the letter was written in the 'we'-form rather than the 'I'-form and was printed on University of Plymouth headed notepaper in order to emphasise the seriousness of the research project. Each letter was then signed by the researcher using blue ink. In order to encourage respondents to take part in the questionnaire, three different incentives were mentioned in the cover letter. First, a summary of the findings was offered as an incentive, as this is normal practice in academic surveys. Respondents were asked to fill in a separate request form if they wished to receive a summary of the findings. These request forms were automatically entered in a draw, where the winner had the choice between a magnum of champagne for themselves and a donation of £100 to a charity of their choice¹¹. A copy of the covering letters as well as the request form can be found in Appendices X and XI.

¹¹ The winner of the draw ticked the second option, and after consultation the money was donated to a German charity.

In order to maximise the response rate, the use of an endorsement was considered, but then abandoned for two reasons. First, there are hardly any organisations qualifying as an endorsement in the context of English and German professional football. For example, the Deutsche Fußball Liga (DFL) has been thought of being an appropriate endorsement for the German respondents, but it soon became clear after some telephone calls with academics and experts in the field that such an endorsement was likely to do more harm than good, as the DFL was in some clubs' bad books at that particular point of time. The second, and more practical, reason was simply the lack of any key contacts to organisations which could have been potential endorsements as well as the high entry barriers to them. Therefore, it was decided not to use an external endorsement. This decision was shown to be the correct one by the statements of some pilot testers (inside and outside the PBS) who thought that the University of Plymouth Business School itself serves as a good endorsement.

Pilot testing is a crucial aspect of every questionnaire survey as it enables one to 'refine the questionnaire so that respondents will have no problems in answering the questions and there will be no problems in recording the data' according to Saunders *et al.* (2003, p. 308). Oppenheim (1992, p.64) adds that 'studies which have been inadequately piloted, or not piloted at all, will find that a great deal of effort has been wasted on unintelligible questions producing unquantifiable responses and uninterpretable results.' Because of the relatively small sample size, it was decided to test the questionnaire on fellow academics and marketing people rather than on sample members. The pilot sample size involved 20 people, mainly academics from different departments (marketing, economics) and different institutions and countries (Plymouth Business School/UK, Nürtingen University/Germany, School of Internal Business Reutlingen/Germany, School of Commerce at the University of Adelaide/Australia) as well as people working in marketing/market research or the sports industry across England and Germany. All pilot testers were contacted beforehand

and asked whether they are willing to test the questionnaire. They then received an e-mail or letter including the initial covering letter and questionnaire. Following Bell's recommendations (1999), they were also given a list with questions considering the length of the questionnaire, the layout and manageability as well as the content of the questionnaire. The full list of questions is provided in Appendix XII.

Most of the pilot testers were quite happy with the length of the questionnaire, although three suggested a shorter version. The clarity of instructions was not a problem according to the respondents. However, some suggested rethinking a number of the questions relating to the general questions about the club/company. For example, a question asking the football clubs how they finished last season was deleted as some respondents felt that this question could lead to the identification of particular clubs and therefore put clubs off taking part in the survey. Following pilot tester's recommendations, the section about sponsor's objectives was reconsidered and modified, as the initial questionnaire stated only five objectives and respondents felt that the list should be enhanced. The section dealing with the relationship between football club and sponsors (section 'D' on the clubs' and section 'B' on the sponsors' questionnaire) was modified as well in response to statements of the pilot testers. In the initial questionnaire, the questions were provided in blocks with the determinant in question as the headline. The pilot testers, however, felt that it is necessary to jumble the questions and therefore provide no indication of the underlying concept of each determinant. Thus, all items of the section in question were rotated and some of them reversed-phrased as suggested by some respondents. All in all, the pilot testing proved to be useful, as modifications according to recommendations of the pilot testers improved the quality of the final questionnaire.

5.2.2.3 Distribution and collection of the questionnaire

After the process of questionnaire design had been completed, the distribution of the final questionnaire was carried out.

The timing of questionnaire distribution was an important consideration, as it might well have an impact on the response rate. Gillham (2000, p. 46) suggests avoiding 'holiday periods or when organisations are likely to be closed, or exceptionally busy.' In this respect, Chadwick (2004) implies that there is not really a perfect time of the year at which one can approach football clubs, as they are quite busy at the start and the end of a football season and in between. The summer months, however, seem to be problematic as well, because one has to assume that potential respondents within football clubs might be on holiday. The interval between seasons might also cause problems, as clubs are looking for new sponsors or developing their prospective sponsorship activities. In the case of sponsors, however, the timing seems not as problematic. In view of these observations and considering the time frame of this study, it was decided to approach both football clubs and sponsors at the beginning of April 2005, therefore avoiding the holiday season and the summer months. Besides, the 2004/05 season had another six weeks to go in the English Premier League and seven more weeks in the German Bundesliga.

Another decision which had to be made concerned the actual distribution method of the questionnaire, i.e. online and postal questionnaires respectively. Online-questionnaires can be administered either via e-mail or via a web site (Saunders *et al.*, 2003). The latter option was abandoned because of the additional effort and problems of creating a web-based questionnaire. The choice was therefore limited to e-mail-distribution and postal distribution. The case for using e-mail questionnaires may be made on the cost-efficiency grounds, as questionnaires sent by e-mails save postal charges. In addition, the response time is shorter in comparison to postal surveys, as the mailing route becomes irrelevant (Ilieva *et al.*, 2002) However, there are some disadvantages connected with e-mail-surveys, for example approaching the wrong person or landing in the 'spam file'. Some organisations operate a strict e-mail-policy, not allowing any attachments. In addition, Saunders *et al.* (2003) note that the lack of anonymity can cause a problem, as respondents

will be identifiable by their e-mail addresses unless an anonymous server is used for returning questionnaires. Anonymity is therefore more secure in a postal survey. However, the main disadvantages of distributing questionnaires by post are the charges and the time exposure involved. Various studies investigated whether there is any difference in response rates between questionnaires distributed by e-mail and questionnaires distributed by post. Wygant and Lindorf (1999), for example, report a higher response rate for the electronic survey than for the mail survey, Bachman, Elfrink and Vazzana (1996) report the reverse, and Schaefer and Dillman (1998) note no difference at all. In view of the above points, it was decided to distribute the questionnaire both by e-mail and post and therefore following observations made by Cobanoglu, Warde and Moreo (2001, p. 442), who note that 'research on mixed-mode surveys has suggested that employing more than one method for collecting survey data is acceptable and usually yields a higher response rate.' In addition, a mixed-mode method was selected because in some cases either an e-mail-address or a postal address had been identified as the contact address. Using only one or the other distribution method would have therefore led to the exclusion of some members of the sample size.

Using two distribution methods meant additional work, as two different distribution 'packages' had to be prepared. The postal package comprised the covering letter, the actual questionnaire (in the form of a booklet), the request form and an addressed FREEPOST return envelope. The latter has been identified as more cost-efficient in comparison to stamped envelopes, as only the actual responses are charged. The return FREEPOST envelope makes it easier for the respondent to reply and therefore contributes to the convenience factor as postulated by Hague (1992). The e-mail-survey required an electronic version of the questionnaire in order to enable the respondent to fill it in on-screen. Again, great emphasis was placed on convenience for the respondent and on manageability of the online-questionnaire in order to make the reply as easy as possible for

the participants. The initial e-mail sent to the clubs and sponsors consisted of three attachments (on-screen version and paper version of the questionnaire, plus the request form). The main body of the e-mail was the covering letter, which involved additional instructions relating to the completion and return of the on-screen questionnaire and an assurance that the attached documents are safe to open.¹² In addition, respondents were offered the option of filling in and return a paper version of the questionnaire if they feel uncomfortable with the on-screen version.

Pre-notification as suggested by Jobber and O'Reilly (1996) and Edwards *et al.* (2002) was done either by e-mail or by telephone in the case of football clubs as their number was manageable. In sponsors' cases, pre-notification was omitted because of time restrictions.

The distribution process was carried out in two subsequent stages. The physical preparation of the distribution, where two different lists had been created (one for the e-mail survey and one for the postal survey) and then been subdivided into personalised contacts (contacts where the name of the key person is known) and 'impersonalised contacts'. For the postal survey, questionnaires, covering letters, requests forms and return envelopes (for English respondents) were printed three weeks before distribution. Because the German FREEPOST requires a specific design for return envelopes, the University of Plymouth in-house printing department was commissioned to print these envelopes. The e-mail survey required less physical distribution, as there were no hard copies involved. However, preparing eight different templates (English and German e-mail-versions with the relevant attachments for clubs, shirt sponsors, commercial partners, and smaller sponsors) and sending them to different test accounts proved to be time-consuming as well. The second stage involved the actual sending out of the e-mail and postal questionnaires. A total of 168 letters were sent out to clubs and sponsors across England and Germany on Monday, 04 April 2005. This caused no problems thanks to strict and solid planning. The

¹² In cases where companies' policies simply forbid employees to open attachments, the alternative of a hard copy was offered upon their request from the researcher.

distribution of e-mails, however, was planned for the following day and proved less forward. A test run two weeks before the actual sending out was completely unproblematic, when the e-mails had been sent out directly from Microsoft-Word. However, a day before the actual sending out, the University of Plymouth changed its policy on e-mail-distribution. As a result, it was not possible anymore to send out e-mails directly from Word. Consequently, a total of 340 e-mails had to be sent out on an individual basis. After twelve hours, all of the e-mail questionnaires had then been sent out. The contact details of the e-mail address list proved to be very good since only a few e-mails returned as 'not deliverable' for two reasons. In some instances, the recipient of the e-mail was unknown (because the key contact had left the company). Also, some companies blocked e-mails with Word-attachments automatically. In the case of returned e-mails, the clubs/companies in questions were then contacted by post. The postal address list proved to be good, as only one letter was received as 'return to sender'.

The importance of follow-up letters for winning a high overall response rate has been mentioned by various authors (Hague, 1992; Saunders *et al.*, 2003; Gillham, 2000; Bryman and Bell, 2003) and identified in some studies (e.g. Edwards *et al.*, 2002). Following recommendations made by Hague (1992) a special covering letter was created for the second mailing, emphasising the importance of contribution and reiterating the objectives of the studies. The covering letter also included an apology in case that the reminder had crossed with their response to the first mailing. It was decided to distribute the follow-up letters purely by post considering the higher response rate of the postal survey (19.6%) compared to the e-mail survey (11.2%). The second mailing in early May 2005 led to an improved overall response rate, as the next section shows.

5.2.2.4 Response rate

Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2002) note that one of the factors that will affect the quality of the data provided is the relevance of the research to the interviewees. However, most of the interviewees showed a high interest in the research project. This is well illustrated by the fact that the majority of respondents (64.3%) requested a summary of the findings.

A total of 498 questionnaires were sent out to the English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs and their respective sponsors in the first instance, of which 71 completed questionnaires were returned. The follow-up letters five weeks later proved to be a good tactic, with a return of 55 additional questionnaires.

All in all, 172 (which is 36.75% of) clubs and sponsors respectively responded, with 46 of them rejecting their participation. The reasons for rejection were manifold. Some backed their unwillingness to participate with a general policy of not filling in any questionnaires at all or that they were not interested in the research project. Others offered a telephone interview instead, and some others did not state any reason at all. Appendix XIII provides some examples of the letters/e-mails received from clubs/companies who were not willing to take part but proved to be fair enough to respond in any way.

However, a total of 21 clubs (55.3% of clubs) and 105 sponsors (22.8% of sponsors) returned a completed questionnaire. The combined response rate reaches the total of 25.3%, which is a good response rate in general terms. Compared to other studies in the area of professional football sponsorship, it seems to be low though. Chadwick (2004), for example, reports an overall response rate of 60.4% in his study, Farrelly and Quester (2003) note an even higher response rate with 86%. However, both studies are based on a considerably smaller sample size (Chadwick: 182; Farrelly and Quester: 92) and both emphasise that their response rate is extraordinarily high compared to other studies in the field. The (professional market research) study of the Bob Bomlitz Group (2004), which investigated the sponsorship market in Germany by asking 2,500 companies, reached a

(valid) response rate of 27,3%, which has been named as highly satisfactory by the researchers.

However, owing to the nature of the questionnaires (the questions on the clubs' questionnaire referred to shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors, and sponsors had the option to answer the questions for more than one club), the cases used for analysis were even higher. Therefore, 21 clubs represent 63 cases¹³, and the 105 sponsors represent 127 cases¹⁴, which means that a total of 190 cases could be used for combined analysis (i.e. testing the hypotheses).

5.2.2.5 Analysing the quantitative data

After the quantitative data collection process had been completed, the data analysis process began. Chapter 8 explains the various stages of this process in greater detail, whereas this section provides a brief overview of the data analysis process and techniques used.

The decision of which data analysis technique to use was based on different grounds, for example the techniques used in previous studies in the field of (football) sponsorship and relationship quality respectively. Another decision criterion is stated by Bryman and Bell (2003), who note that the techniques used are limited by the type of variables and the nature and size of the sample. The purpose of the analysis generated from the quantitative survey also determines the choice of analysis methods. In this respect, data analysis served mainly three purposes in this study: first, to describe the characteristics of the sample size, second, to test the seven principal research propositions (PRPs); and finally, to test the six hypotheses.

In order to describe the characteristic of the sample size and the PRPs, descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and cross-tabs have been used. Data relating to the hypotheses,

¹³ 21 clubs times 3 answers: for shirt sponsors, commercial partners, smaller sponsors

¹⁴ 89 sponsors were stating one club, ten sponsors 2 clubs and six sponsors were stating 3 clubs.

however, has been analysed in a more sophisticated way, employing sound statistical methods, i.e. multivariate analysis. After assessing the suitability of the data for subsequent analysis and checking the scales reliability, multiple regression analysis was run in order to confirm or reject the six hypotheses relating to relationship quality. As it was felt that subsequent analysis was needed, a factor analysis (in form of a principal component analysis) was then carried out in order to reduce the data set and to identify underlying dimensions of relationship quality. Hypotheses testing was then completed by a second multiple regression analysis testing the components which came out of the factor analysis. The whole data analysis process was followed and completed by drawing conclusions from the findings.

5.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity is a sensitive issue in every research project, and confidentiality indispensable. Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 132) point out that the identity of study participants must not be disclosed 'unless they have expressly consented to being identified.' They also refer to the issue of confidentiality as it relates to interviewees who are already in the public eye. Some of them would not expect the option of anonymity, but would even welcome some publicity. Arksey and Knight also ask to consider that 'in research involving small, well-defined groups, members may be so well known to each other that with a little reading between the lines, so to speak, they can identify non-attributed quotations.'

With respect to that, this Chapter displays a list of the names and positions of all respondents who took place in the qualitative interview phase. The decision to name the interviewees was based upon the following reasons:

- all interviewees agreed to be quoted by name, and some even insisted to be named and quoted in this thesis.

- given the limited number of potential clubs and main sponsors in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in the 2004/05 season, as well as the limited number of highly recognised football and sponsorship experts in both countries, there would have been always a way to identify some of the respondents owing to their position and/or public status.
- the purpose of naming the respondents is to show the high quality of this research phase, since most of the interviewees are well-known people in their field.

However, the analysis of the qualitative interviews and the presentation of the results remain unaffected, since all quotations in Chapter 6 are stated anonymously. In addition to this, confidential information, which has been given off the records or has been marked as 'non-quotable', has not been used in the course of this thesis. Also, information which could have potential negative consequences for the respondents has been left out.

The matter for the participants in the questionnaire survey is different. As mentioned above, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed for those taking part in the survey. In addition, disclosure of the names would not make any sense because of the larger sample size and the nature of quantitative research.

6 THE RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This chapter presents the results of the qualitative research phase, revealed from seventeen in-depth interviews with clubs' and sponsors' representatives as well as football and/or sponsorship specialists. As already explained in Chapter 5, the qualitative data were analysed using a five-step-approach. The findings resulting from the analysis process will be presented in four different sections within this chapter. The first three sections cover the three perspectives of sponsorship, whereas the fourth section takes the Anglo-German context into consideration. The presenting of the qualitative data includes quite a few direct quotes from the interviewees in order to support views and to illustrate results. The quotations are stated anonymously, but with a reference to the specific group and country¹. The main findings of the qualitative research phase will be summarised at the end of this chapter.

6.1 Sponsorship as an income stream in the football business

This first section presents the results of the qualitative interviews with respect to the first perspective of sponsorship. It covers the questions on the football business in general and on sponsorship as an income stream in particular.

6.1.1 *Football as a business*

Can football be seen as a business?

The first main issue to be dealt with in this subsection is the question as to whether football can be seen as a business. All interviewees answered this question in the affirmative. The following statement by an expert is exemplary:

Professional football is so many different things. It can be lots of things all in the same time. In fact, it's very difficult to define. Because there is a kind of religious element, it's definitely a kind of urban cult, it's a sports entertainment, it's a local tribal spectacle. And it's a small business.

[Expert - UK]

¹ UK = United Kingdom; G = Germany

The last sentence leads to another interesting point: the actual size of this business. The overall perception of the participants is that in terms of turnover, football is not a big business. Some interviewees called it even a 'small business' as seen above. Some others compared clubs with medium-sized companies. However, the actual size of the football business remains unclear and warrants further investigation.

The view that the football business is a part of the entertainment industry was confirmed by a couple of interviewees. One said for example:

And football is very firmly a part of the entertainment business. Who is a bigger world star than David Beckham ? You know? Is Brad Pitt a bigger star? In some parts of the world perhaps. But Beckham, he is a footballing brand and he is an icon. And to a lesser extent every club has that in their own communities.

[Club's representative - UK]

The core product of the business is the game itself. One expert noted that football is a product which is highly emotionalised. This view is supported by statements of clubs' representatives that they are selling emotions first and foremost. However, the game is not the only product of football companies, as the following statement shows:

A football club is just so many different businesses in one. We are a conference business as well. We have a huge catering operation here, we have a huge retail operation, we have a huge ticketing system operation. So we have so many different companies within a company or a football club. It's just a different company to categorize. You know, we're a sponsorship agency, we're just everything.

[Club's representative - UK]

What are the main characteristics of the football business?

The second main question deals with the main characteristics and peculiarities of the football business. The overall perception is best reflected in the following statement:

The key characteristic is that it is a very unusual business. So it's a weird business. That's the key element.

[Expert - UK]

For the clubs' representatives the football business is significantly determined by a strong public perception. As mentioned above, the football business is perceived by insiders as

being a relatively small one in terms of turnover. But it is a huge business in terms of public interest, media attraction and number of stakeholders. One interviewee noted:

I read an article saying that the average football club would have to spend €300m a year to get the same share of voice if they were different type of business. So that's actually a much bigger business perception wise than it is actually in terms of revenue.

[Club's representative - UK]

Another representative of a football club added that they have a turnover similar to that of SME, but the media attraction of a global player. Yet another interviewee referred to the public interest, saying that football is the topic number one in pubs and that sometimes even board meetings of blue chip companies are postponed just because an important match is taking place. Two other clubs' representatives mentioned the relatively high number of stakeholders who follow the daily business of a football club with great interest. This makes life for decision-makers at football clubs more difficult, since they have to consider that everything they do and every decision they make is likely to be subjected to a high degree of public scrutiny.

The dependence on sporting success is another key characteristic mentioned solely by representatives of clubs, as in the following two statements:

The first thing is those eleven players out there. That's the first part of the business and whatever football is first and foremost it's about a football match. And that football match governs an awful lot of what you do. You can be absolutely brilliant off the field, but if you rubbish on it, it'll affect how you do your business.

[Club's representative - UK]

The football business is very volatile, difficult to calculate, owing to the fact that we play a game with an unpredictable outcome. It's not as calculable as selling screws for example.

[Club's representative - G]

The role of the fans was named as another key characteristic by clubs' representatives, although opinions differ as to whether a fan has to be seen primarily as a supporter or a customer. One club representative said that fans are just as much customers as the sponsors, for example. Another one said that for his club fans are not seen as customers,

but the basis of the club. However, the interviewees all agreed that fans play a crucial role in the context of the football business. A view, which is shared by an expert:

But at the end, the reality is that the entire business rests, the global business rests on those people who have more than a passive interest in the game. And they buy the TV channels, they buy the magazines, they buy the commercial products, they buy the matches, and they buy the products which the sponsors hope they will buy more of.

[Expert - UK]

Most answers and views regarding the nature of the football business come from clubs' representatives, which is understandable because it is their working environment. Nevertheless, some sponsors and sponsorship experts also described the football business from their point of view. Interestingly enough, most of the remarks were rather negative. For example, one sponsor took the view that football is a business which is based on debts and unhealthy financing. The sponsor also could not understand why clubs are not able to manage their finances properly. A sponsorship specialist expressed a similar viewpoint by explaining that most professional football clubs plan on a best-case basis and then moan and blame others when reality proves to be different. The lack of good leadership as well as the poor and inadequate management structures of most football clubs is the main characteristic of the football business for another expert.

One disadvantage of football clubs compared to other businesses is named unanimously by all three groups: football clubs have relatively small marketing budgets. As a result, football clubs seldom have the money to advertise for themselves, cultivate relationships or put good plans into action.

6.1.2 Sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs

How important is sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs?

This section deals with the perceived importance of sponsorship for clubs of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. The interviews revealed similarities as well as differences. One similarity is the opinion of the interviewees that sponsorship is different at every club and that there are different levels of sponsorship within both

leagues. This is due to the fact that a lot of major sponsors want to be associated with the big clubs, whereas the smaller clubs find it difficult to attract sponsors, according to clubs' representatives and experts. This again is linked to the fact that the big clubs have a wider appeal and more appearances on television than the smaller clubs.

There is, however, a difference between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga in terms of revenues from sponsorship. This difference is also expressed in the various interviews although statements depend on individual perceptions of size. However, the English interviewees rated sponsorship revenues as 'reasonably small', whereas the German interviewees ranked sponsorship revenues as 'extremely high'. The interviewees also confirmed the figures presented in Chapter 2, which indicate that for English Premier League clubs sponsorship comes third after television and matchday revenues, whereas for the German Bundesliga clubs income from sponsorship is the second most important source of income. The German interviewees explain that sponsorship became really important after the crash of Kirch Media. As a consequence, television income had been significantly reduced, and clubs were forced to intensify their search for sponsorship. This phenomenon will be dealt in greater detail in the section regarding Anglo-German differences.

Both English and German interviewees emphasised the fact that sponsorship revenues also depend on performance on and off the pitch. The following three statements explain why:

Sponsorships have to deliver. And we get bonuses for success from [our shirt sponsor]. If we finish in the top six, we get more money than if we finish in the bottom four. And that's right. Because if we're in the top six [our shirt sponsor] is gonna get far more reflection, more television coverage, more media coverage than if we were on the wrong end of the table,

[Club's representative -UK]

There's an interest in both sides, in marketing the right way because we both make revenue. The more [the club we sponsor] works with us, the more revenues they can gain.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

Sponsoring companies try to negotiate extremely performance-orientated contracts, because they want to reach their objectives.

[Expert - G]

The English interviewees differentiate between the various levels of importance of sponsorship as an income stream. Although it might be a small source of revenue, sponsorship as an income stream is considerably important for the clubs for two reasons. First, it is a high-margin income stream which goes straight to the bottom line, with few operational costs. It is also a pre-paid income stream, as one club's representative points out:

Sponsorship is still vital important to us. It provides essential income to help us to grow as a business and grow as a club. Guaranteeing that you get a million pounds a year before you leave and open the door to public just gives you that security that you can do ground improvements by a plan. Prior salaries have to be paid for by somebody. And it's all what we're doing in the commercial world that helps us to pay those salaries.

[Club's representative - UK]

Second, sponsorship can help football clubs to improve their image as well. An interviewee explains how:

And it also is an image thing. If you got a wrong unknown brand on your shirt it says a lot about your club. If you got a brand on your shirt that no one has ever heard of, it sort of diminishes the value of it. Whereas everyone's aware of [our shirt sponsor]. So people's perception of [our club] is that we have attracted a top company to working on side us. So it's about image as much as it is about money.

[Club's representative - UK]

The image of the sponsors as well as their international appeal can help clubs to grow at both a national and international level according to some other interviewees.

How important will sponsorship be as an income stream for professional football clubs?

Once the perception of the current sponsorship situation has been revealed, it is interesting to see how the interviewees assess the future potential of sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs. The overall perception is entirely optimistic. Some interviewees assumed that the importance of sponsorship will increase, while some others thought that the growth of sponsorship still has considerable potential. Only one expert presented a rather conservative assessment by stating that there will be a consolidation in the football sponsorship market at a lower level compared to previous years. It is also interesting to note that the representatives of the English clubs have a clear desire to

generate more revenue from sponsorship within the next few years, as the following typical statement shows:

With the brand and the perception of the brand and the knowledge of the brand and the awareness of the brand across the world, you must be able to generate or find ways to generate more revenues in the future. And that's what we're doing. We set a strategy to try to exponentially grow revenue across the next five to ten years.

[Club's representative -UK]

With future sponsorship trends and possible areas for improvement will be dealt in the next section.

6.2 Football sponsorship as a marketing tool

What kind of objectives do sponsors have?

This section investigates the objectives and intentions of football sponsors. When the answers of the interviewees are compared, it becomes clear that objectives differ from sponsor to sponsor. Some sponsors also have multiple reasons for their sponsorship. At the top of the list is brand awareness and image transfer. Improving links with customers or business associates is another popular target according to the interviewees who emphasised the importance of hospitality in this connection. One sponsor said that their initial decision to sponsor a professional football team was prompted by their belief that it met the social obligations they have. As one of the largest employers they wanted to give something back to the community in which the club they were sponsoring was located. This kind of intention can also be seen as an attempt to improve the image of the sponsor in a broader sense. Sponsorship is also used to motivate or benefit the sponsoring company's staff by allocating tickets to home games or inviting them to join the executive lounges. However, some of the interviewees share the view that direct economic objectives such as sales increase becomes even more important. This view is supported by various statements of sponsorship experts, for example:

I mean Nike doesn't need to get its name known, does it? Everybody knows Nike and everybody knows what they do. So the motivations of sponsors are different from the way they were maybe five years ago, certainly ten, fifteen years ago.

[Expert - UK]

It is not only about brand awareness anymore. The sales-orientated objectives are in the foreground now.

[Expert - G]

The investment should have a return. The economic targets play an important role nowadays.

[Expert - G]

Over the years, objectives can change within a sponsorship relationship as one sponsor explains. For this sponsor motivation has changed significantly in the course of their sponsorship agreement. When they signed the initial agreement, it was basically about increasing brand awareness in the home market. The objectives then turned from growing internationally to generating new customers and profit from the sponsorship.

Why do companies invest in football sponsorship?

Companies use sponsorship in order to achieve their individual objectives. The question is why so many sponsors choose football as a subject of sponsorship. The interviews revealed three different reasons.

- **Football provides passion and image**

For those sponsors who want to improve their image through sponsorship, football is an ideal sport, because it generally delivers a positive image. It also delivers passion, which is specifically important for companies in industry sectors, which are perceived as being boring or old-fashioned. The following two statements support this view:

Financial services are not very sexy, football is sexy. So if you rub alongside, you may get a little bit of the sexiness of it. There are all kinds of synergies.

[Expert - UK]

In the Premier League, companies want to be associated with the glamour and the glitz and the prestige of the Premier League. And if they can afford it, they're prepared to pay for that.

[Club's representative - UK]

- Football provides wide audiences and access to different target groups

For those sponsors who want to increase their brand awareness, football is an ideal sport, because it generally delivers wide audiences both in the stadium and through media coverage. Some interviewees held the strong belief that television exposure is highly important for sponsors. Wide audiences are one factor, another factor is the demographic and social structure of the football audience. One expert explains:

Football is admired across all social classes. It's an extraordinary phenomenon that such a wide-ranging sport appeals to such a broad target group over such a long time. Football attracts ordinary people, who are fans. And it brings along decision-makers who are interested in football.

[Expert - G]

This is important especially for those sponsors whose target groups are heterogeneous or cannot be targeted through classical advertising such as television commercials or print advertising, a fact which is recognised by another expert:

I think that in the general sense, football remains in the position to deliver significant numbers of ABC 1 males between 18 and 30, who don't watch very much television outside of pornography, football and film.

[Expert - UK]

- Some football clubs have an international appeal

For those sponsors who want to grow internationally, football is an ideal sport, because some football clubs have not only a national, but also an international or even global appeal. Some sponsors said that one of their reasons for sponsoring a club was the fact that the football club in question was also popular in foreign countries which are the sponsor's main markets. Football clubs which are successful in international competitions or have significant fan bases outside their home country help to raise awareness of the brand and enhance the image of the sponsor in those countries as well. However, the interviews also revealed that the English Premier League has a much wider appeal around the globe than the German Bundesliga, which results in the fact that more foreign companies - especially from Asia – invest in English Premier League clubs than in German Bundesliga clubs.

What are the reasons for successful sponsorships?

From the companies' point of view, sponsorship is successful when the objectives of the sponsor have been met. It is therefore interesting to know what sponsors can do in order to make it successful. There is overall agreement across all three groups that just putting the name or the logo on the shirt is not enough anymore. A typical statement is:

So you can't just say, 'I stuck my logo on a shirt and think that that's it.' You have to do other activities in and around it,

[Sponsor's representative - G]

The interviews revealed three areas which help to make the sponsorship successful.

- Linking sponsorship with other promotional tools

As mentioned above, putting a name on the football shirt is not enough by itself. Therefore, sponsors link their sponsorship with other promotional activities, such as advertising (for example, television commercials, print advertising in magazines or newspapers or perimeter boards, displays in and around the stadium) or public relations activities (autograph sessions, prize competitions). Some sponsors also try to enrich the sponsorship with events, such as football matches between the sponsor and important stakeholders at the ground of the football clubs being sponsored. Other sponsors noted that the scope for such activities is strongly depended on the budget. Further details concerning figures relating to budgets and expenditures were not revealed.

- Focusing on fans and 'having a reason for being there'

Some sponsors emphasised the need to get in contact with fans and to care about the fans. Therefore, it is essential from the perspective of sponsors to be able to understand and speak the language of the supporters in order to get accepted by the fans. The following two statements explain why:

It's about having a relevance for being there. And if you're a brand and you don't understand why you're there, then you possibly shouldn't be there. You've got to have a role to play. And that's what makes you stick out, having a relevance, having a point for being there.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

So you just have to use that basic knowledge and ensure that everything you design around the football fan is meeting their needs. And once you do that and market their way they recognise 'Okay, they are the club's sponsors but they doing this for us.' And they are talking to us in our language. But it is difficult. You got to work hard.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

- Looking for scandal-free clubs

Some sponsors look for a positive image transfer when identifying a club to sponsor. In order to ensure that this objective is reached, they have to make sure that the club they are sponsoring is popular and has a good image. One sponsor said that this was a major consideration in the decision whether to sponsor the football club in question. In their field of business they could not afford to have a scandal, and the club which they eventually choose had to have an impeccable, scandal-free track record.

What are current trends in the area of professional football sponsorship?

All in all, six trends have been identified:

- A shift from 'sweetheart deals' to commercially-motivated business-related deals

There is an overall agreement among the interviewees that some of the sponsorships in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga are based on non-commercial reasons, as the following statements show:

Certainly at football clubs like ours a lot of the smaller sponsors are sponsoring because the principal managing director, or the chief executive or the chairman is a fan [of our club]. That happens in every country.

[Club's representative - UK]

Some football sponsors are purely there because the board of directors or the chairman likes the team. But there were a lot of people who sponsored football teams because they were supporters. So it's a charity donation that they can get a tax benefit. It's not real sponsorship.

[Expert - UK]

Sponsorship is often linked to local patriotism. Some chairmen decide to do sponsorship because they like football or the football club and also like the idea of hanging around in the VIP-area every second Saturday and getting some pats on the back,

[Expert - G]

However, there is also overall agreement that these so-called 'sweetheart deals' are declining in number and importance. Nowadays, the majority of sponsorship agreements are based on commercial grounds because sponsorships have to deliver and companies need a return. The following statements are typical of views expressed by the interviewees:

The 'chairman's whim syndrome' is very rare. It exists but is dying out. There are clear economical and business-related objectives in the foreground, especially when a lot of money is involved,

[Expert - G]

Just because somebody in your management committee likes football or likes [the club] is not a reason to do sponsorship. It has to be for pure commercial reasons and for us it was putting it through a matrix and evaluating all the properties we threw up.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

In this connection, some interviewees pointed out that controlling and internal justification are becoming even more important. One sponsor said that you cannot reduce employees' wages in the sponsoring company and support football clubs with millions of Euro without explaining why. Sponsors are also investing more carefully and turning their attention to the return on their investment, a fact which is recognised by football clubs:

But it's important that we provide value for money and a benefit to those companies because even they are supporters [of our club]. If we don't deliver for them, they wouldn't have to justify the expenditure with us.

[Club's representative - UK]

I think what's happened, is that people have become much more discerning about where they invest their money. People are only investing now if they can see a specific return on their investment.

[Club's representative - UK]

▪ Sponsorship as a network opportunity

The hospitality facilities of football clubs are not only a good meeting-point for the representatives and chairmen of the various sponsors, but also a good opportunity for them

to do business together. Two sponsors reported lucrative business deals they did with other sponsors of the clubs as a result of networking with them at a football club they were all sponsoring. This is a trend which is actively supported by football clubs, as the following statement shows:

If we can, we help them to do business here with other club sponsors. So we encourage networking. If this person in this box could do business with the people in that box we put them together. We introduce them.

[Club's representative - UK]

- Long-term partnerships

Clubs' and sponsors' representatives highlighted the trend towards long-term partnerships which benefit both the club and the sponsor.

- Joint communication campaigns of clubs and sponsors

Some representatives of German clubs emphasised the current trend of joint communication campaigns, where club and sponsor work together in order to sell a joint message. This is especially important for clubs who have low marketing budgets.

- Social sponsorship as part of football sponsorship

Some sponsors have discovered a new field of sponsorship which enables them to stand out from other sponsors by actively supporting the community around the football club they sponsor. One sponsor gave information about activities with disability organisations linked to the club and community officers who work with children. Social sponsorship is also an additional source of income for football clubs, as one club official explains:

We realize that we can have an awful lot of funding from community pots of funding, from charity pots of funding, not just from commercial pots of funding.

[Club's representative - UK]

- The use of clubs' databases in order to contact fans

Some clubs have collected a lot of data on their fans and built up considerable databases. These databases are valuable not only for the clubs, but also for the sponsors, because they give them direct access to their specific target group. One interviewee explained the benefit as follows:

Say it's a credit card company, they send you a direct mail advertising their credit card. You probably won't even open it. Straight to the bin. But if they send you the same letter with the [club logo] on it, redemption level goes through the roof.

[Club's representative - UK]

One sponsor talked about a customer acquisition programme in cooperation with the football club they sponsor. Their database of fans helps to generate a lot of new customers, a fact which is recognised by one club's representative:

That's been the biggest shift in the last six month when companies have started to realise that by linking in with football club databases it gives them so many added value and makes their marketing more effective. And they're prepared to pay significant sums for that.

[Club's representative - UK]

What can be improved in the area of professional football sponsorship?

Interviewees were also asked what areas they think are most in need for improvement. All in all, five main suggestions have been identified.

- Getting rid of the advertising clutter and providing more exclusivity

Sponsors as well as sponsorship experts complained about the advertising clutter and the proliferation of sponsors, because there are too many companies and especially too many boards on English Premier League grounds. Some sponsors also said that they want to have fewer brands in the marketplace. They would like to reduce the number of sponsors and increase exclusivity. Another demand, which applies especially to the English Premier League and is linked with the previous preference, is to improve the perimeter boards

around the pitch. All in all, this is an area where some football clubs are indeed self-critical, as the following statement shows:

Our perimeter boards are terrible, absolutely terrible. If you look on the television you can't normally make out the sponsor. I think you can do some very basic things, just to make the perimeter boards nice and clean and they have a very clear message from the sponsor. And again, reduce the clutter.

[Club's representative- UK]

- Facilitating more networking between sponsors

Networking between sponsors is a current trend, as shown earlier. However, some interviewees thought that this is still an area for improvement. One sponsor noted:

The biggest area, I think, that sponsorship can improve is looking at brand affinities, which is when you look at the number of football brands that are out there. The bit that is missing in all of this is how do we wrap all of these properties together and leverage that so it's greater than the sum of the whole. So you start building brand affinity and I think that's the biggest bit of missing in the world of sponsorship, how you look at a single property and how the sponsors themselves who work together.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

- Promoting social sponsorship as a part of football sponsorship

Social sponsorship as a part of the football sponsorship deal is a current trend, as shown above. Again, it is a field where a lot of things can be done better according to some interviewees. One sponsorship expert believed that more sponsors can be generated by such sponsorship opportunities, especially by those companies which do not have an interest in football but in social sponsorship.

- Solving the problem of player access

The problem of sponsors' access to players is a field which needs to be improved as well according to the interviewees. A lot of players have individual contracts with their own sponsors, which then leads to conflicts with the club sponsors, as the following statement shows:

The hardest part of the problem [occurs when the club sponsor has] no rights to any personal experience by any of the footballers at all. If you pay somebody €3m a year, it's not unreasonable that [the players] turn up three or four times a year to take part to [promote the] sponsors. I think that's one of the biggest problems.

[Expert - UK]

- Being more imaginative

Some of the interviewees – mainly the sponsorship experts – accuse clubs as well as sponsors of being too unimaginative:

So there is no limit to what you can do with a sponsor. Sometimes I get angry with clubs who show no real imagination. And it's very limited, it's just the name on the shirt, box hire and match sponsorship.

[Club's representative - UK]

Rather than saying no, you need to think about how you possibly can do things. And go back and start from scratch. And work out how you can do it. Being more imaginative of what they can and what they can't do.

[Expert - UK]

Therefore, the demand is clearly to use the imagination and creativity within the marketing department of sponsors and clubs and come up with new concepts or simply adapt new ideas from other fields of sponsorship.

Can sponsorship be measured and what do companies actually measure?

Regarding the general question as to whether sponsorship is measurable or not, the answers were somehow different, although no one said that it is not measurable. Some interviewees differentiated between types of sponsorship and said that, as with advertising, you cannot measure sponsorship in the broad scheme of things. Another noted that sponsorship is not always measurable – at least not in monetary terms. Another viewpoint was:

It's a bit harsh to say sponsorship as a property is immeasurable. Actually pretty much most of marketing itself is immeasurable.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

However, most of the interviewees confirmed that sponsorship effects are measurable. One of the clearest statements came from a sponsor's representative who said:

I mean, the biggest misconception to me is that the people outside the sponsorship believe that you can't fully measure sponsorship. But I can guarantee down to the very penny I know how much the value is worth. I have a very scientific way of measuring. There are some parts immeasurable, but I have a very stringent set of figures that says that this is how much, this delivers for us. And you have media value which you can measure down to the penny. You have value of hospitality which you can revalue on tickets that you sale, signed merchandise, promotions. Revenues you gain from [your business] and all this things can be added up. And you can get a definite figure. And that's the figure you use to compare to your customer enquiring number. It costs a bit more and you have to spend a lot of time and effort, but it gives you a very concrete set of results.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

All of the sponsors said that they measure their sponsorships. According to the interviewees, sponsors measure most of all brand awareness and media exposure. One sponsor explained their measurement activities in detail:

We measure it in a number of different ways, both in terms of the relative cost it would get me to have that air time, so effectively brand presence. So, we quantify exactly how many clean shots there are of our logo on TV and in the press. Over and above that, however, we have just undertaken dedicated B-2-C-research. So we're measuring basically the brand. And again, we measure effectively our affinity with a) the Premier League and b) then with [the club we sponsor].

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

6.3 Sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship

This section presents the results relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship and covers the questions surrounding the ideal relationship, the actual relationship and dimensions of relationship quality within the football- sponsorship dyad.

How would an ideal relationship between clubs and sponsors look?

The main issue to be dealt within this subsection is the question as to how the interviewees would describe an ideal relationship between clubs and sponsors. Some interviewees noted that the relationship should be based on the principle of service and service in return. This view is supported by an expert who believes that the ideal relationship is a very much business-orientated one. Some other interviewees point out that it has to be a two-way relationship, where both the club and the sponsor benefit. However, the ideal relationship

is defined by most of the interviewees as a partnership, where the two partners trade off advantages and benefit from a mutual understanding of each other's businesses. The picture of two equal partners was mentioned by interviewees across all three groups in this connection. The following statement describes the relationship between clubs and sponsors from a different angle:

I suppose words are always very important. Words often tell you about relationships. And very few people look at them all that closely because the movement of sponsorship towards partnership is exactly what you would expect from the word, isn't it? It's the same as the word for 'spouse'. It's a wife or a husband. That's what the word actually means.

[Expert - UK]

How do clubs and sponsors actually perceive their relationship?

The ideal relationship has been described above. It is interesting to see how the representatives of clubs and sponsors describe their actual relationship. The experts' perspective has not been taken into consideration since they are not in a position to assess in detail the actual relationship from an outside point of view.

▪ The perceived relationship from the clubs' perspective

The clubs' representatives described their relationship with their sponsors initially as 'good', 'very good', 'very, very good' or 'excellent'. Other adjectives were 'friendly', 'close' or 'personal'. It is interesting to note that most of the clubs' representatives used solely the term 'relationship', just one club official spoke about 'cooperation' and their 'sponsors being partners'.

However, some interviewees referred to two important, additional aspects. First, the relationship to their sponsors is based on business. Second, it is a mutual relationship.

Typical statements were:

It's about helping each other. It's a two-way branding.

[Club's representative - UK]

It is clearly a win-win-situation.

[Club's representative - G]

But obviously it's very important that we look after our sponsors and we deliver as much as we can to generate extra business for them. Because then we can demonstrate that they're getting extra business, everybody wins.

[Club's representative - UK]

The last statement is linked to the overall opinion of club's representatives that they work very hard for their sponsors and try to satisfy them as much as possible. Some interviewees emphasized that their clubs now used dedicated sponsorship coordinators whose work focuses solely on the needs of the sponsors.

Two determinants which demonstrate the quality of the relationship seems to be the length of the sponsorship relationship and the loyalty of the sponsors, as the following statements show:

We have a very good record of loyalty, to keeping our sponsors. We've got some sponsors who have been with us an awful long time. So we proud ourselves that we've got some companies who sponsor us for a long long time. So they've grown with us as we have grown.

[Club's representative - UK]

I think the fact that we've been with [our sponsor] for eleven years speaks for itself. They're obviously quite happy.

[Club's representative - UK]

In summary, it may be said that the clubs' representatives perceive the relationship with their sponsors as a positive one which both benefit from.

- The perceived relationship from the sponsors' perspective

The sponsors' representatives described the relationship with their clubs initially as 'really good' or 'pretty strong'. One sponsor noted a 'really strong working relationship', another a 'very amicable relationship'. Daily cooperation was described as 'unproblematic', 'uncomplicated' and 'unbureaucratic'.

In comparison to the clubs' perspective, the sponsors' representatives used the term 'partnership' more frequently. They also emphasised the commercial side of the relationship, as the following statements show:

Ours is very much a partnership, It's a commercial alliance, as we call it.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

I think that it has started being a very commercial venture.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

So it really started from a very commercial basis, but having just initiated that, we are now working actively with them to develop what I say is a strategic relationship with them.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

Some of the sponsors also highlighted the fact that their relationship benefits both sides. There is also overall agreement that the length of the relationship reflects its quality to some extent. Some sponsors considered their sponsorships to be 'strategic partnerships'. All in all, the sponsoring company representatives perceive the relationship with the clubs they sponsor as a positive one. They see it mainly as a partnership, where the emphasis is on the commercial aspect.

Which factors contribute to the relationship quality of the football sponsorship dyad?

Previous studies on relationship quality (RQ) have revealed various dimensions of the higher-order construct in question. The interviewees have not explicitly been asked for dimensions but rather for their perception of the relationship as presented above. The transcripts then have been analysed for the most common dimensions of RQ (namely trust, commitment and satisfaction) in the first place.

▪ Trust

Trust was not mentioned explicitly by any of the interviewees, although there are some implications for trust. For example, one sponsor said that they believe in the club, another sponsor described their relationship as amicable and personal. A German club representative emphasised the willingness to prove reliability whenever needed. An English counterpart said that it is important not to exaggerate too much when selling the sponsorship in order to prove reliability, another English club representative mentioned the

club's 'good reputation in the business.' In addition, one sponsorship expert implied that reliability is essential, stating that football clubs should not walk out of a long-term partnership just because another sponsor is prepared to pay more in the short-term. All in all, trust was not mentioned as a major dimension of relationship quality by the interviewees.

▪ Commitment

Commitment seems to be a major dimension in the relationship between clubs and sponsors according to the respondents, although just one interviewee used the term 'commitment' explicitly. Some sponsors' and clubs' representatives spoke about their 'dedicated teams', who work on the sponsorship. However, one sponsorship expert noted that personal and emotional attachment is important to make the sponsorship work. Support for this view comes from an English club representative who emphasised the need to 'throw yourself into that' otherwise 'you are not going to be very happy.' Commitment can take many forms on different levels (i.e. on a business or personal level). One sponsor said that they worked with the community of the football club outside their initial sponsorship agreement. Some other sponsors and clubs cited their longstanding loyalty as sponsorship partners. One sponsor's representative noted:

Sponsorship doesn't work if you do it just one or two years. It is a partnership which has to be built and remained.

[Sponsor's representative - G]

Other respondents mentioned a personal attachment to the relationship. One club's representative noted 'one of the closest relationships' with the main sponsor, which 'is lived daily'. Some sponsors said that they suffer and cheer with the club, especially on match days, and one sponsor even noted that he/she was converted into a football fan through the sponsorship.

▪ Satisfaction

The transcripts of the interviews gave neither an explicit nor an implicit indication of satisfaction, except one statement of a club's representative:

[Our main sponsor] is obviously quite happy. I mean, if they weren't happy they would come to [us] and say it straight.

[Club's representative - UK]

The transcripts of the interviews were reviewed further in order to generate other dimension of RQ. All in all, three more dimensions have been revealed which seem to determine the quality of relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors:

▪ Communication

Communication seems to be an essential part of the relationship. One sponsorship expert rates communication as the basis of the relationship between clubs and sponsors and suggests that both should talk to each other quite frequently. Another sponsorship expert notes that taking care of the sponsors through communication is quite important. This view is supported by clubs' representatives, as the following statements show:

[Our staff takes care of our sponsors on a daily basis.]

[Club's representative - UK]

[I have daily contact with all of our sponsors.]

[Club's representative - G]

[We very often consult each other.]

[Club's representative - G]

Communication can take place in different forms. The respondents mentioned fixed, scheduled meetings on a regular base (for example every month) as well as brief phone calls or e-mails. Communication mainly fulfils two purposes according to the interviewees. First, to keep each other informed, and second, to solve problems when they occur.

- Mutual understanding

Whether sponsors and clubs understand the needs and situation of each other seems to be another issue which determines the quality of relationship between them. One sponsorship expert emphasised the importance of mutual understanding in the sponsorship dyad and assumes that this has improved over the years. In the past, commercial managers of football clubs did not know much about sponsorship, and companies did not know much about football. With the increase in professionalism on both sides (e.g. more and more marketing experts are coming into football clubs, and sponsoring companies are starting to employ sports agencies), the need for mutual understanding has been realised, as the following statements show:

It can be a problem, especially if this guy from the sponsor doesn't understand the pressures that the club's got and vice versa. And that's why whenever we do a sponsorship deal we make sure we understand what you're trying to achieve, how you're going to use us to achieve that.

[Club's representative - UK]

The people working with us are people who understand and vice versa.

[Club's representative - UK]

And so when you try and work with them, I think they understand where you coming from.

[Sponsor's representative - UK]

Mutual understanding implies that one party generally does not interfere in the business of the other. This is sometimes a problem when objectives clash. However, the respondents on the sponsors' side gave assurances that they would not interfere in the preparation of a game or other matters affecting the club and its team.

- Cooperation

The last and most frequently mentioned dimension of RQ in the football-sponsorship dyad according to the transcripts seems to be cooperation between the clubs and their sponsors. This is strongly linked with the previous dimension, since the one partner has to

understand the needs of the other in the first place if genuine cooperation is to take place. Cooperation was implied on many occasions throughout the interviews. For example, one interviewee said:

Basically, we have a brilliant collaborative relationship.

[Club's representative -G]

Cooperation can be part of the sponsorship deal where two partners trade of advantages, work together on a joint strategy or explore together the opportunities of the sponsorship, according to the interviewees. Clubs' representatives made it clear that they are trying to cooperate with the sponsors in order to help them reach their objectives. Cooperation can also take place besides the initial sponsorship. For example, one sponsor reported that they are working with the club on various social projects for the community. Some clubs' representatives noted that it is becoming more and more important to promote a joint message, especially in view of the fact that football clubs seldom have the marketing budget to start an advertising campaign on their own. Some other interviewees also mentioned joint workshops where ideas for prospective projects were generated. Football clubs and sponsors cooperate on a personal level as well. One interviewee said that their club arranged a tennis tournament for sponsors and their families, another one reported skiing trips, and another respondent reported a football match between the club's and the sponsor's representatives. Personal attachment has, in turn, an effect on the business dimension. For example, one sponsors said that they tried cooperating with a football club by supporting and helping the club's marketing department with their know-how and advice on a personal level.

6.4 Anglo-German differences

This final section deals with the differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga, as perceived by the interviewees.

What are the general differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga?

This subsection revealed three differences. First, English Premier League clubs publish more figures and data than German football clubs. This is related to the fact that most of the English clubs are limited companies which went public, whereas in Germany only one professional football club is quoted on the stock exchange. One German expert noted:

In Germany, it is an act of state to publish figures. These are trade secrets which are better guarded than the crown jewels of the Queen of England.

[Expert - G]

Second, Premier League clubs seem to benefit more from globalisation than their German counterparts. This is due to the fact that the English Premier League has a much more international appeal than the German Bundesliga, especially in Asia. One English expert said:

And of course, one of the great values that the Premier League club offers the sponsor is that at least three times a season, you get the chance – not a guarantee – that someone in Shanghai is gonna watch you. There is obviously some value there.

[Expert - UK]

This view is supported by a representative of an English Premier League club who said that one of their sponsors was an Asian company which had no business outside their Asian home market. Their one and only reason was to generate a lot of media exposure on Asian television.

The third difference relates to sponsorship, which seems to be more sophisticated in the German Bundesliga than in the English Premier League. One expert said that sponsorship

plays a less important role in England which is reflected in the fact that English clubs do not differentiate between sponsorship and other commercial income sources, but subsume all these activities under the general term 'commercial revenues'. In Germany, however, differentiation of income sources takes place.

What are the reasons for the differences in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga?

Chapter 2 presented some figures and indicators showing that the German Bundesliga clubs are much more sophisticated in terms of sponsorship than their English counterparts. The interviewees in both countries were confronted with this assessment. Most of the English interviewees were not aware that the differences were so great. Some of them even denied that there are any differences at all, but then had to admit that there was obviously a gap, as they were confronted with figures that could not be denied. English interviewees across all three groups doubted that some sponsorship fees in the German Bundesliga were justified and rated them simply as too high. However, whereas some of the reasons for the differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga revealed in the interviewees are based on facts, some others rest on pure assumptions. All in all, two main concrete reasons as well as a collection of minor reasons for the differences and unproved assumptions were identified.

- Different necessities

The responses of English and German interviewees created the impression that the German Bundesliga clubs are more heavily dependent on sponsorship revenues than their English counterparts. English Premier League clubs can count on huge television and matchday revenues. Another reliable source of income are the overall sponsors of the English Premier League. The FAPL not only approaches these sponsors but also looks after them. The need to develop sophisticated sponsorships is not as apparent as in other countries. In

Germany, however, the need is greater because the other revenue streams are not as high as in England. The crash of Kirch Media is quoted by nearly all German interviewees as a turning point in this connection. As a consequence of the sharp reduction in television revenues that this brought about, Bundesliga clubs had to find new ways to generate revenue streams or improve already existing income streams such as sponsorship. The German interviewees noted that the Kirch collapse led to an attitude change within the clubs and to more sophisticated sponsorship approaches. Sponsorship as an income stream was consequently rated more highly. Another factor which contributes to the stronger need for sponsorship in German clubs is the fact that the German Bundesliga has no league sponsors. Therefore, every club is wholly responsible for its sponsorship income.

- The prospect of World Cup 2006 in Germany is a real driver for sponsorship in the Bundesliga.

The German interviewees across all three groups emphasised the importance of the forthcoming World Cup in the home country of the Bundesliga. New stadiums provide increased hospitality and advertising opportunities for sponsors. In addition, the sponsors' representatives made clear that their sponsorship decision was partly based on the desire not to be left behind and to position themselves on the tide of the forthcoming world championship event.

- Other reasons and assumptions

Apart from the two reasons mentioned above, the interviewees also mentioned other reasons partly based on facts and partly based on assumptions. One of the assumptions about why the English Premier League clubs have less income from sponsorship than German Bundesliga clubs was voiced by an English club's representative:

Perhaps we started from a lower base. In this country, we've got the established, mega football clubs in the Premier League, like Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool. But the other clubs in the Premier League have gone up and down, up and down. And possibly there was a lower base to start from.

[Club's representative - UK]

A representative of another English club assumed that there might be too much sponsorship clutter and that big sponsors scrutinised whether they got value for their money, because there were too many companies advertising in and around the stadium. An English expert blamed the total number of professional clubs in England as the reason for a lower level of sponsorship income, because there was too much competition between all these clubs.

The interviewees also tried to find reasons why German Bundesliga clubs generate more income from sponsorship. Two English clubs' representatives assumed:

And maybe in Germany there's still a culture with the companies that they like to support the local football teams.

[Club's representative - UK]

[In Germany are] probably more big industries getting involved with their local team than perhaps there are in this country.

[Club's representative - UK]

Another assumption was made by an English expert who threw up the question as to whether German clubs simply offer better value or more sophisticated methods of servicing sponsors.

Again, another assumption by two interviewees was based on the fact that Germany is a bigger and more attractive market, because it is in the middle of Europe, whereas 'the Premier League is perhaps a little bit more on the edge of Europe'. Therefore, it might be easier to leverage benefits in Germany than in England.

How will the gap in sponsorship between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga progress?

Only few interviewees responded to this question, though there was agreement that the difference will decrease as a result of two assumptions. First, the level of sponsorship income for German clubs will decrease in the long-term, according to a German expert.

Second, the Premier League will increase its sponsorship incomes, because the clubs are learning and copying from each other, as an English expert indicated:

Well, I would imagine the Premier League is probably catching up pretty quickly with everybody. You know, these guys talk to each other.

[Expert - UK]

6.5 Summary of the qualitative findings

The qualitative research phase revealed the following findings:

- *The characteristics of the football business:* The football business is described by the interviewees as a relatively small business in terms of turnover, but as a huge business in terms of public perception and media coverage. It is also perceived as an unusual, weird part of the entertainment industry, providing a highly emotionalised product. Dependence on sporting success is another key feature of the football business, as is dependence on the support of the fans who keep the football business running by purchasing football-related products and services. Whereas clubs' representatives more or less play their cards close to their chest, some sponsors and sponsorship experts noted also negative aspects of the football business such as unhealthy financing and insufficient management structures. Participants across all three groups again emphasised the fact that football clubs have a relatively small marketing budget compared to other businesses.
- *Sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs:* The findings showed that the importance of sponsorship as an income stream is perceived differently in England and Germany. For English Premier League clubs, sponsorship is not as important as for German Bundesliga clubs as a source of revenue. However, in terms of image-building and cash flow it plays an important role. The English Premier League

and the German Bundesliga have one common problem: the perceived imbalance of sponsorship levels within each league, where only the big clubs attract big companies whereas smaller clubs find it difficult to sign considerable sponsorship deals. However, the interviewees paint a rosy picture of the future of sponsorship.

- *Sponsorship as a marketing tool:* The interviewees confirmed the view that sponsors have different and multiple objectives, ranging from increasing brand awareness and transferring image to improving links to customers, business associates and staff. It has also been revealed that economic objectives are becoming even more important. Football, however, provides a lot of opportunities to reach these objectives. For example, wide audiences and huge media attraction as well as different target groups. The subsection about reasons for successful sponsorships made clear that simply putting a name on the shirt is not enough anymore. Sponsors need to link their sponsorship involvement with other promotional tools such as advertising and public relations activities. It is also clear from interviewees' point responses that such activities around the sponsorship depend mainly on the budget. Some interviewees emphasised the importance of concentrating on fans. Six current football sponsorship trends were revealed. First, there is a shift from 'sweetheart deals' to business-related deals, because monitoring and internal justification are becoming even more important than before. Second, sponsorship is being used as a networking opportunity between companies. Third, sponsorships are increasingly taking the form of long-term partnerships. Fourth, more and more clubs and sponsors promote their messages in joint communication campaigns. The fifth trend is the discovery of social sponsorship within football sponsorship. Last but not least, sponsors are using databases of clubs more frequently in order to directly get in contact with the fans. The interviewees also named five areas where sponsorship could be improved such as getting rid of the advertising clutter, providing more exclusivity and improving perimeter boards – at least in the English

Premier League. Another field requiring improvement is the area of networking between partners. Promoting social sponsorship and solving the problem of sponsors' access to players were other demands by the interviewees. In addition, interviewees suggested that more imaginative strategies and methods could improve sponsorship. Finally, the opinion of interviewees was revealed that sponsorship is measurable – at least to some extent. Sponsors measure first of all brand awareness and media exposure.

- *Sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship*: The ideal relationship between clubs and sponsors is a business-orientated partnership, characterised by mutual understanding and equal status according to sponsorship experts mainly. The actual relationship, however, is described by clubs and sponsors with positive adjectives such as 'good' or 'excellent'. The term 'partnership' was used more frequently by sponsors than by clubs. Both sides emphasised the business dimension of their relationship. The clubs' representatives emphasised their attempt to work hard for the sponsors in order to fulfil the objectives of the latter. The interview transcripts were also checked for dimensions determining the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. Commitment as a well-established dimension of RQ was supported by the interviews, whereas they yielded only slight evidence for trust and satisfaction, although both have been identified as real drivers of RQ in previous studies. However, three other dimensions were revealed as being important for the relationship quality, namely mutual understanding, cooperation and communication.
- *Anglo-German differences*: Some differences between the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga were revealed. For example, Premier League clubs benefit more from globalisation than their German counterparts. They also publish more data and figures, whereas the German clubs try to keep financial information secret, according to one interviewee. Two main reasons for the differences in sponsorship income and

significance were identified. First, income requirements of English and German clubs were different. English Premier League clubs are less dependent on sponsorship revenues than German clubs because of huge alternative income streams such as television and matchday revenues. Second, the prospect of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany seems to be a real driver for the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship. Apart from these two main reasons, a collection of other reasons and assumptions have been revealed. According to the interviewees, the fact that there are too many professional football clubs in England and too much advertising clutter in the Premier League could be a reason. Another assumption was that Premier League clubs might have started from a lower base. Some other interviewees saw the size, attractiveness and location of the German market as the main reason why the Bundesliga clubs generate more sponsorship income. Interviewees also assumed that in Germany were probably more big companies which sponsor the local teams than in England. Another English interviewee thought that German clubs might offer their sponsors better services and more value for money. In the long term, however, the difference between the level of club sponsorship in England and Germany will diminish according to some interviewees. On the one hand, this could be because English Premier League clubs are catching up. On the other hand, it could be because the sponsorship revenue level in Germany might decrease in the foreseeable future.

The next chapter links the findings of the qualitative research phase with the findings of the literature review in order to generate further research propositions.

7 DISCUSSION OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS AND GENERATION OF PROPOSITIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The previous chapter presented the results of the qualitative research. This chapter places the most interesting findings in the context of the literature-based theoretical background (as given in the first five chapters of this thesis). Upon that, research propositions as well as hypotheses will be built (and subsequently tested in a quantitative survey). This chapter also describes the content-related design of the questionnaire.

7.1 Linking theory and primary data in order to build research propositions

This section relates the findings of the qualitative research phase to the theory generated from the literature review. It does this from the three sponsorship perspectives. In view of the combined findings research propositions will be built sequentially.

7.1.1 Sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs

Chapter 1 introduced football as a business. The interviewees confirmed the view that football is indeed a business, though they also admitted that in terms of turnover it is not a *big* business. This is in line with discussion of the first chapter of this thesis, which described football as a business with unusual features; a view confirmed by some interviewees as well. For them, the main characteristic of the football business is the extraordinary degree of public perception and media coverage, an issue which is mentioned in Chapter 1. Some of the interviewees point to what they see as the negative aspect of public interest, with the public discussing every decision of football clubs. They also complain that too many people are interfering in clubs' affairs, a view shared by the technical magazine SPONSORS, which notes that most people feel they know enough about football to express an informed opinion on it (Klewenhagen, Sohns and Weilguny, 2002). The complaint of clubs' representatives (which is confirmed by some

representatives of sponsors) that football clubs have relatively small marketing budgets compared to other organisations is a new insight that is offered here. This, of course, is proving to be a problem for football clubs, because the importance of marketing campaigns is growing. Not only do clubs need to promote games or advertise their merchandise: they also have to produce advocacy advertising in order to present themselves to potential sponsors. For example, VfB Stuttgart produced an image film which was shown in cinemas around the city in order to attract more spectators and sponsors. All these activities cost money, and therefore it is fair to say that football clubs need appropriate marketing budgets just as businesses in other industries do. Another issue, which has not been dealt with in greater detail within the course of this thesis, is the problem of the unhealthy finances of some football clubs, as mentioned by some football experts and sponsors. Indeed, the figures do not paint a rosy picture of football finance. According to a report of the DFL (2005a), the debts of German Bundesliga clubs amount to more than €71.8m in 2003/04. The situation in the English Premier League is not better. Deloitte (2005) reveals that ten of the twenty English Premier League clubs made an aggregated pre-tax loss of £128m in the same season.

The implication for further research which comes out of the qualitative interviews with regard to this issue would be the question of how the Premier League and the Bundesliga really perceive the size and nature of the football business. In view of the qualitative findings *the author proposes that the Premier League and Bundesliga clubs rate football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage, but as a small business in terms of turnover.*

Chapter 2 described sponsorship as an important income stream for professional football clubs. The interviewees confirmed that sponsorship plays an important role for professional football, although it seems that the importance of sponsorship as a revenue stream is bigger in the German Bundesliga than in the English Premier League. The results

of the interviews confirm the figures presented in Chapter 2, with sponsorship being the second most important income source for German Bundesliga clubs and only the third most important one for English Premier League clubs. However, sponsorship is even more important in view of the fact that it is not only a pre-paid income stream but also one with a high margin.

The prospects of sponsorship as a source of income are quite good according to the interviewees, although it seems that nobody really can accurately assess its potential. The English clubs' representatives show a clear desire to get more out of sponsorship within the next few years, whereas the outlook of the German interviewees is limited to 2006. What happens after the World Cup 2006 in Germany seemed difficult for them to predict.

Considering the qualitative results, *the author proposes that German clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship more highly than their English counterparts, whereas English Premier League clubs rate the future importance of sponsorship more highly than German Bundesliga clubs.*

Some interviewees also emphasised that sponsorship is important not only as an income stream, but also as an opportunity to build a club's own brand since it can help to enhance the image of the club. The association with certain sponsors can also help to grow the club internationally. Therefore *the author proposes that clubs see sponsorship both as an income stream and as an opportunity to build the brand of the club and to network with their sponsors.*

7.1.2 Sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies

The interviews revealed that companies are going into football sponsorship because football provides wide audiences and different target groups. It therefore delivers opportunities to reach the sponsors' objectives on a national and/or international level. One characteristic of football is that it generates passion and generally has a good image.

However, the reasons for the sponsors interviewed seem to be primarily commercial ones. This is in line with the relevant literature on sponsorship, although some of the interviewed sponsorship experts doubted that companies are going into football sponsorship purely for economic reasons and that personal reasons (such as the CEO's personal attachment to a particular football club) might influence the decision as well.

In view of these observations, *the author proposes that commercial reasons for companies to go into football sponsorship prevail over personal reasons.*

A main difference between English and German sponsors in terms of reasons to sponsor football clubs seems to be the World Cup 2006, hosted by Germany. German respondents stated that this event played a role in their decision to sponsor a football club, while the English sponsors denied any interest. This, in turn, could help to explain the prominent position of the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship. Therefore, *the author proposes that the World Cup 2006 is an important reason for German sponsors to sponsor Bundesliga clubs, but does not play an important motivating role for sponsors in England.*

Objectives differ from sponsor to sponsor, according to the respondents. Individual sponsors might also have multiple objectives. Enhanced brand awareness and image were named most frequently by the interviewees, although staff motivation and improving business links or meeting social and/or local responsibilities were also mentioned. This, again, is in line with the literature on sponsorship. A market research survey by the Bob Bohlitz Group (2004) revealed that 63.6% of the sponsors interviewed pursue economic objectives and nearly the same percentage anticipates an increase of economic objectives in sponsorship in the future. Therefore, *the author proposes that brand awareness and image transfer prevail over other sponsorship objectives.*

Another interesting aspect of this section are the potential areas for improvement in football sponsorship. Reducing the advertising clutter and providing more exclusivity is one requirement according to the interviewees. Other areas for improvement refer to the problem of player access, the opportunity for networking between sponsors or the degree of imagination behind sponsorship concepts. This is an area where further research is necessary, although no further propositions are made.

7.1.3 Sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors

The interviews covered three aspects of relationship between football clubs and their sponsors. First, there is the ideal relationship. According to the respondents, it is a mutual business-related partnership which both clubs and sponsors benefit from. This represents more or less the own definition which has been presented in Chapter 3.

Second, the interviews revealed how sponsors and clubs actually perceive their relationship. It is interesting to note that both parties used positive attributes to describe their relationship, although sponsors used the term 'partnership' more frequently than the clubs' representatives. In addition, both emphasised the business dimension of their relationship.

The third aspect, revealed by the transcript of the interviews, refers to the concept of relationship quality. The overall concept of relationship quality is an important issue for football sponsorship, as suggested by Farrelly and Quester (2005). However, it can be doubted that both football clubs and sponsors place great value upon the importance of relationship quality by measuring or managing it. At least, the interviews revealed no evidence that football clubs or sponsors evaluate their relationship quality. In addition, only few respondents mentioned that they proactively manage their relationship with the

other side. In view of these observations, *the author proposes that the majority of clubs/sponsors perceive relationship quality as being important for the success of their sponsorship, but then only the minority measure or even manage it.*

As presented in Chapter 4, various studies on relationship quality identified different dimensions of RQ. The most common dimensions emerging from the literature review and an analysis of more than 30 papers on relationship quality (see Appendix VIII) have been crosschecked with the transcripts of the interviews (as presented in Chapter 6). Table 7.1 lists the most important dimensions and their individual outcomes from the literature and the interviews.

determinant	supported by the literature	supported by the interviews
trust	+++	+
commitment	+++	++
satisfaction	+++	
coordination	+	
cooperation	+	+++
communciation	++	++
joint problem solving	+	
ethical orientation	+	
relationship duration	+	+
power	+	
mutual understanding	++	+++

(+ fair support ++ strong support +++ very strong support)

Table 7.1: dimensions of relationship quality identified from the literature and interviews

As indicated in Table 7.1, most studies on RQ identified commitment, trust and satisfaction as the three key dimensions of relationship quality. The qualitative research phase, however, identified three other dimensions (mutual understanding, cooperation and communication) which seem to be important in the sponsorship dyad. Therefore, six dimensions have qualified for further research. All of these six dimensions will be explained in detail now and subsequently hypothesised in relation to relationship quality. In addition, a discussion of how these variables have been operationalised in previous models, and a set of rationales for those included in this model, are given in subsection 7.3.3.

7.1.3.1 Commitment

Commitment is an important dimension of RQ according to the relevant literature as described in Chapter 4. For example, Lang and Colgate (2003) view commitment as an antecedent of relationship quality, Roberts *et al.* (2003) call it an indicator of RQ, and for Liang and Wang (2005) commitment is an important variable in the measurement of relationship quality.

Commitment has been examined in relation to the sociology and psychology disciplines first. In this context, commitment has been viewed as a variable which binds an individual to a behavioural disposition (Kiesler, 1971) or accounts for certain kinds of behaviour (Becker, 1960). The organizational literature (e.g. Meyer, Allen and Smith, 1993) lists three forms of commitment operating through various psychological mechanisms. First, affective commitment based on the attachment to an organisation (employees stay with the company because they want to). Second, continuance commitment based on the perceived cost of leaving an organisation (employees stay because they feel they have to). And third, normative commitment based on the perceived obligation to stay with an organisation (employees stay because they feel they ought to). One could assume that all three commitment forms exist in a sports sponsorship context depending on the individual clubs and sponsors on the one hand and the individual sponsorship dyad on the other. However, it seems rather difficult to examine which of the three forms a sponsor's and/or sponsee's commitment relates to, though this could be an implication for further research explicitly focusing on commitment in the sponsorship dyad.

In this respect, Wong and Sohal (2002b) note that despite the belief of other disciplines to view commitment as a multidimensional phenomenon which consists of several cognitive features, commitment has seldom been considered as a complex construct in consumer research. However, in the relationship marketing literature, commitment has been

described in many ways. Following Roberts *et al.* (2003) commitment is a key measure of how the exchange partners feel about their relationship, and whether they want to continue it. This view is supported by Ivens (2004, p. 302) who adds that 'commitment is generally interpreted as an attitude.' Anderson and Weitz (1992, p. 19) define commitment as 'a desire to develop a stable relationship, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, and a confidence in the stability of the relationship'. Diller and Kusterer (1998, p. 218) add that commitment is 'the willingness of a business partner to adhere to a business relationship nearly regardless of the future perspective or the economic stimulus.' They argue that relationship commitment mainly refers to the past and the common history of the business associates. Common success against third parties, exchange of confidential information and open communication, as well as the exchange of personal sympathies and common ground also lead to commitment according to the authors. Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 23) add that 'relationship commitment exists only when the relationship is considered important.' Their study – one of the first papers examining commitment in a relational business-to-business context – showed that commitment is influenced by trust. Other precursors identified to build commitment are the relationship termination costs, the expected relational benefits and shared values. Commitment has been shown to reduce uncertainty in a relationship (Gounaris and Venetis, 2002). It also leads to cooperation, acquiescence, long-term orientation, lowered transaction costs and greater value (Abdul-Muhmin, 2002). For relationships to achieve a high level of commitment there needs to be well developed structural and social bonds (Gounaris and Venetis, 2002).

However, all of the above characteristics of commitment relate to studies which were carried out in business contexts other than those of sports sponsorship. Furthermore, they reflect only one side of a relationship rather than both sides, and therefore reduce the transferability on to sponsorship dyads. So far, only two studies have dealt explicitly with

commitment in a sports sponsorship context. One study comes from Chadwick (2004), who examined the determinants of commitment in the dyadic relationship between English professional football clubs and their shirt sponsors. One of the clear revelations was that not only the football sponsors commit to the sponsorship but also the football clubs. It therefore reinforced the view of taking both sides of a sponsorship dyad into consideration when looking at the relational aspects of sponsorship. Furthermore, the study identified shared values, perceived benefits and opportunistic tendencies as key determinants of commitment. However, the failure of the study to prove a strong link between trust and commitment – as evident in other studies (e.g. Morgan and Hunt, 1994) – could imply that professional football sponsorship dyads are different from dyads of other business contexts.

The other study dealing with commitment in the context of sports sponsorship comes from Farrelly and Quester (2005). They argue that in the sports sponsorship context commitment takes the form of additional investments in order to leverage the sponsorship effects. This view has two main shortcomings. First, it assumes that additional investments for leveraging the sponsorship result from the sponsor's commitment. However, it could also be argued that these additional investments are part of the overall sponsorship strategy which has been set up at the beginning of the sponsorship when commitment was not incisive. The decision to invest additional resources for leveraging the sponsorship could also be based on the sponsor's rational assessment that additional resources are needed in order to achieve the commercial short-term objectives through the sponsorship. In this case, sponsors might see sponsorship as a marketing tool rather than a relationship between committed partners. Second, Farrelly and Quester's view reflects the perspective of the sponsors only and consequently ignores the sponsees' commitment (an important point in view of Chadwick's findings). It is therefore a limited approach to assess commitment in a sponsorship dyad by the means of additional investment for leveraging the sponsorship. It

might be one of various other forms of commitment in the context of sports sponsorship, but not the only one. However, the results of Farrelly and Quester's study clearly shows that trust has a positive effect on commitment, and that sponsors' commitment has a strong impact on their economic satisfaction, but only little impact on their non-economic satisfaction. This again, could be due to the rather restricted definition of commitment in their study.

In summary, commitment is seen as a key dimension of relationship quality according to previous studies. Furthermore, it has been shown that commitment plays an important role in sports sponsorship dyads. This is supported by the qualitative interviews, which revealed two levels of commitment: first, organisational commitment in the context of the sponsorship agreement, and second, the personal commitment of the people who work on the sponsorship and are attached in an emotional manner to the sponsorship and/or the club. In view of these findings, *the author proposes that commitment positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.3.2 Trust

Trust is seen as a critical construct in a range of discipline areas (Nicholson, Compeau and Sethi, 2001) and as a central dimension in the relationship evaluation literature. As a consequence of the paradigm shift in the marketing literature, trust has been recognised as an important variable for the success of relationships in many different contexts. For example, in the channel literature (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Weitz and Jap, 1995), the supplier literature (Ring and van de Ven, 1992; Ganesan, 1994; Morgan and Hunt, 1994), the international business literature (Ahmed *et al.*, 1999), the end consumer relationships literature (Czepiel, 1990; Berry, 1995), and the lateral relationships literature (Webster, 1992).

There is less of a consensus as to whether trust only exists between individuals or whether it can exist between organisations or a combination of both. Research therefore focused on all three ways by examining trust between individuals (Park and Hwang, 2002), between organisations (Friman *et al.*, 2002), and between individuals and organisations (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). This thesis appreciates that trust can be developed in the above three ways, but looks at trust between organisations in view of the fact that professional football sponsorship is a business-to-business relationship.

Trust has been defined as 'the belief that a partner's word or promise is reliable and a party will fulfil his/her obligations in the relationship' (Schurr and Ozanne, 1985, p. 940) and 'as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner on whom one has confidence' (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé, 1992, p. 315). It is linked to the confidence of one partner in the other partner's integrity and reliability (Achrol, 1991; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Roberts *et al.*, 2003). Trust can be built when the relationship is long-term orientated and when past performance (such as communication) proved to be of high quality and frequency (Diller and Kusterer, 1988; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Cheng and Stotlar, 1999). Further, trust has been shown to be critical in relationships where there is a high degree of risk, uncertainty, or lack of knowledge (Coulter and Coulter, 2002). However, trust has also been identified as a major determinant of relationship commitment. One of the most interesting papers in this respect comes from Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 22), who argue that trust influences commitment on the one hand and that commitment and trust in combination lead to cooperation on the other hand.

Other researchers link trust directly to relationship quality. In previous studies on relationship quality, trust has been named as a feature of RQ (Dwyer and Oh, 1987; Crosby *et al.*, 1990), a determinant of RQ (Moorman *et al.*, 1992), a component of RQ (Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Leuthesser, 1997), an antecedent of RQ (Wong and Sohal, 2002b; Lang and

Colgate, 2003), and as an indicator of RQ (Roberts *et al.*, 2003). In this study, trust is seen as a determinant of relationship quality rather than an element of the RQ construct.

There is less of a consensus when it comes to the conceptualisation of trust. Trust has been considered either as a one-dimensional construct (e.g. Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Leuthesser, 1997, Lang and Colgate, 2003) or as a two-dimensional construct (Kumar *et al.*, 1995; Wong and Sohal, 2002b; Roberts *et al.*, 2003) in previous studies on RQ. In this respect, Moorman *et al.* (1992) argue that trust has to be viewed as a belief and as a form of behaviour. Sako (1992) views trust even as a three-dimensional construct incorporating contractual trust (referring to parties adhering to written or verbal contracts), competence trust (referring to the expectation that a partner can perform at a set level), and goodwill trust (referring to the demonstration and mutual expectation of honesty and benevolence between the parties).

In a sports sponsorship context, trust has been examined only twice. Chadwick (2004), for example, proposed that trust is a major determinant of commitment in the football club-sponsor dyad. However, the findings of his study failed to prove a strong link between trust and commitment. In relationships between sponsors and Australian football teams, trust was shown to increase commitment and satisfaction, and therefore trust is considered to be a key variable in the club-sponsor dyad (Farrelly and Quester, 2003, 2005). In this context, trust is seen as a one-dimensional construct based on the sponsors' belief the sponsees to be reliable, knowledgeable about the relationship, and open in its dealing with them. The shortcoming of Farrelly and Quester's study has been mentioned on many occasions within this thesis and applies in this regard as well in view of the fact that trust of only one side of the sponsorship dyad has been taken into consideration.

In summary, trust has been described as a crucial dimension of relationship quality in previous studies on RQ (see Chapter 4). Furthermore, trust is the essential variable in the sports sponsorship dyad according to Farrelly and Quester (2003, 2005). The interviews revealed slight evidence of trust, although reliability is clearly a theme in the sponsorship dyad according to some interviewees. Therefore, *the author proposes that trust positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.3.3 Satisfaction

Marketing literature has focused on satisfaction over the years and various studies have conceptualised it as a prerequisite for relationship quality (Wilson, 1995). For example, Dwyer and Oh (1987) note a direct link between satisfaction and relationship quality, Bejou *et al.* (1996) and Leuthesser (1997) call satisfaction a component of RQ, Lang and Colgate (2003) view it as an antecedent of RQ and Roberts *et al.* (2003) state that satisfaction is an indicator of relationship quality. In addition, various other researchers have empirically proved that satisfaction is positively associated with relationship quality (Bejou, Ennew, and Palmer, 1998; Hsieh and Hiang, 2004; Wong, 2004).

Most definitions of satisfaction relate to customer's satisfaction and mainly focus on the customer's past and current evaluations of the product or service (Hsieh and Hiang, 2004). However, the definition which seems most appropriate for this thesis comes from Dwyer and Oh (1987, p. 352), who conceive satisfaction 'as a global evaluation of fulfilment in the relation'. Their definition of satisfaction can be applied to both sides of the sponsorship dyad.

There is some debate in the relationship marketing literature on how satisfaction may be conceptualised. Some studies have conceptualised it as a one-dimensional construct (e.g.

Wray *et al.*, 1994; Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Leuthesser, 1997), whereas others view satisfaction as a two-dimensional construct. For example, Geyskens and Steenkamp (2000) distinguish between economic satisfaction (based on an evaluation of the economic results from the relationship) and social satisfaction (referring to the psychological aspects of the relationship). Ivens (2004, p. 301) differentiates between economic satisfaction and non-economic satisfaction based on the belief that 'in relationship management, objectives may be economic (e.g. turnover, customer penetration) and non-economic.' Crosby and Stevens (1987) even used three dimensions to conceptualise satisfaction in their study on relationship satisfaction in the life insurance industry: customer's satisfaction with the personnel, the core service and the organisation.

With regard to the context of sports sponsorship, Farrelly and Quester (2005, p. 213) note that 'there appears to have been no previous attempt in the sponsorship literature to identify or define the construct of satisfaction' which might owe to 'the notorious difficulty sponsors encounter when trying to evaluate sponsorship effects and outcomes.' In this respect, the authors also point out that satisfaction 'acts both as an antecedent and an outcome in what is by nature a cyclical, iterative process.' Indeed, the role of satisfaction in business-to-business relationships remains somehow unclear despite previous studies. However, Farrelly and Quester (2005) distinguish between economic and non-economic satisfaction in their study examining the relationship between sponsors and clubs in the context of Australian football. The economic satisfaction dimension refers to results of the sponsorship which enabled the sponsor to implement initiatives and to increase the value of both the own brand and those of the sports entity. The non-economic satisfaction dimension reflected sponsors' perception of the sponsee's ability to establish a rapport with the sponsor as well as the dependability and level of professionalism in servicing the sponsorship relationship. Here again, the restricted focus on only one side of the sponsorship dyad (the sponsor's perspective) limits the value of the findings which imply

that economic satisfaction is strongly influenced by trust and commitment, whereas non-economic satisfaction is determined by trust only.

In summary, satisfaction has been identified as a key dimension of relationship quality in previous studies, whereas the transcripts of the qualitative interviews implied little if any evidence of satisfaction. However, in view of the strong support from the literature *the author proposes that satisfaction positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.3.4 Mutual understanding

The need to understand the consumer has been mentioned on many occasions throughout the relationship marketing literature. It is therefore quite surprising that only few studies dealt with the concept of mutual understanding. For example, Mohr and Bitner (1991) proposed that mutual understanding is a two-dimensional construct, incorporating role taking accuracy and cognitive similarity, which determines customer satisfaction in service encounters. They also note a strong link to communication in view of the fact that mutual understanding is the exchange of messages without distortion. Following Mohr and Bitner's definition of mutual understanding and applying it to a sponsorship context, mutual understanding is given when the sponsor and the sponsee understand each other's perspective even when their own perspective may be different (role taking accuracy) and when sponsor and sponsee share the same idea of what each other's behaviour in the sponsorship dyad should be (cognitive similarity).

With regard to the concept of relationship quality, only few studies can be noted referring to mutual understanding. Keating *et al.* (2003), for example, examined understanding as a RQ dimension but failed to prove a statistically significant correlation. Naudé and Buttle

(2000), on the other hand, reported 'mutual understanding of needs' as one of the most common attributes of relationship quality.

Despite a clear lack of studies appreciating the importance of mutual understanding for the quality of relationships between business partners, the findings of the qualitative research phase imply that mutual understanding is a key issue in the professional football sponsorship dyad. Clubs' and sponsors' representatives emphasised the need to try and understand each other's position. They also admitted that this can be difficult from time to time in view of the fact that clubs and sponsors sometimes have different viewpoints and different objectives. The interviewees also pointed out that clubs have to understand what sponsors are trying to achieve with their sponsorship and that sponsors need to understand the unique characteristics of the football business in order to prevent possible conflicts. Furthermore, respondents from both sides of the sponsorship dyad firmly emphasised their desire to understand each other in order to make the relationship work.

In summary, mutual understanding has been dealt with in the RQ literature only marginal (e.g. Naudé and Buttle, 2000; Keating *et al.*, 2003). However, the interviews strongly imply the importance of mutual understanding in the professional football sponsorship dyad. Therefore, *the author proposes that mutual understanding positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.3.5 Cooperation

Cooperation has been found to be a necessary ingredient for relationship marketing according to Wilson (1995). Various authors agree that cooperation is strongly determined by trust. For example, Barbalet (1996) argues that trust is the emotional basis for cooperation, Das and Teng (1998) state that trust is an ingredient of cooperation and Morgan and Hunt (1994) note that cooperation is the outcome of trust and commitment.

Deutsch (1973) and Johnson and Johnson (1989), on the other hand, link cooperation to communication and mutual understanding. This thesis appreciates that cooperation somehow interrelates with other RQ dimensions, but examines cooperation as an independent dimension of relationship quality following Woo and Ennew (2004).

In view of the importance of cooperation in the relationship marketing literature, it is surprising that cooperation has been touched upon only slightly in previous studies on relationship quality. It appears that the only notable exception comes from Woo and Ennew (2004) who view cooperation as a dimension of RQ. Common to nearly all definitions of cooperation is the notion of exchange partners to collaborate and work together in order to achieve common and/or mutually compatible goals (Frazier, 1983; Young and Wilkinson, 1997; Das and Teng, 1998; Humphries and Wilding, 2004; Woo and Ennew, 2004).

In a business-to-business context, Anderson and Narus (1990, p. 45) note that 'coordinated, joint efforts will lead to outcomes that exceed what the firm would achieve if it acted solely in its own best interests.' In relation to the context of professional football sponsorship, this could mean that the value of the sponsorship might increase if both sponsorship partners cooperate rather than trying to reach their sponsorship objectives on their own. This view is supported by the interviewees during the qualitative research phase, all of whom emphasised the importance of cooperation. In the football sponsorship dyad, cooperation can take many forms. For example, interviewees mentioned joint advertising campaigns, joint projects or joint workshops in order to explore the opportunities of the sponsorship and make it therefore more effective. Clubs' and sponsors' representative also pointed out that cooperation is not reduced to the boundaries of the sponsorship agreement, but that cooperation can also take place outside the actual sponsorship agreement (e.g. joint leisure activities such as tennis and golf tournaments or weekend trips to the mountains).

The transcripts of the interviews strongly implied that the relationship between football clubs and their sponsors is also determined by the degree of cooperation between both sponsorship partners.

In summary, cooperation has been mentioned only slightly in previous studies on relationship quality (e.g. Woo and Ennew, 2004). The interviews, however, revealed that cooperation has a strong impact on the relationship between the football clubs and their sponsors. In view of the qualitative results, *the author proposes that cooperation between both parties positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.3.6 Communication

Communication is commonly seen as one of the most important elements in successful business-to-business relationships (Anderson and Weitz, 1989, 1992; Anderson and Narus, 1990; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Fundamentally, communication is the glue that holds inter-organisational relationships together according to Mohr and Nevin (1990). Anderson and Narus (1990, p. 44) define communication as ‘the formal as well as informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between firms.’ In this respect, Lages *et al.* (2005) emphasise that communication includes not only sending and receiving information but also the ability to make use of the information. It is therefore seen as a two-way method of achieving some kind of shared understanding.

However, whilst communication has been shown to be a success factor in relationships, little research has examined the relationship between communication and relationship quality. One of the few studies comes from Keating *et al.* (2003) who view communication as a dimension of RQ. Another study by Lages *et al.* (2005, p. 1041) identifies communication as an intrinsic constituent element of relationship quality. They define

communication as 'the human activity that creates and maintains relationships between the different parties involved.'

There is some debate relating to the role of communication in relational constructs and the relationship between communication and other relational variables. For example, Morgan and Hunt (1994) view communication as an antecedent of trust, whereas Anderson and Weitz (1992) and Ahmed, Patterson and Styles (1999) show a direct link between communication and commitment. The transcripts of the qualitative interviews included no explicit or direct reference to the relationship between communication, commitment and trust. It is therefore assumed that communication is a direct determinant of relationship quality in the professional football sponsorship dyad. This view is supported by a statement from a sponsorship expert during the qualitative research phase who rates communication as the basis of the relationship between clubs and sponsors.

However, only limited research has been done examining communication in a sports sponsorship context, with Chadwick (2004) being one of the very few examples. He proposed a direct link between communication and commitment in the English football clubs-sponsor dyad. Although the findings of his quantitative survey failed to prove a strong relationship between communication and commitment, the study casts light on the nature of communication in the football club-sponsor dyad. The qualitative findings resulting from several critical incident interviews in his study revealed that communication between English professional football clubs and their sponsors takes the form of verbal communication via face-to-face encounters or telephone calls, formal and informal meetings and performance reviews. Communication is quite often aimed at problem solving or involves discussions regarding joint marketing efforts of the club and its sponsors. This is confirmed by the qualitative interviews of this study, in which clubs' and sponsors' representatives mentioned fixed, scheduled meetings on a regular base as well as

brief phone calls or e-mails as the most popular forms of communication between them. In addition, communication helps to keep each other informed and to solve problems when they occur.

Communication has been touched upon by the RQ literature. However, the interviews provide strong evidence that communication is a significant dimension of relationship quality. In this respect, *the author proposes that communication positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.*

7.1.4 Anglo-German differences

Some of the propositions generated above deal with differences between the English Premiere League and the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship as revealed by the qualitative interviews (e.g. the impact of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 on the sponsorship situation in the German Bundesliga.) Another reason for the competitive edge of the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship seems to be that German and English clubs have faced (and are still facing) different necessities. The English Premier League generate much more income from television, merchandising and match days than their German counterpart, as described in Chapter 2. The German clubs have had to find other ways to generate money and have therefore focused on further developing sponsorship opportunities (Bühler, 2005a). Other reasons for the German dominance in this income area include the attractiveness and size of the German market on the one hand and problems in the English Premier League caused by too much sponsorship clutter on the other hand. The last point is supported by the findings of the content analysis, which reveal that English Premier League clubs have – on average – far more perimeter boards on their grounds than German Bundesliga clubs. The interview findings relating to the assessment of the future sponsorship situation suggest that there are first signs of a narrowing of the gap between the top English and German leagues. The new sponsorship deals arranged by

Arsenal FC (Fly Emirates/£100m for a 8-years-shirt-sponsorship-deal and the right to name the stadium for 15 years) and Chelsea FC (Samsung Mobile/£50m for a five-year-shirt-sponsorship-deal) are probably significant confirmation of this trend.

As far as Anglo-German differences are concerned, no further PRPs or hypotheses were generated on account of the restricted length of the questionnaire. However, the quantitative results will be viewed from an Anglo-German perspective as well.

7.2 Principal research propositions and hypotheses

The last section linking the theoretical background and primary data produced thirteen statements which can be divided into two different kinds of propositions: principal research propositions (PRPs) and hypotheses. Hypotheses refer to statements where a correlation between two variables is drawn, while PRPs relate to more general issues and assumptions which primarily describe phenomena and/or situations. The differentiation makes sense when it comes to analysis. Whereas the principal research propositions are mainly described by means of frequency tables or cross-tabs, hypotheses are tested in a more sophisticated way using sound statistical techniques such as multivariate analysis methods. It could be argued that it would have been sufficient to focus on the six hypotheses generated by the literature review and the findings coming out of the qualitative research phase. Not only would this approach limit further analysis just to one perspective of sponsorship (i.e. sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship), but it would also neglect the two other perspectives and therefore disregard the nature of this thesis. On the other hand, it could be argued that all three perspectives should have led to hypotheses. This, in turn, would have been too demanding bearing in mind time and space restrictions. In addition, whether hypotheses can be generated and/or tested depends on the nature of variables and levels of measurement, and this again depends on the data collection methods

used (Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch, 1997). Therefore, the conclusion drawn here is that the PRPs and hypotheses, as represented in table 7.2, best reflect the nature of the research and sequentially qualify for subsequent analysis.

PRINCIPAL RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS	
PRP-1:	<i>The Premier League and Bundesliga clubs rate football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage, but as a small business in terms of turnover.</i>
PRP-2:	<i>German clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship more highly than their English counterparts, whereas English Premier League clubs rate the future importance of sponsorship more highly than German Bundesliga clubs.</i>
PRP-3:	<i>Clubs see sponsorship both as an income stream and as an opportunity to build the brand of the club and to network with their sponsors.</i>
PRP-4:	<i>Commercial reasons for companies to go into football sponsorship prevail over personal reasons.</i>
PRP-5:	<i>The World Cup 2006 is an important reason for German sponsors to sponsor Bundesliga clubs, but does not play an important motivating role for sponsors in England.</i>
PRP-6:	<i>Brand awareness and image transfer prevail over other sponsorship objectives.</i>
PRP-7:	<i>The majority of clubs/sponsors perceive relationship quality as being important for the success of their sponsorship, but then only the minority of sponsors/clubs measure or even manage it.</i>
HYPOTHESES	
H-1:	<i>Commitment positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>
H-2:	<i>Trust positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>
H-3:	<i>Satisfaction positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>
H-4:	<i>Mutual understanding positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>
H-5:	<i>Cooperation between both parties positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>
H-6:	<i>Communication positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>

Table 7.2: principal research propositions and hypotheses of the research

7.3 Designing the questionnaire

In order to test the PRPs and hypotheses, two main questionnaires were designed: one for the clubs of the English Premier League and German Bundesliga, and one for their respective sponsors. Chapter 5 already described the formal considerations of questionnaire design. At this point, however, the PRPs and hypotheses will be linked to the

specific questions. Appendices XIV to XVII provide a copy of the clubs' and the sponsors' questionnaire respectively.

7.3.1 Questions relating to sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs

This section deals with the questions relating to PRP 1 to 3 covering sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs and football as a business.

PRP 1 is linked to question block 'A' in the clubs' questionnaire. Respondents were asked to state their perception of the football business in terms of annual turnover, public perception and media coverage by ticking one of the following options: Football as a 1) big business, 2) medium-sized business and 3) small business.

PRP 2 refers to the first and the last question of block 'B' in the clubs' questionnaire, where respondents were asked to describe the general and future importance of sponsorship for their club on a 7-point-Likert-scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

PRP 3 is linked to the second and third question of block 'B', asking respondents to state the importance of sponsorship as a brand building and network opportunity respectively on a 7-point-Likert-scale.

7.3.2 Questions relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies

This section deals with the questions relating to PRP 4 to 6 covering sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies.

PRP 4 is considered in question block 'A-6' in the sponsors' questionnaire, where sponsors were asked to state on a 7-point-Likert-scale whether their overall motive for sponsoring the football club in question was commercial or personal.

PRP 5 is linked to the 13th question of question block 'A-5', where sponsors were asked to state their agreement/disagreement with the statement that they sponsor the football club in order to position themselves as a football sponsor in view of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany. Here again, a 7-point-Likert-scale was used.

PRP 6 is considered in question block 'A-5' of the sponsors' questionnaire. The questions were adopted from studies undertaken by Thwaites (1995) and Chadwick and Thwaites (2005). Some of the objectives have been slightly modified. For example, the initial stated objective 'generate media attention' was split into 'generate media attention for the company' and 'generate media attention for the brand' in order to distinguish between corporate level objectives and objectives relating to specific products/brands of the company. Two more objectives were added to the initial list provided by Chadwick and Thwaites: first, positioning the company as a sponsor in view of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany (see PRP 5) and, second, networking with other sponsors as an additional objective. The latter derived from the qualitative research phase.

Both questionnaires incorporated sections which were not covered by any propositions, but nevertheless refer to sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies and income stream for professional football clubs. Question block 'C-2' in the clubs' questionnaire and 'A-7' in the sponsors' questionnaire respectively, relate to potential areas for improvement in terms of football sponsorship. The various points were adopted from a study by the Bob Bomlitz Group (2004) and reflect the potential areas for improvement which came out of the qualitative interviews. Question block 'C-1' in the clubs' questionnaire and 'A-8' in the

sponsors' questionnaire deal with the question on which base clubs and sponsors select each other. As there were no previous studies available dealing with this issue, an own list of possible criteria was developed, involving four different criteria for clubs and five different criteria for the sponsors. In addition, both questionnaires incorporated the option 'no specific criteria' and 'we don't select the sponsor (football club), the sponsor (football club) selects us'. The degree of respondents' agreement/disagreement was measured on a 7-point-Likert-scale as in all questions relating to this section.

7.3.3 Questions relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors

This section deals with the questions relating to PRP 7 and the six hypotheses covering sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship generally and the concept of relationship quality specifically. Whereas the previous two sections dealt with questions from either the clubs' or the sponsors' questionnaire, this section covers questions from both questionnaires owing to the nature of the topic, i.e. the sponsorship dyad.

The questions in block 'D' for the clubs' questionnaire and block 'B' for the sponsors' questionnaire have exactly the same order and wording¹ in order to ensure valid responses and to make data entry and analysis easier. All of the variables are measured on an interval scale in view of the fact that a 7-point-Likert scale (where 7 equals 'strongly agree' and 1 equals 'strongly disagree') has been used.

PRP 7 incorporates three questions relating to the importance of relationship quality (#35)², the evaluation of relationship quality (#15)³, and the management of the relationship (#6)⁴.

¹ Except that the word 'football club' in the sponsors' questionnaire has been replaced by the word 'sponsor' in the clubs' questionnaire in order to make sense.

² 'Maintaining a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole'

³ 'We measure the quality between us and our sponsor/football club'

⁴ 'We proactively manage the relationship between our club and the sponsor/football club'

In order to generate data for testing the hypotheses, scales for the six dimensions of relationship quality as well as a measurement for RQ itself needed to be included. In this respect, the researcher has two options. On the one hand, it is possible to draw scales from existing studies and adapt them for the purpose of one's own study. This is seen as common practice according to Bryman and Bell (2003), who note that the use of pre-tested scales enables the researcher to make comparisons with other studies. On the other hand, if such scales do not exist or do not serve the purpose of the study, it is advisable to create new scales based on the understanding of the research topic and develop 'measures which have desirable reliability and validity properties' (Churchill, 1979, p. 65). However, this study used four scales drawn from the existing literature and two newly formulated scales. In addition, a new measurement of RQ has been developed for the purpose of this study. All measurement scales were subject to discussion in the pilot testing phase of the questionnaire. The pilot testers (some of them involved in sports marketing either as academics or as practitioners) were asked to state their opinion as to whether the applied scales were appropriate in measuring the six dimensions of relationship quality in the professional football sponsorship dyad. However, all measurement scales seemed to be appropriate according to the pilot testers. Appendix XVIII lists all questions relating to the seven scales as well as their position in the questionnaire. The following paragraphs deal with the individual scales.

Commitment has been measured in many different ways in previous studies. Some authors (e.g. Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Ross *et. al.*, 1997; Jap and Ganesan, 2000) state that perceptions of commitment are accurate indicators of true commitment and therefore counter the view that most measurement scales in questionnaires measure *perceptions* of commitment rather than true commitment. However, Wong and Sohal (2002b, p. 37) note that 'there has been no agreement as to the proper measurement scale to use' for commitment. For example, Wong and Sohal measured commitment as a multidimensional

construct (e.g. customer's commitment to the contact employee and customer's commitment to the retail store) by the means of a nine-item scale combining individual items from three different commitment scales. This approach has its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the researcher is able to use a measurement scale which is tailor-made for the respective research context by selecting the most appropriate items from previous studies. On the other hand, such an approach could lead to reduced reliability of the measurement scale by tearing apart previous established measurement scales. Most studies on RQ (e.g. Kumar *et al.*, 1995; Roberts *et al.*, 2003, Ivens, 2004; Farrelly and Quester, 2005) measured commitment as a one-dimensional construct by the means of multi-item scales, Lang and Colgate (2003) even used a single-item scale.

In view of the above studies, the decision was made to measure commitment as an one-dimensional construct and to adapt the commitment scale from Anderson and Weitz (1992). Their 10-item-commitment-scale is widely used in relationship marketing research and also possesses high internal reliability with a reported Cronbach alpha value of 0.9. Another reason for applying the scale of Anderson and Weitz was the fact that it was used in the context of football sponsorship before by Chadwick (2004). However, he pruned two scales (cot-8 and cot-1 as coded in this study) owing to the belief that the labelling of shirt sponsorships as alliances and the notion of one partner defending another whenever others criticise them does not apply to clubs' and sponsors' perception of commitment. The pruning of these two items was considered but then rejected in view of some statements made in the qualitative interviews. One sponsor, for example, called their association with the respective football club a 'strategic alliance'. In addition, some other sponsors assured that they would stand up for their sponsorship partner if it would come under public pressure unjustly. Therefore, all items of the commitment scale by Anderson and Weitz (1992) were incorporated into the questionnaire. However, the wording of the items was changed slightly in order to adapt it to the football sponsorship context.

Previous studies on relationship quality have measured *trust* in various ways. For example, Bejou *et al.* (1996) and Leuthesser (1997) used a multi-item scale and Lang and Colgate (2003) used a single-item scale in order to measure trust as a one-dimensional construct. Other studies (e.g. Kumar *et al.*, 1995; Wong and Sohal, 2002b; Roberts *et al.*, 2003) applied multi-item scales in order to measure trust as a two-order construct. Chadwick (2004) combined items of previous studies in order to measure trust in cognitive and behavioural terms by the means of a seven-item scale. Farrelly and Quester (2005) also used a seven-item scale incorporating items from established scales by Anderson and Weitz (1992) and Ganesan (1994) in order to measure trust based on the belief of a sponsor in the sport entity's reliability, fairness and openness.

The various measurement scales of previous studies were compared and then the decision was made to adopt the seven-item scale from Farrelly and Quester (2005) based on two reasons. First, the scale proved to be a good measurement of trust in a sports sponsorship context before and noted a good internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha value of above 0.92. Second, the items of the scale seemed to be appropriate for this study as well in view of the fact that the scales could be used to measure trust of both sponsors and football clubs.

Satisfaction has been conceptualised and measured in many different ways in previous studies on relationship quality. Wray *et al.* (1994), for example, measured the customer's overall satisfaction with the relationship by the means of a single-item scale ('I am satisfied with the quality of the relationship with this salesperson'). Wong (2004) used a 4-item scale incorporating four semantic differentials (please/displeased, happy/unhappy, contented/disgusted, enjoyable/frustrating) in order to measure the emotional satisfaction of customers. Bejou *et al.* (1996) and Leuthesser (1997) conceptualised satisfaction as an one-dimensional construct measured by a multi-item scale, whereas Lang and Colgate (2003) used a single-item scale. Ivens (2004) differentiated between economic and non-

economic satisfaction measured by the means of two four-item scales. In order to measure economic and non-economic satisfaction in a sports sponsorship context, Farrelly and Quester (2005) used two three-item scales.

After a comparison of the various scales measuring satisfaction in previous studies, the decision was made to adapt the three-item scale used by Lages *et al.* (2005) who, in turn, developed their 3-item-satisfaction-scale based on a previous scale from Kumar *et al.* (1992). The decision was based on two reasons. First, because as it was used in previous studies it is an established measurement scale proving good reliability with a reported Cronbach alpha of 0.83 (Lages *et al.*, 2005). Second, the items of the scale seemed to be most appropriate to measure sponsors' and sponsees' overall satisfaction with the sponsorship relationship. The first item is therefore related to the fact that a sponsor/sponsee considers the association with the sponsorship partner to be successful. The second item assesses the extent to which the sponsor/sponsee is satisfied overall with the sponsorship partner, and the third item refers to the degree to which sponsor's/sponsee's expectations were achieved in terms of the results of the relationship with the sponsorship partner.

Mutual understanding has been examined only marginally in the relationship marketing literature. Therefore, only few measurement scales are available. For example, Naudé and Buttle (2000) specified mutual understanding of needs at three different levels (essentially better than, the same, or worse than the current relationship) and Keating *et al.* (2003) used a two-item scale in order to measure understanding. However, none of the available scales were found to be appropriate to measure mutual understanding in the professional football sponsorship dyad. Therefore, the decision was taken to develop an own scale. Three items were formulated based on the findings of the qualitative interviews. Statements made by interviewees (e.g. 'And so when you try and work with them, I think they understand

where you're coming from.') were adapted and then formulated in a general way ('This football club/sponsor understands what we want from the sponsorship').

In view of the fact that only a few studies dealt with *cooperation* as a dimension of relationship quality, an appropriate scale for the purpose of this study could not be identified. Woo and Ennew (2004), for example, used a three-item scale to measure cooperation as a dimension of relationship quality. However, two of their three cooperation items referred to dealing with complaints and resolving conflicts. It was felt that these items do not reflect the sort of cooperation in a professional football sponsorship dyad as described by the interviewees during the qualitative research stage. Therefore, the decision was made to develop an original scale based on the statements made by clubs' and sponsors' representatives during the qualitative interviews. This resulted in four new items reflecting cooperation within and outside the context of the sponsorship agreement and the notion to work jointly on projects and doing many things together.

Following previous studies (e.g. Keating *et al.*, 2003; Lages *et al.*, 2005) and based on the findings of the qualitative research phase, this study views *communication* as a dimension of relationship quality in the professional football club-sponsor dyad. The scale measuring communication was drawn from Chadwick (2004), who adopted his communication scale from Anderson and Weitz (1992). However, he also pruned one item of the original six-item scale ('[the other side] is willing to let us see their weaknesses and strengths') based on the belief that clubs and sponsors do not discuss their success and failures. This is supported by the qualitative findings of this thesis as well. The decision to use Chadwick's communication scale was based on the fact that this scale proved to be a reliable measurement of communication in the professional football sponsorship dyad with a reported Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.85 (Chadwick, 2004).

After established scales were adapted from previous studies and new scales developed relating to the dimensions of relationship quality, a measurement for *overall relationship quality* itself had to be found. Previous studies provide various approaches to measure RQ. Boles, Hiram and Julie (1997), for example, assessed relationship quality, with one item consisting of a 62mm line which was anchored with 'excellent' at the one end and 'poor' on the other. Scores were ranged from 1 to 62 as respondents were asked to mark on the continuum where they felt their relationship was with the relationship partner. Wong and Sohal (2002b) also used a single-item scale asking respondents to state their overall assessment of their relationship quality on a 7-point-Likert-scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Similarly, Lee and Wong (2001) measured relationship quality as an exchange partner's overall perception of the quality of relationship with a single 7-point-Likert scale ranging from 'extremely high quality' to 'extremely low quality'. Although 'sets of questions are more reliable than single opinion items' (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 147), the decision was taken to develop a one-item-scale in view of the fact that single-item-scales have been used quite frequently to measure overall relationship quality in previous studies. Therefore, respondents were asked to state their agreement with the statement 'The quality of relationship between our football club (company) and this sponsor (football club) is very good' on a 7-point-Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

All in all, the questionnaire incorporated 33 items relating to the six hypotheses in question. Following recommendations made by some pilot testers and Dillman (2000), question rotation was used in order to reduce potential response bias. In addition, seven items ('cot3', cot5', 'cot6', 'sat2', sat3', 'und2' and 'com2') were reverse-phrased as recommended by Fields (2005, p. 669), who explains that 'participants will actually have to read the items in case they are phrased the other way around'.

In order to keep options open for further analysis, respondents were asked to state their opinion of how successful the sponsorship was in achieving the football clubs'/sponsors' overall objectives on a 10-point-Likert scale ranging from 'very successful' to 'not successful at all' (question 'D-2' on the clubs' questionnaire and 'B-2' on the sponsors' questionnaire).

7.3.4 Questions relating to the characteristics of respondents

The fourth and last page of the questionnaires covered questions scanning clubs' and sponsors' characteristics respectively.

Section 'E' in the clubs' questionnaire started off with a question relating to the size of the club in terms of public perception. Clubs were asked to state whether – in their view – they are a large club, a medium-sized club or a small club. As question 'E-1' tended to reflect the self-perception of the clubs, two other questions have been included to assess the size of the football club. First, question 'E-2' inquiring after the number of full-time staff working for the football club and second, question 'E-6' inquiring after the clubs' previous year's turnover. The latter question was marked as optional after some pilot testers expressed reservations suggesting that this question could put off some respondents. Questions 'E-3' and 'E-4' were included in order to identify the number of full-time staff working in the marketing department and those working solely on sponsorship respectively. Finally, respondents were asked to fill in their job title. This information was needed in order to identify how many people from top, middle or lower management level took part in the survey.

The section about the sponsors' characteristics in the other questionnaire also included questions identifying the respondents' job title ('C-7'), the companies' annual turnover ('C-6') and the number of people working for the company ('C-2'), in the marketing

department ('C-3') and solely on sponsorship ('C-4') respectively. In addition, questions about the geographical spread of the company ('C-1') as well as the industry sector ('C-5'), in which the company operates, were asked, the latter using the SIC classification⁵ as response options. Questions 'C-2' and 'C-6' were incorporated to identify the size of the company using the classification bands of the Commission of the European Union⁶.

Table 7.3 links the PRPs and hypotheses to the respective questions of both questionnaires.

	clubs' questionnaire	sponsors' questionnaire
PRP 1	A-1, A-2, A-3	
PRP 2	B-1, B-4	
PRP 3	B-2, B-3	
PRP 4		A-6
PRP 5		A-5 (#13)
PRP 6		A-5
PRP 7	D-1 (#6, #15, #23, #35)	B-1 (#6, #15, #23, #35)
H 1	D-1 (#2, #8, #9, #17, #18, #23, #24, #28, #31, #34, #36)	B-1 (#2, #8, #9, #17, #18, #23, #24, #28, #31, #34, #36)
H 2	D-1 (#10, #11, #19, #20, #23, #25, #29, #32)	B-1 (#10, #11, #19, #20, #23, #25, #29, #32)
H 3	D-1 (#12, #16, #23, #27)	B-1 (#12, #16, #23, #27)
H 4	D-1 (#1, #7, #23, #26)	B-1 (#1, #7, #23, #26)
H 5	D-1 (#3, #5, #14, #21, #23)	B-1 (#3, #5, #14, #21, #23)
H 6	D-1 (#4, #13, #22, #23, #30, #33)	B-1 (#4, #13, #22, #23, #30, #33)

Table 7.3: linking the PRPs and hypotheses to the respective questions in the clubs' and sponsors' questionnaire

⁵ http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.html
⁶ www.europa.eu.int/scadplus/printversion/en/lvb/n26026.htm

8 THE RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

This chapter presents the findings of the quantitative research phase, i.e. the postal (and e-mail) survey. After characteristics of the respondents have been listed, the findings will be presented according to the three perspectives of sponsorship and the principal research propositions (PRPs) and hypotheses respectively. Each section explains the statistical techniques used and the results generated.

The data analysis process was carried out in various steps. First, the data had to be transferred from the questionnaire to SPSS, the computer software package used for the data analysis. Saunders *et al.* (2003) emphasise that the coding of data is a crucial part of this process, and Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997) point out that coding should be carried out thoroughly, as mistakes made at this stage are difficult to correct later. The variables have been coded according to the subject of the question in a way that it makes sense (at least to the researcher himself), e.g. “ai_pc” for “area for improvement: professionalism on part of the clubs”. In order to ensure that no data entry errors occurred, questionnaires and data sheets were double-checked after the initial data input. Particular attention was paid to questions where reverse items were used. In addition, SPSS-generated frequencies as well as minimum and maximum values were scanned in order to detect data entry errors by checking whether values were falling outside the range of possible values. Finally, various SPSS files were created for testing the PRPs and hypotheses separately.

8.1 Characteristics of respondents

This section provides an overview of the characteristics of the clubs and sponsors which took part in this quantitative survey.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, a total of 126 completed questionnaires were returned, 21 from clubs and 105 from their respective sponsors. Whereas the number of English and German clubs which returned completed questionnaires is nearly balanced (ten English Premier League clubs compared to eleven German Bundesliga clubs), the number of German sponsors who responded (76) outweighs the English sponsors (29) by far. This is mainly due to the difference in terms of sample size (297 German sponsors vs. 163 English). Therefore, the relative amount of English respondents (17.79% of all English sponsors which have been contacted replied) is not that far from the response rate of German sponsors (25.59%). Table 8.1 presents an overview of the response rate.

	Both leagues		English Premier League		German Bundesliga	
	count	%	count	%	count	%
Clubs	21	55.3%	10	50.0%	11	61.11%
Sponsors	105	22.8%	29	17.79%	76	25.59%
<i>Shirt sponsors</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>34.2%</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>40.00%</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>27.78%</i>
<i>Commercial partners</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>24.2%</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>17.95%</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>25.21%</i>
<i>Smaller sponsors</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>17.4%</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>13.46%</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>26.67%</i>
Total	126	25.3%	39	21.31%	87	27.62%

Table 8.1: response rate – NB: percentage relates to the respective sample size of each category

As mentioned above, ten English Premier League clubs and eleven German Bundesliga clubs returned a completed questionnaire. The questionnaires were filled out either by representatives of the top management level¹ (42.9%) or by staff at middle management level² (52.4%): Only one club's questionnaire was completed by someone from a lower management level³. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the statements made and answers given are valid.

Eight clubs each perceive themselves as large or medium-sized clubs, five clubs state that they are a small club in terms of public perception (see Table 8.2). It is interesting to note that more than half of the German clubs perceive themselves as large clubs, whereas only

¹ 'Commercial/Sponsorship/Marketing Directors' or 'Head of Commercial/Sponsorship/Marketing Department' is defined as 'top management level'.

² 'Commercial/Sponsorship/Marketing Managers' is defined as 'middle management level'.

³ 'Commercial/Sponsorship/Marketing Assistants' is defined as 'lower management level'.

twenty per cent of English clubs state that they are a big club. The majority of English clubs, however, see themselves as medium-sized clubs in terms of public perception. The size of the football club can also be assessed by the number of people working for the club and the size of turnover. The latter is not as reliable an indicator, as nine clubs chose the option not to disclose their turnover. In terms of employees, however, four of the eight 'large' clubs employ more than 100 people. Interestingly enough, the majority of English clubs (70%) state that they have more than 100 people on their payroll. In comparison, the majority of German clubs (72.8%) employ fewer than one hundred people. The fact that none of the participating clubs employs more than 250 people leads to the conclusion that professional football clubs in England and Germany are at most medium-sized enterprises according to the classification system of the European Union⁴.

When it comes to people working in the marketing department, the picture is more balanced. The majority of English and German clubs (76.2%) employ more than four marketing people. On the other hand, three football clubs stated that they have only one employee responsible for marketing.

Regarding the number of employees who work solely on sponsorship, a difference between English and German clubs is identifiable. Whereas 60% of the English clubs state that two people at most work on sponsorship, 81.9% of the German clubs employ more than three people for sponsorship issues. This difference might be one of the reasons why the English Premier League lags behind the German Bundesliga in terms of sponsorship, as it could be assumed that more people are needed to take appropriate care of the sponsors. Table 8.3 compares the number of staff working solely on sponsorship at clubs and at sponsors.

⁴ The classification of the Commission of the European Union differentiates between micro-enterprises (fewer than 10 occupied persons and a turnover threshold of 2 million Euro), small enterprises (between 10 and 49 occupied persons and turnover threshold of 10 million Euros), medium-sized enterprises (between 50 and 249 occupied persons and a turnover threshold of 50 million Euros) and large enterprises (more than 250 occupied persons and a turnover threshold exceeding 50 million Euros).

With regard to the sponsors, the analysis of characteristics relates to the companies themselves on the one hand (i.e. industry sector, number of staff, turnover) and to the cases they represent on the other hand. As mentioned in Chapter 5, 16 sponsors used the additional two rows in their questionnaire (ten referred to two and six of them referred to three clubs).

Nearly 95% of the questionnaires were completed by members of top or middle management, which, in turn, reflects the seriousness of this research.

The majority of responding companies (59%) were large enterprises, followed by medium-sized enterprises (28.6%) and smaller enterprises (12.4%). 40% of all companies are active on an international level (half of them in more than twenty countries). 21.9%, however, describe themselves as national enterprises, 32.4% as regional companies and the vast minority (5.7%) as local companies.

The predominant industry sectors (according to the classification system of the European Union) represented by the respondents are manufacturing (21%), finance/insurance/real estate (18.1%) and retail trade (17.1%), followed by services, transportation, electric/gas/energy, communications and finally construction. Most of the sponsors which categorised themselves as 'any other' were media companies.

Regarding the number of people working for their marketing department, most companies (40%) stated 'fewer than five people'. Around a quarter of sponsors (26.6%) employ more than 20 people in their marketing department. More than half of all companies stated that they had no full time employee who worked solely on sponsorship. The vast minority (5.8%) noted 4 or more full-time sponsorship employees. Again, the reader's attention is drawn to table 8.3.

As described earlier, the 105 sponsors constituted 127 cases representing 37 cases of English Premier League sponsors and 90 cases of German Bundesliga sponsors, hence a England-German-relation of 1:2.43. The cases consist of 13 (10.2%) shirt sponsors, 83 (65.4%) commercial partners and 31 (24.4%) smaller sponsors. Owing to a different proportion in sample size (the content analysis revealed considerably more commercial partners in the German Bundesliga than in the English Premier League, whereas the smaller sponsors in England outweigh the smaller sponsors in Germany), the relative number of English commercial partners/smaller sponsors differs from the German one.

More than half of all sponsors state that they sponsor a 'large club' in terms of public perception. 31.2% rate the club they sponsor as medium-sized and only 16% admit that they sponsor a small club. It is debatable whether these numbers reflect the real picture, as they are based on the perception of respondents. However, it is understandable that a sponsoring company likes to see itself as a sponsor of a large or at least a medium-sized club rather than a smaller club. It is interesting to note, though, that the statements of English sponsors present a 'more realistic picture' than the German ones. Table 8.2 provides a comparison between clubs' and sponsors' perception of the size of the respective football club.

The majority of sponsors (36.2%) stated that they have sponsored their respective club between two and five years, whereas the minority of sponsors (11.8%) indicated less than one year of sponsorship. Considering the intention of how long to sponsor the respective club in future, a large proportion of sponsors (43.3%) was not sure. However, 21 cases show a short-term orientation (less than 2 years), 16 show a long-term orientation (more than 5 years) and the rest fall in between.

As far as the annual value of the sponsorship deal is concerned, most of all cases report less than £100,000. 22% report an annual value between £100,000 and £499,000, whereas 18.9% of all cases state more than £500,000. The statements are not very sound, as in 32 cases sponsors did not want to disclose their figures.

	clubs			sponsors		
	<i>All</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>
large club	38.1%	2.0%	54.5%	52.8%	43.2%	56.8%
medium-sized club	38.1%	50.0%	27.3%	31.2%	32.4%	30.7%
small club	23.8%	30.0%	18.2%	16.0%	24.3%	12.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8.2: perceived size of the football club according to clubs' and sponsors' perspective

	clubs			sponsors		
	<i>All</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>
No dedicated sponsorship staff	9.5%	10.0%	9.1%	34.6%	44.8%	30.7%
Less than 1 full-time	4.8%	10.0%	0.0%	16.3%	24.1%	13.3%
1	4.8%	10.0%	0.0%	20.2%	6.9%	25.3%
2	19.0%	30.0%	9.1%	13.5%	6.9%	16.0%
3	33.3%	20.0%	45.5%	9.6%	13.8%	8.0%
4 or more	28.6%	20.0%	36.4%	5.8%	3.4%	6.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8.3: number of full-time staff working solely on sponsorship

8.2 Findings regarding sponsorship as an income stream in the football business

This section presents the findings relating to sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs and therefore results referring to the first three PRPs. The results are mainly descriptive, although statistical tests were used to reveal possible differences between English and German respondents. Field (2005) suggests using non-parametric tests when the data are not normally distributed or violate an assumption of parametric tests. Owing to the fact that the club samples are too small to test parametrically, the non-parametric counterparts of the independent t-test, namely the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov-Z-test⁵, were used to check for

⁵ The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test must not be confused with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which tests whether a sample was from a normally distributed population. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test, as used here, does much as the same as the Mann-Whitney U test, but tends to have a better power when sample sizes are less than about 25 per group. (Field, 2005)

significant differences between English and German clubs. Both tests compare differences in central tendency (i.e. the median) of the two sub-samples. If the p value (either 1-tailed when a direction of the relationship was implied or 2-tailed if the PRP does not suggest the direction of the relationship) is less than .05 then the mean of English and German respondents are significantly different. In addition, effect sizes were calculated as 'they provide an objective measure of the importance of an effect' (Field, 2005, p. 32). In this connection, Pearson's correlation coefficient r seems to be a good effect size measure according to Field, because it lies between 0 (indicating no effect) and 1 (indicating a perfect effect). However, small effects are noted for $r = .10$, medium effects for $r = .30$ and large effects for $r = .50$.

The PRPs will be judged according to Cooper and Schindler's (1998, p. 131) definition that a proposition is 'a statement about concepts that may be judged true or false if it refers to observable phenomena'. The PRPs will be accepted if they can be judged to be true or rejected if they can be judged to be false.

8.2.1 PRP 1: the perceived size of the football business

The first principal research proposition assumed that English and German football clubs rate football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage on the one hand, but as a small business in terms of annual turnover of professional football clubs on the other hand. Question block 'A' of the clubs' questionnaire dealt with PRP 1 and generated the following findings.

Considering the size of the football business in terms of public perception, the vast majority of clubs (71.4%) rated football as a 'big business', followed by 28.6% who perceive football as a 'medium-sized' business in this context. The distinction between 'big business' and 'medium-sized business' was made clearer by the English clubs than by

their German counterparts. However, not a single club ranked football as a 'small business' in terms of public perception. This is in line with the findings of the qualitative interviews. Football is big and attracts the attention of millions of people in England and Germany. It is difficult to think of any other industry type in which so many people are interested.

In terms of media coverage, the rating of the football business is even clearer. 81% of the clubs rated football as a 'big business' in this respect, followed by 19% who ranked it as a 'medium-sized business'. Here again, the distinction between 'big business' and 'medium-sized business' is clearer in the English cases. As above, not a single club perceived football as a 'small business' in terms of media coverage. This, in turn, confirms the opinion of the interviewees of the qualitative research phase that there is no other type of business which attracts as much media coverage as the football business.

The first part of PRP 1 is reflected in the findings regarding questions 'A-2' and 'A-3' of the clubs' questionnaire. However, the results generated from question 'A-1' leads to the rejection of PRP 1, as the majority of football clubs (85.7%) ranks football either as a 'big business' or 'medium-sized business' in terms of annual turnover of football clubs and therefore rejects the perception of football as being a 'small business' in financial terms. It might be fair to conclude that football is neither a 'big' nor a 'small' business, but a 'medium-sized business' in terms of turnover. This is in line with the statements of nearly half of all football clubs (47.6%) and differentiates the common opinion that football would be a big business in general terms. Figure 8.1 illustrates clubs' perception of the football business supporting the comments made above.

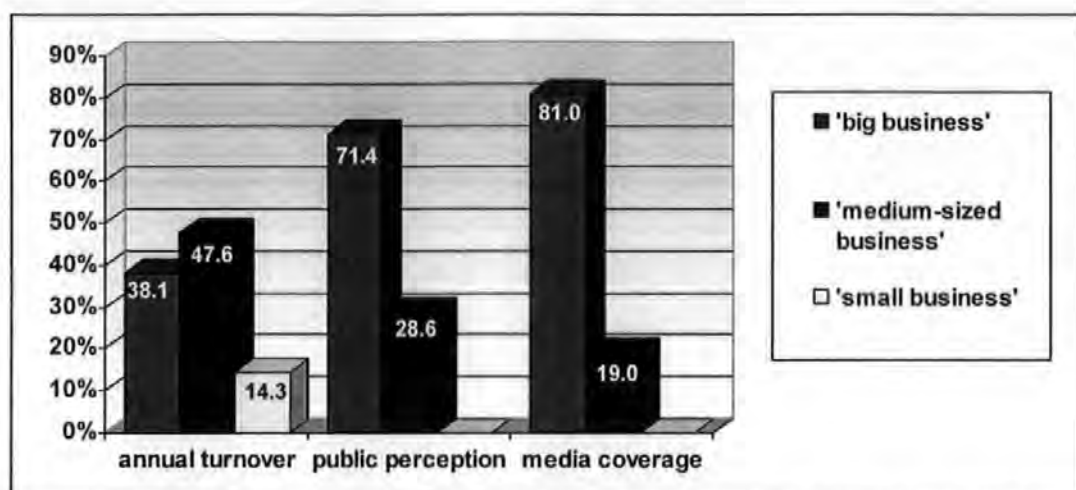


Figure 8.1: graphic representation of clubs' perception relating to the size of the football business in terms of clubs' annual turnover, public perception and media coverage

8.2.2 PRP 2: current and future importance of sponsorship as an income stream

On the basis of the findings of the qualitative research phase, it has been proposed that German clubs rate the *current* importance of sponsorship more highly than their English counterparts, but that the English Premier League clubs rate the *future* importance more highly than the German clubs. The following findings relate to questions 'B-1' and 'B-4' of the clubs' questionnaire where clubs were asked to state the current and future importance of sponsorship for their club on a seven-point-Likert-scale.

The analysis of the first part of PRP 2 reveals a surprising picture. Despite their dominating position in the area of sponsorship, only 63.6% of the German clubs agreed to the statement that sponsorship is a very important source of revenue for their clubs. Consequently, 36.4% disagreed. In contrast, all of the English clubs agreed that sponsorship is a very important source of revenue for them (Table 8.4).

For our clubs sponsorship is a very important source of revenue.	All clubs	English clubs	German clubs
agree	81.0%	100.0%	63.6%
disagree	19.0%	0.0%	36.4%
undecided	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8.4: current importance of sponsorship as an income stream for football clubs

The difference between respondents is not only visible in absolute and relative numbers, but is also confirmed by the results of the Mann-Whitney U test. The 1-tailed p value of .476 is not significant; therefore, it can be concluded that German clubs do not rate the current importance of sponsorship significantly more highly than their English counterparts as assumed beforehand. In addition, the difference represents only a very small effect with an r -value of 0.0165. The findings of the Mann-Whitney U test are supported by the 1-tailed p value of .0905 of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test. All in all, it has to be noted that English clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship more highly than the German clubs.

The findings related to the rating of the future importance of sponsorship for the clubs complies more with the assumed picture. The vast majority of clubs representing the English Premier League (90%) agreed with the statement that the importance of revenues from sponsorship for their club will increase significantly in the next five years. Only one English club disagreed. The picture concerning the German clubs is somehow different. Only 36.4% of the clubs representing the German Bundesliga agreed with the statement, the same proportion disagreed, and three clubs neither agreed nor disagreed (Table 8.5).

The importance of revenues from sponsorship for our club will increase significantly in the next five years	All clubs	English clubs	German clubs
agree	61.9%	90.0%	36.4%
disagree	23.8%	10.0%	36.4%
undecided	14.3%	0.0%	27.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8.5: future importance of sponsorship as an income stream for football clubs

Consequently, the mean relating to the English clubs (5.60) is higher than the one relating to the German clubs (4.27) although variance and standard deviation of English and German clubs are nearly the same. The Mann-Whitney U test confirms that English clubs (mean rank = 13.65) rate the future importance of sponsorship significantly higher than German clubs (mean rank = 8.59), $U = 28.5$, p (1-tailed) = 0.03, $r = -0.414$ (medium-sized

effect). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov-Z-test (1 tailed Sig. value of .0215) confirms the above findings.

The results support statements made by representatives of English Premier League clubs during the in-depth interviews that they are willing to strengthen sponsorship as an income stream in the foreseeable future. The relative modest attitude of German clubs towards the future strength of sponsorship revenues might be explained with the dominating position of German Bundesliga clubs in terms of sponsorship compared to other European football leagues. The level of sponsorship income is relatively high, which in turn means that it is more difficult to increase revenues ‘significantly’ than in the English Premier League, which starts from a lower base. Consequently, German clubs do not anticipate a ‘significant’ increase of the importance of sponsorship revenues as the statement ‘B-4’ of the clubs’ questionnaire implied.

	current importance of sponsorship as a revenue stream	future importance of sponsorship as a revenue stream
Mann-Whitney U	54.000	28.500
Z	-.076	-1.899
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.940	.059
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	.476	.030
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	.011	.004
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.181	.043
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	.0905	.0215

Table 8.6: results of Mann-Whitney U test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test

The findings confirm PRP 2 only partially as English clubs not only rate the future importance of sponsorship revenues higher than German clubs but also the current importance.

8.2.3 PRP3: sponsorship as a networking and brand-building opportunity for football clubs

The in-depth interviews carried out in the qualitative research phase revealed that sponsorship is seen not only as an important income stream for professional football clubs but also as an opportunity to build the brand of the club. These findings led to the

generation of PRP 3 arguing that clubs see sponsorship not solely as an income stream but also as an opportunity to build the brand of their club and to network with their sponsors.

The findings relating to question ‘B-2’ of the clubs’ questionnaire seek to give an answer. The majority of clubs (71.4%) agree with the statement that for them sponsorship is a very important opportunity to build their brand. One club was undecided, five clubs (23.8%) disagreed. The results regarding sponsorship as an opportunity to network are more or less the same. Again, 71.4% of all clubs see sponsorship as a network opportunity. Only 19% disagree as indicated by Table 8.7.

	All clubs	English clubs	German clubs
For our club sponsorship is a very important opportunity to build our brand			
agree	71.4%	100.0%	45.5%
disagree	23.8%	0%	45.5%
undecided	4.8%	0%	9.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0
For our club sponsorship is a very important opportunity to network			
agree	71.4%	90.0%	54.5%
disagree	19.0%	0.0%	36.4%
undecided	9.5%	10.0%	9.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8.7: importance of sponsorship as a brand-building tool and a network opportunity

To judge by these results, it seems that the English clubs see sponsorship more as a brand building opportunity than their German counterparts, as all English clubs agreed with the statement. On the contrary, an even percentage of German clubs (45.5%) agreed or disagreed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov *Z* test confirms that English clubs rate the importance of sponsorship as a brand building tool significantly higher than German clubs with a reported 2-tailed *p* value of .023.

However, although more English (90%) than German (54.5%) clubs see sponsorship as a network opportunity, the difference is not significantly sound according to the Kolmogorov-Sminrov *Z* test with a reported 2-tailed *p* value of .217.

	importance of sponsorship as a brand building tool	importance of sponsorship as a network opportunity
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.248	.832
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.217

Table 8.8: results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test for PRP 3

The above findings are in line with the statements made by some interviewees of the qualitative research phase and therefore PRP 3 can be confirmed.

Besides, the higher mean of all clubs relating to sponsorship as an income stream (5.48) in comparison to the mean of all clubs relating to sponsorship as a brand building opportunity (5.19) implies that clubs rate the importance of sponsorship as an income stream higher than its importance as a brand building opportunity or to networking with their sponsors.

8.3 Findings regarding sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies

This section presents the findings relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool for companies. The results are based on 127 cases revealed by the sponsors' questionnaires and will be presented according to the fourth, fifth and sixth PRP. In addition, further findings, which do not relate to any of the PRPs but which have also been revealed, will be presented in this section. The statistical techniques (i.e. descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test) used in this section are the same as in the previous section. However, as the nature of the data allowed drawing comparisons and looking for differences between cases reflecting shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors, Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA has been used in addition. The Kruskal-Wallis test is the non-parametric counterpart of the one-way independent ANOVA applying for data which violates some assumptions of parametric testing such as required sample size or normal distribution of data. The problem of this test is the fact that it only tells that a difference exists, but does not tell exactly where the difference lies.

Consequently, whenever the Kruskal-Wallis test reveals a significant difference between sub-samples, *post hoc* procedures were carried out in order to identify the difference. Field (2005) suggests checking the *p* value of the Kruskal-Wallis test for significance and then carry out Mann-Whitney U tests by using a critical value (the so-called Bongerroni corrections) of 0.5 divided by the number of tests which are conducted.

8.3.1 PRP 4: commercial and personal reasons as overall motives for sponsoring football clubs

In view of the findings of the qualitative research phase it was proposed that commercial reasons prevail over personal reasons for companies to sponsor football clubs. The findings of the quantitative survey confirm this proposition in many ways. First, the mean of the commercial variable (6.13) is considerably higher than the mean of the personal variable (2.54). Second, the difference becomes even more apparent when comparing the absolute and relative numbers of agreement/disagreement to question block ‘A-6’ of the sponsors’ questionnaire (Figure 8.2).

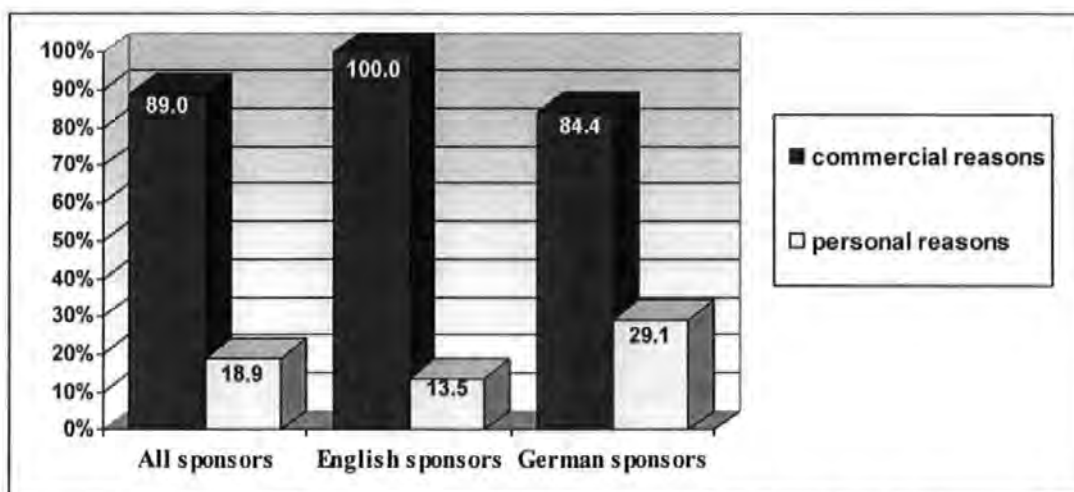


Figure 8.2: graphic representation of sponsors’ responses whether they go into sponsorship for commercial and/or personal reasons

In the vast majority of cases (89%), sponsors agreed that commercial reasons are the overall motive for them to sponsor football clubs. Only 5.5% disagreed, all of them German sponsors. In contrast, the answers to the question as to whether personal reasons

are the overall motive, sponsors disagreed in the majority of cases (69.3%). However, nearly twenty per cent also agreed, which leads one to conclude that some companies went into football sponsorship both for commercial and for personal reasons. In order to get a clearer picture, a new variable was created by combining the variables relating to commercial and personal reasons indicating seven different possibilities (Table 8.9).

	All sponsors	English sponsors	German sponsors
pure commercial reasons ¹	66.9%	78.4%	62.2%
pure personal reasons ²	4.7%	0.0%	6.7%
commercial and personal reasons ³	12.6%	13.5%	12.2%
neither commercial nor personal reasons ⁴	3.1%	0.0%	4.4%
tendency to commercial reasons ⁵	9.4%	8.1%	10.0%
tendency to personal reasons ⁶	1.6%	0.0%	2.2%
Undecided ⁷	1.6%	0.0%	2.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

¹ high value for commercial reasons and low value for personal reasons
² low value for commercial reasons and high value for personal reasons
³ high values for both commercial and personal reasons
⁴ low values for both commercial and personal reasons
⁵ high value for commercial reasons and undecided value for personal reasons
⁶ undecided value for commercial reasons and high value for personal reasons
⁷ undecided values for both commercial and personal reasons

Table 8.9: reasons for companies to sponsor clubs of the English Premier League/German Bundesliga

That commercial reasons prevail over personal reasons becomes evident in view of the fact that in most of the cases (66.9%) sponsors state that they are involved for pure commercial reasons. In comparison, only 4.7% state that they are involved for pure personal reasons. In 12 cases there is a tendency towards commercial reasons although personal reasons can not be denied. Therefore sponsors state in 12.6 % of all cases that they are involved both for commercial and personal reasons. When comparing the results between English and German cases it seems that English sponsors acknowledge a stronger commercial sense than their German counterparts. This is supported by the reported 2-tailed p value of .003 of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test, confirming a statistically significant difference between English and German responses. In terms of 'personal reasons' the 2-tailed p value ($p = .132$) fails to reach statistical significance, indicating no difference (Table 8.10) However, owing to the results presented in Table 8.9 it seems that personal reasons play a

more important role for German sponsors to go into football sponsorship than for English sponsors.

	commercial reasons to go into football sponsorship	personal reasons to go into football sponsorship
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.373	.932
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.132

Table 8.10: results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test for PRP 4

A Kruskal-Wallis test with a reported Monte Carlo⁶ *p* value of .011 and .003 reveals that statistically significant differences between shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors exist in responses relating to commercial and personal reasons to go into football sponsorship. This leads one to conclude that shirt sponsors are into football sponsorship principally for commercial reasons, whereas personal reasons are of greater importance for commercial partners or smaller sponsors. This conclusion is confirmed by subsequent Mann-Whitney U tests, which identified that the differences relating to commercial reasons are statistically significant between shirt sponsors and commercial partners on the one hand and between shirt sponsors and smaller sponsors on the other, with reported Monte Carlo *p* values of .001 and .007 and therefore both falling below the critical value of .0167. As indicated by Table 8.11, shirt sponsors report a stronger emphasis on commercial motives than commercial partners and smaller sponsors. The latter two, in turn, report a stronger emphasize on personal reasons in comparison to shirt sponsors.

commercial reasons to go into football sponsorship			
	<i>shirt sponsors – commercial partners</i>	<i>shirt sponsors – smaller sponsors</i>	<i>commercial partners – smaller sponsors</i>
Mean rank	66.50 – 45.68	28.50 – 19.98	56.05 – 61.37
Monte Carlo Sig.	.001	.007	.202
personal reasons to go into football sponsorship			
Mean rank	26.00 – 52.02	14.50 – 29.85	57.57 – 57.31
Monte Carlo Sig.	.000	.001	.486

Table 8.11: Mann-Whitney U tests as post hoc procedures following Kruskal-Wallis test

⁶ Following Field's suggestions (2005), the Monte Carlo method was used in favour of the exact test owing to the larger sample size.

8.3.2 PRP 5: the World Cup 2006 as a driver for sponsorship in Germany

Various articles in German newspapers and magazines convey the impression that the forthcoming World Cup tournament 2006, which is to be held in Germany, is an important driver for the football sponsorship market in Germany. This impression is supported by statements made in the qualitative interviews phase – primarily by German interviewees saying that in the summer of 2006 the eyes of the whole world will be on Germany. Therefore, it was proposed that the World Cup 2006 is an important motivation for sponsors in the German Bundesliga, but does not play an important role for sponsors of English Premier League clubs. English and German sponsors were asked to agree or disagree (on a 7-Point-Likert-Scale) to the statement that positioning themselves as a football sponsor in view of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany was a reason sponsoring the football club in question.

English and German sponsors disagree in most of the cases (66.9%) with the statement mentioned above, whereas only few sponsors (22.8% of the cases) state that the World Cup 2006 is playing a role in their football sponsorship involvement. When one compares answers between English and German sponsors, a difference is recognizable – although a very slight one. More German sponsors (in absolute and relative numbers) agree and fewer disagree (only in relative numbers) in comparison with their English counterpart. However, both 1-tailed p values of the Mann-Whitney U test ($p = .025$) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test ($p = .0085$) indicate a statistically significant difference between German and English responses although incorporating a small effect with $r = -0.172$ (Table 8.12). This leads one to conclude that German sponsors (mean rank = 67.76) rate the importance of the World Cup 2006 more highly than English sponsors (mean rank = 54.85).

	The World Cup 2006 as a reason to go into football sponsorship
Mann-Whitney U	1326.500
Z	-1.941
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.052
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	.025
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.322
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.017
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	.0085

Table 8.12: results of Mann-Whitney U test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test for PRP 5

A Kruskal-Wallis test with a reported Monte Carlo p value of .012 reveals that a difference between the three different types of sponsors exists and subsequent Mann-Whitney U tests ($U = 876.000$; small effect with $r = -0.263$) identified a statistically significant difference between commercial partners (mean rank = 62.45) and smaller sponsors (mean rank = 44.26) as the reported p value of .006 falls below the critical value of .0167.

It can be noted that PRP 5 reflects the real situation only partly as the forthcoming World Cup does not play an important role for English sponsors. However, it seems that it does not play an important role for the majority of German sponsors either. It is debatable whether a different formulation of the question (e.g. 'Do you think that the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany is a real driver for the German football sponsorship market') would have led to different results. However, to investigate the impacts of the World Cup tournament on the host nation and its companies would go beyond the scope of this research.

8.3.3 PRP 6: brand awareness and image transfer as the main objectives of sponsors

In general, sponsors have multiple objectives. According to the literature and the findings of the qualitative research stage, increasing awareness (of the company in general or the brand in specific) and enhancing the image of the company are the most popular ones. This section seeks to answer the question as to what kind of objectives sponsors of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs are trying to reach with their sponsorship.

Following the literature review and the results of the in-depth-interviews, it was proposed that brand awareness and image transfer prevail over other sponsorship objectives. Therefore, companies were asked to state their agreement or disagreement with a list of thirteen objectives plus an option to say that they have no particular objectives. In addition, space was provided for respondents to fill in any other objectives.

English and German sponsors stated in the vast majority of cases (96.9%) that they have particular objectives concerning their football sponsorship. In only four cases (all of them relating to the German Bundesliga), sponsors noted that they do not have any objectives at all.

As indicated by Table 8.13, the three most popular objectives stated by English and German sponsors relate to public awareness of the company and brand(s) respectively, and to the image of the company – just as predicted in PRP 6.

Rang	objectives	All sponsors	English sponsors	German sponsors
1	Increase public awareness of the company	75.6%	91.1%	70.0%
2	Increase awareness level of brand(s)	73.2%	81.1%	68.9%
3	Enhance the image of the company	63.0%	59.5%	65.6%
4	Generate media attention for the brand(s)	62.2%	56.8%	64.4%
5	Generate media attention for the company	62.2%	54.1%	64.4%
6	Improve the target market's perception of the brand(s)	57.6%	51.4%	63.6%
7	Improve the target market's perception of the company	57.6%	45.9%	62.5%
8	Improve relationship(s) with other businesses/partners	48.8%	43.2%	54.4%
9	Increase sales leads	48.8%	43.2%	50.0%
10	Promote community involvement	48.0%	35.1%	47.8%
11	Improve employee motivation	35.4%	24.3%	40.0%
12	Network with other sponsors	33.9%	21.6%	38.9%
13	World Cup 2006 in Germany	22.8%	18.9%	24.4%
14	No particular objectives	3.1%	0.0%	4.4%

Table 8.13: objectives of sponsors of English Premier League/German Bundesliga clubs

It is interesting to note that objectives such as ‘improving relationships with other businesses/partners’, ‘increasing sales leads’ and ‘promoting community involvement’ are not as common as assumed. Less than half of all sponsors identified the objectives in

question. This, in turn, supports the research proposition that objectives relating to awareness/image of the company and/or brand(s) prevail over other objectives. What really surprises is the fact that 'networking with other sponsors' is not as important to the sponsors as assumed following the qualitative in-depth-interviews.

All objectives were tested for differences between the three types of sponsors. Differences relating to three objectives stand out when comparing the results concerning shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors. Enhancing the image of the company seems to be more important for shirt sponsors (61.5%) and commercial partners (59.9%) than for smaller sponsors (45.2%). The same can be said of the network objective (38.5% shirt sponsors, 42.2% commercial partners and only 9.7% smaller sponsors). In addition, community involvement seems to be more of an objective for commercial partners (56.6%) than for shirt sponsors (30.8%) or smaller sponsors (32.3%). The Krustal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences concerning only one objective, namely networking with other sponsors. A p value of .016 reported by the subsequent Mann-Whitney U test seems to support the conclusion that commercial partners (mean rank = 62.39) rate the importance of networking with other sponsors as an objective of football sponsorship significantly higher than smaller sponsors (mean rank = 44.40), $U = 880.500$, p (2-tailed) = 0.009, $r = -0.246$ (indicating a small effect). Apart from that, the results concerning other objectives were more or less balanced between the three types of sponsors.

A comparison between English and German results does not reveal any considerable differences, although it can be noted that increasing awareness is the top objective of English sponsors (91.1% relating to company awareness, 81.1% to brand awareness) and clearly prevails over other objectives ('enhancing image' comes third with a significant gap). The Mann-Whitney U test and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test for all objectives

reveal no statistical differences between English and German responses, except for the objective mentioned above. Therefore English sponsors (mean rank = 77.31) emphasise the importance of increasing awareness level for their company more strongly than German clubs (mean rank = 58.53), $U = 1172.500$, p (2-tailed) = 0.004, $r = -0.254$ (indicating a small effect).

8.3.4 Further findings

This section presents the results of two issues relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool which were generated from the quantitative survey but do not relate to any PRPs. First, potential areas for sponsorship improvement are presented, and second, the criteria of selection.

Clubs and sponsors were provided with a list of six potential areas, in which sponsorship might need more improvement. The list was generated in the light of the findings of the qualitative in-depth interviews on the one hand, and a previous study by the Bob Bomlitz Group (2004), investigating the sponsorship trends in Germany, on the other hand.

All in all, three potential areas for improvement stand out across all groups (clubs/sponsors, English/German). First, there is the creativity on part of the clubs, which seems to be an important issue for German sponsors in the first place (54.5%) and to English sponsors to a lesser extent (45.2%). When one compares the means of this variable (any mean over 4.0 implies importance), it becomes apparent that German clubs (4.24) admit that creativity on their behalf needs to be improved. The second most important area for improvement seems to be the evaluation of sponsorship effects, which has been ranked (according to percentage and mean) as the most important by English sponsors most. This is in line with the findings of the Bob Bomlitz Group study, which reports creativity and evaluation as the most important areas for improvement as well. Interestingly, a Kruskal-Wallis test and a Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference ($p =$

.000) in responses between German clubs and German sponsors relating to creativity on part of the sponsors, indicating that for German clubs (mean rank = 78.83) the improvement of the creativity on part of the sponsors is more of an issue than for German sponsors (mean rank = 54.31), $U = 863.500$, p (2-tailed) = 0.000, $r = -0.317$ (indicating a medium effect). Third, according to sponsors and clubs in England and Germany, using sponsorship as a network opportunity for sponsors seems to be another area for improvement. Professionalism of clubs is an issue which has been widely discussed in articles of German newspapers and magazines (e.g. Sohns and Weilguny, 2003; Sohns, 2004a). Improving professionalism (either on the part of sponsors or on the part of the clubs) seems not to be an important issue according to the respondents. It is interesting to note, though, that more clubs than sponsors think that sponsors should become more professional, whereas more sponsors than clubs think that clubs should become more professional, although this is demanded only by the minority in both cases. However, statistically significant differences occur only in a comparison between German clubs and German sponsors relating to professionalism on part of the clubs. The p values of the Kruskal-Wallis test ($p = .001$) and the Mann-Whitney U test ($p = .000$) implies that German clubs (mean rank = 80.80) rate improvement of sponsors' professionalism as more important than German sponsors (mean rank = 53.57), $U = 798.500$, $r = -0.353$ (indicating medium effect). Finally, the impression generated by the statements during the qualitative interviews, that sponsorships have to become more exclusive (which in turn means that clutter has to be reduced), was not confirmed by the findings of the quantitative survey. Exclusivity of the sponsorship is the lowest priority according to (foremost German) respondents. This, again, is supported by the study of the Bob Bomlitz Group, where exclusivity plays not an important role according to German companies which are active sponsors.

Another interesting point, which was not covered by a PRP, but nevertheless asked about in the questionnaire, is the question of which criteria play a role in selecting the sponsorship partner. Therefore, clubs were provided with a list of six selection criteria and sponsors with a list of seven criteria, four of them similar to each other.

The clubs stated that the actual sponsorship fee is the most important selection criterion (73% of English and German clubs), followed by the image of the sponsor (55.6%) and the financial resources of the sponsor (54%). The industry sector plays an important selection criterion for 52.4% of the clubs. Differences between English and German responses were not visible, although the English clubs showed a higher degree of agreement throughout the selection criteria than their German counterparts. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z tests revealed no statistically significant differences between English and German clubs either.

The number one criterion for sponsors to select their football clubs seems to be local proximity (76.4% of English and German sponsors), followed by the image of the club (67.7%) and the size of the fan base (52%). For nearly half of all sponsors (47.2%), it is important that the clubs are known for their serious business practices, whereas the actual sponsorship fee seems not to be of an important issue when it comes to selecting the right football club (37.8% of all sponsors' cases). Differences between English and German responses are quite visible in three selection criteria, which German sponsors rate considerably higher than the sponsors of English Premier League clubs: local proximity (83.3% German sponsors compared to 59.5% English sponsors), image of the club (75.6% vs. 48.6%) and serious business practice of the club (55.6% vs. 27%). These observations are also confirmed by the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z tests, which report statistically significant differences between English and German sponsors relating to local proximity ($p = .039$), image of the club ($p = .017$) and serious business practice of the club ($p = .010$).

When the criteria for clubs and sponsors are compared, it becomes apparent that the image of the other side is quite important for both clubs and sponsors, whereas the actual sponsorship fee is only an important criterion for the clubs. Another considerable difference is the statement of 22.2% of the clubs that they do not have any selection criteria – in comparison with only 3.9% of the sponsors. In addition, 19% of the clubs stated that they were selected by the sponsors, whereas only 4.7% of the sponsors noted that they were selected by the clubs. This, in turn, means that the vast majority of clubs and sponsors select each other.

8.4 Findings regarding sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship

The literature review and findings of the qualitative interviews regarding sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship led to the generation of one principal research proposition and six hypotheses, which have been tested by the means of 189 combined clubs' and sponsors' cases across England and Germany. The testing of PRP 7 was limited to a comparison of descriptive statistics and non-parametric tests whereas the hypothesis testing was more sophisticated and detailed.

8.4.1 PRP 7: importance of relationship quality

As a result of the findings of the qualitative interviews and the picture revealed by various articles in German sponsorship magazines, it was proposed that the majority of sponsors and/or clubs perceive relationship quality as being important for the success of their sponsorship on the one hand, but that only the minority of sponsors and/or clubs measure relationship quality or even manage it.⁷

⁷ Appendix XIX provides the statistical figures relating to this section

Indeed, the majority of clubs and sponsors (80.3% of all cases) agreed with the statement that a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole. Only 12.2% disagreed, whereas 7.4% were undecided. When one compares the means for clubs and sponsors, it becomes apparent that clubs (5.81) rate the importance of relationship quality higher than sponsors (5.54). In addition, more clubs (85.7%) than sponsors (77.6) in relative terms agree with the above statement. This is supported by the findings of subsequent Mann-Whitney U tests, indicating that clubs (mean rank = 105.36) rate the importance of relationship quality significantly higher ($p = .041$) than sponsors (mean rank = 89.03), $U = 3253.500$, $r = -0.149$ (indicating a small effect). A comparison between English and German responses revealed that more English clubs (93.3%) than German clubs (78.8%) agree with the statement, whereas the opposite is true in the sponsors' cases (67.6% English sponsors in comparison with 81.8% of German sponsors) although no statistically significant difference has been revealed. Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed that differences exist between the various sub-samples⁸, but no p value of the subsequent Mann-Whitney U tests fell below the critical value of .0083, indicating no statistically significant difference. However, the fact has to be remained that both clubs and sponsors across England and Germany believe that relationship quality is a crucial issue in their relationship.

The second part of PRP 7 refers to the evaluation of relationship quality, assuming that only the minority of clubs and sponsors actually evaluates the quality of their relationship with each other. This again, is confirmed by the results of the quantitative survey. Less than a third (31.2%) of all clubs and sponsors state that they measure the quality of relationship between them and their partner. More than half of them (52.9%) neglect any evaluation, whereas 15.9% were undecided. The results also revealed that – in relative terms – more clubs (36.5%) than sponsors (28.6%) evaluate their relationship quality,

⁸ i.e. English shirt sponsors/commercial partners/smaller sponsors, German shirt sponsors/commercial partners/smaller sponsors (reflecting either clubs' or sponsors' responses)

although they are still the minority. A Mann-Whitney U test ($p = .003$) confirms this difference, indicating that clubs (mean rank = 111.29) set greater value on evaluating relationship quality than sponsors (mean rank = 86.86), $U = 2943.000$, $r = -0.214$ (indicating small effect). A comparison between English and German responses revealed no significant differences. To recapitulate, the minority of clubs and sponsors actually evaluate the quality of their relationship.

The third and final part of PRP 7 refers to the questions whether clubs and sponsors proactively manage their relationship. It has been assumed that only the minority does so. However, the findings reject this assumption as the majority of clubs and sponsors (61.9%) confirmed that they manage the relationship between them and their partner. Here again, considerably more clubs (76.2%) than sponsors (54.8%) indicate proactive relationship management, a difference confirmed by the results of Mann-Whitney U tests (mean rank clubs = 113.61; mean rank sponsors = 85.69; $p = .001$; $U = 2796.500$; $r = -0.245$, indicating small effect). Differences between English and German responses were not apparent. However, clubs clearly differentiate between the different types of sponsors. This becomes apparent in the case of English clubs, as all of them stated that they proactively manage the relationship with their shirt sponsor, whereas the figures for commercial partners (90%) and smaller sponsors (40%) decrease. The same can be said for German clubs, although to a lesser extent (81.8% referring to shirt sponsors and 72.7% to commercial partners and smaller sponsors respectively). However, Kruskal-Wallis and subsequent Mann-Whitney U tests revealed that differences between the English and German samples were not statistically significant. Testing for differences between subsamples relating to sponsors' responses revealed that differences exist ($p = .002$). The post hoc procedures then identified statistically significant differences ($p = .003$; $U = 34.000$; $r = -0.535$, indicating large effect) between English commercial partners (mean rank = 21.10) and smaller sponsors (mean rank = 11.79) as well as differences ($p = .007$; $U =$

232.000; $r = -0.287$, indicating small effect) between German commercial partners (mean rank = 45.82) and smaller sponsors (mean rank = 25.83). This leads to the conclusion that commercial partners set greater value on managing the relationship between them and their clubs than smaller sponsors do. However, the fact remains that the majority of clubs and sponsors stated that they proactively manage their relationship.

Although the majority of clubs and sponsors agreed with the statement that relationship quality is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole, and although only the minority of clubs and sponsors stated that they actually evaluate the quality of relationship between them and their partner, PRP 7 can be confirmed only partially in view of the above findings. In contrast to the assumption, the majority of clubs and sponsors noted that they proactively manage their relationship. Figure 8.3 summarises the findings related to PRP 7.

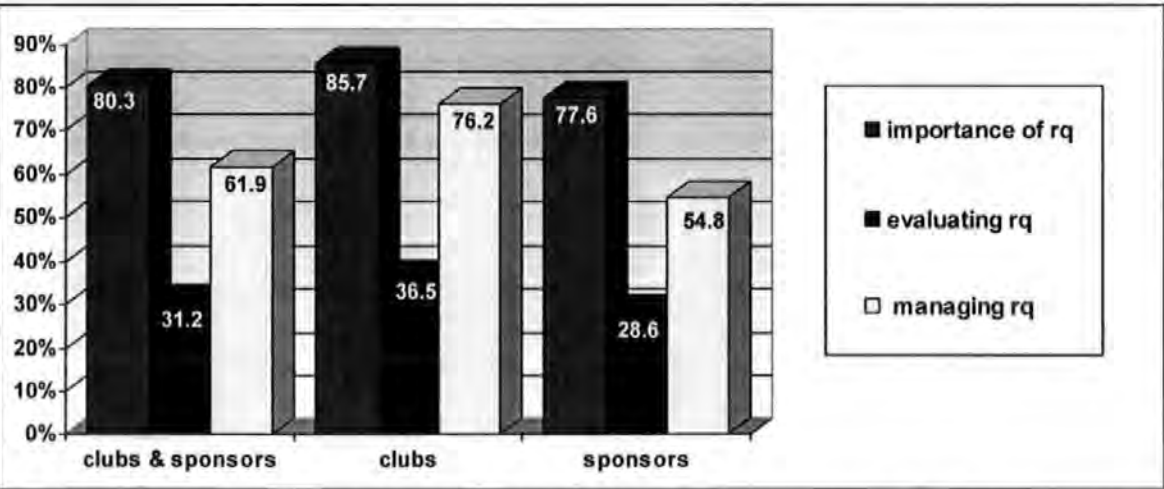


Figure 8.3: graphic representation of clubs' and sponsors' statements assessing the importance of relationship quality and whether they evaluate or manage it.

However, the findings of another statistical test emphasise the importance of relationship quality even more so. In order to test whether relationship quality positively influences the success of the sponsorship as a whole, a simple regression⁹ was run. The model incorporated 'overall success of the sponsorship' as the dependent variable and

⁹ For more information on simple regression the readers attention is drawn to Field (2005, p. 154)

'relationship quality' as the independent variable. The outcome of the simple regression confirms that the model predicts the 'overall success of the sponsorship' significantly well (47.7% of the variation can be explained by the independent variable) and that relationship quality has a significant impact on the success of the sponsorship¹⁰. In view of these findings, it is even more important to gain a deeper understanding of relationship quality as addressed in the next section.

8.4.2 Hypotheses

This section covers every aspect related to the testing of the six hypotheses of this thesis. It explains the statistical methods used for testing the hypotheses and presents the findings resulting from the analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 5, two main statistical methods were chosen to analyse the data and test the hypotheses in three subsequent stages. First, multiple regression analysis (MRA) was run in order to confirm or reject the initial hypotheses. Second, a principal component analysis (also known as 'factor analysis') was carried out to reduce the data and identify underlying dimensions of the variables in question. Third, a second multiple regression analysis was applied to test whether the components resulting from stage 2 have any impact on the relationship quality in the professional football sponsorship dyad.

8.4.2.1 Analysis of descriptive statistics

Before starting with the initial data analysis, it is widely recommended to describe the characteristics of the sample size (i.e. the variables relating to question block 'D' of the clubs' questionnaire and block 'B' of the sponsors' questionnaire) on the one hand and check for violations of statistical conventions on the other hand. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, SPSS generated frequencies were used in order to detect any omission errors and to confirm sample validity. Therefore the number of valid cases as well as the

¹⁰ The statistical figures and tables relating to the simple regression can be found in Appendix XX

minimum and maximum value were checked for errors. All values of the continuous variables fell within the possible minimum and maximum range. After one case, which showed missing values throughout all variables, was deleted, no further omission errors were detected. Thus the sample validity was confirmed. The subsequent analysis was therefore based on 189 cases. Following suggestions made by Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997), Pallant (2004), and Field (2005) various statistical tests were applied in order to test for the distribution of the values and to detect any outliers. The results of these tests and their interpretation for each of the continuous variable can be found in Appendix XXI. The following paragraphs describe the tests as well as how their outcome should be interpreted.

- A comparison between the mean and the 5%-trimmed mean was carried out in order to assess the influence of outlying values. The trimmed mean calculates the mean for data between the 5th and 95th percentiles. A significant difference between the mean and the 5%-trimmed mean indicates that there are some outliers and manipulation of the data set might have to be considered.
- The measure of skewness provides an indication of the symmetry of distribution. A distribution is symmetrical when it has the same shape on both side and a value of zero. In contrast, the further a value is from zero, the more asymmetrical or skewed it is (Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch, 1997). A skewed distribution can be either negatively skewed (the frequent scores are clustered towards high values) or positively skewed (the tail points towards the higher and more positive scores) according to Field (2005).
- Kurtosis describes the 'peakedness' or 'flatness' of a distribution. In a normal distribution the value of kurtosis is zero, any values below or above zero indicates a deviation from normal. A distribution with a high peak ($kurtosis > 0$) is called leptokurtic, a flat-topped curve ($kurtosis < 0$) is called platykurtic, and the normal distribution ($kurtosis = 0$) is called mesokurtic (Field, 2005).

- The Kolgomogorov-Smirnov-test is a test of normality, where values in the sample are compared to a normally distributed set of values with the same mean and standard deviation. Non-significant results ($p > .05$) indicate normality, whereas significant results ($p < .05$) indicate that the distribution is significantly different from a normal distribution. Pallant (2004), however, points out that breaches of assumed normality are not unusual.
- Normal Q-Q-plots were also used to assess the normality of distribution. Normal Q-Q-plots compare the actual scores with expected z-scores (scores which would have been obtained if the scores were normally distributed). In case of a normal distribution, the plot will show a straight line of obtained and expected scores from the bottom left to the top right. If scores deviate from the straight line a breach of normality can be assumed.
- Another technique to assess the distribution is to use detrended normal Q-Q-plots, which reflect the deviations of scores from a theoretical line. Some data points of scores, which are normally distributed, will fall above and some will fall below the horizontal line.
- Finally, boxplots were checked to detect any outliers and/or extreme values. Field (2005) suggests three different options to deal with outliers. First, to remove the case from subsequent analysis. Second, transform the data and third, change the score. Pallant (2004), however, points out that it would be acceptable to retain the cases at the stated values if they are likely to have only a small impact on subsequent findings.

As can be seen from Appendix XXI, most of the variables are not normally distributed. However, this is not a reason to worry as it is quite rare to get such distributions for all items tested (Field, 2005).

8.4.2.2 Scale reliability

An important issue relating to quantitative surveys and subsequent analysis (e.g. MRA and factor analysis) is the reliability of scales, i.e. the question whether the scale(s) used in the questionnaire is actually reflecting the construct it is measuring. Field (2005, p. 667) notes that 'in statistical terms, the usual way to look at reliability is based on the idea that individual items (or sets of items) should produce results consistent with the overall questionnaire.' Three measures have been established in order to test internal consistency: 'inter-item-correlations', 'item-total-correlations' and 'Cronbach's alpha (α)', with the latter being the most common way to measure scale reliability (Sekaran, 2000). According to convention, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 is acceptable, any value above 0.8 is fairly good. Bearing in mind that Cronbach alpha values depend on the number of items on the scale, it is possible to get a high value of α not because the scale is reliable but because it includes a lot of items (Cortina, 1993). However, in cases where values fall below 0.7, items might have to be pruned from a scale in order to increase the reliability of the scale. With regard to the other two reliability measures, any individual items with low or negative 'inter-item' or 'item-total correlations' need to be excluded from the scale to increase its reliability. Therefore SPSS-generated 'corrected item-total correlation' and a correlation matrix have been checked for variables with values under 0.3 as suggested by Fields (2005). The reliability tests produced the following results for the items used in this section:

- Commitment: Anderson and Weitz (1992) reported a good internal consistency of their commitment scale with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.9. In this study the Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.8261, indicating a good reliability of the scale. However, for the purposes of subsequent analysis, item 'cot5' ('If another football club/sponsor offered us a better sponsorship deal, we would most certainly take them on, even if it meant dropping this football club/sponsor') was pruned from the scale as the corrected item-total correlation fell below the 0.3-mark and elimination of the item

resulted in an improved Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.8405 and therefore good reliability of the then 9-item-scale.

- Trust: According to Farrelly and Quester (2005) their trust scale had good internal consistency, with a reported Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.9202. With a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.927, the scale had very good reliability in this study as well. For the purposes of subsequent analysis, all items in the scale were therefore retained.
- Satisfaction: Lages *et al.* (2005) note a Cronbach alpha value of 0.83 of their satisfaction scale. The Cronbach alpha coefficient in this study was 0.7452, indicating good reliability of the scale in question. For the purposes of subsequent analysis, all items in the scale were therefore retained.
- Mutual Understanding: the Cronbach alpha value for this newly developed scale was 0.6230 and therefore less than appropriate according to convention. For the purposes of subsequent analysis, item 'und2' ('This football club/sponsor does not understand the pressures of our business') was pruned from the scale as the corrected item-total correlation fell below the 0.3-mark and elimination of the item led to an improved Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.8135 and therefore good reliability of the then 2-item-scale.
- Cooperation: this newly developed scale showed good reliability with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.777. For the purposes of subsequent analysis, all items in the scale were therefore retained.
- Communication: Chadwick (2004) reports a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.85 for the communication scale in his study. The Cronbach alpha value in this study was only 0.6852 and therefore below the appropriate 0.7-mark. For the purposes of subsequent analysis, item 'com2' ('We hesitate to give this football club/sponsor too much information') was pruned from the scale as the corrected item-total correlation fell below the 0.3-mark and elimination of the item resulted in an improved Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7803 and therefore good reliability of the then 4-item-scale.

After pruning the items mentioned above from the scales in question, 6 scales involving 29 items qualified for subsequent analysis.

8.4.2.3 Stage 1: Multiple Regression Analysis

MRA is used quite frequently in studies on relationship quality¹¹ in order to confirm or reject hypotheses. Hair *et al.* (1998, p.148) define MRA as a 'statistical technique that can be used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and several independent (predictor) variables.' Pallant (2001, p. 134) adds that MRA 'allows a more sophisticated exploration of the interrelationship among a set of variables. This makes it ideal for the investigation of more complex real-life, rather than laboratory based, research questions.'

Three types of MRA can be differentiated: First, standard MRA, where independent variables are entered simultaneously into the equation and where each predictor is evaluated in terms of its predictive power. Second, hierarchical multiple regression, where predictors are entered in a sequence determined by the researcher. Finally, the stepwise MRA, where SPSS selects variables from a list provided by the researcher. However, standard (or simultaneous) multiple regression is the most commonly used MRA type as it is easy to handle and does not cause many problems (in contrast to the stepwise MRA, for example¹²) according to Pallant (2001) and Tabachnick and Fidell (1996).

As multiple regression is based on correlations it has its shortcomings mainly in the fact that MRA does not prove the existence of a causal relationship. Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997, p. 206) note in this respect:

The fact that two variables are related, the fact that this relationship can be captured by an association measure, and the fact that this association measure may generate a statistically significant result is no evidence whatsoever that one variable causes the other. No matter how 'intuitively appealing' a cause-and-effect explanation may be and no matter how 'obvious' the designation of each variable as a cause or effect, the fact remains: correlation does not prove causality.

¹¹ e.g. Wray *et al.* (1994), Wong and Sohal (2002a), Wong (2004)

¹² Field (2005, p. 161) notes that the use of stepwise methods 'takes many important methodological decisions out of the hands of the researcher' and therefore they 'are best avoided except for exploratory model building.'

In addition, there is always the possibility that other variables, which are not included in the model, explain a greater proportion of the variance.

However, MRA remains an effective technique to test hypotheses in order to confirm or reject them and is therefore justified for its use in this study. Pallant (2001) recommends a three-step approach when using MRA: First, checking the assumptions. Second, evaluating the model and third, evaluating each of the independent variables. Her approach has been adapted and expanded by a fourth step, the verification of the MRA findings. Appendix XXII provides the statistics and figures relevant to this section.

I. Checking the assumptions

Field (2005, p.171) explains the importance of checking assumptions as follows: 'When assumptions are broken we stop being able to draw accurate conclusions about reality. In terms of regression, when the assumptions are met, the model that we get for a sample can be accurately applied to the population of interest.' The main issues before running MRA relate to the sample size on the one hand and to the individual variables on the other.

Hair *et al.* (1998, p. 164) point out that 'the size of the sample has a direct impact on the appropriateness and the statistical power of multiple regression' with small sample sizes being inappropriate generating statistically acceptable and generalisable findings. However, various authors argue over an acceptable cases-to-predictors-ratio. Hair *et al.* (1998) note 5 observations for each independent variable as the minimum ratio and 20:1 as the desired level. With 189 cases and six independent variables (31.5:1) both minimum and desirable levels of case-to-predictors-ratio have been exceeded in this study. Green (1991), in contrast, recommends two formulas for the minimum acceptable sample size: for testing the overall fit of the regression model samples should meet the ' $50 + 8m$ criterion' (where m is the number of independent variables) and for testing the contribution of individual variables ' $104 + m$ ' is the appropriate criterion. When testing both the overall fit of the

model and the individual contribution of predictors Green suggests using both formulas and selecting the one with the larger value. Following Green’s criteria 96 or 110 cases respectively were needed. Again, the 189 cases used for analysis exceeded Green’s criteria. The sample size is therefore more than appropriate for multiple regression analysis according to Green (1991) and Hair *et al.* (1998).

Concerning the assumptions relating to the individual variables, Pallant (2001) and Field (2005) suggest testing the predictors for multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals.

Multicollinearity is a problem when independent variables correlate too highly. Field’s (2005) recommendation to scan a correlation matrix of all independent variables and search for correlations above 0.9 has been followed and revealed no such correlation, thus indicating that multicollinearity is not an issue (Table 8.14). This is supported by an examination of the Tolerance figures produced by SPSS. Pallant (2001) explains that the possibility of multicollinearity is suggested when the Tolerance values are very low (i.e. near 0), which is not apparent in this case.

	ORQ	COT	TRU	SAT	UND	COO	COM
Overall relationship quality	1						
Commitment	.711	1					
Trust	.803	.773	1				
Satisfaction	.722	.701	.752	1			
Mutual understanding	.676	.616	.799	.603	1		
Cooperation	.722	.622	.678	.529	.592	1	
Communication	.475	.370	.381	.259	.338	.687	1
All correlations significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)							

Table 8.14: correlation matrix of dependent and independent variables

The other assumptions mentioned above can be checked by inspecting the Normal Probability Plot of the regression standardised residuals and the residual scatterplot generated by SPSS. Normality is suggested when the points of the Normal P-P-Plot lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, which can be confirmed in this case. There are no further concerns with regards to linearity (the mean values of the dependent variable for each increment of the independent variables lie along a straight line,

i.e. the relationship is linear), homoscedasticity (the residuals at each level of the independent variables should have the same variance) and independence of residuals (i.e. each value of the dependent variable comes from a separate entity) following observations made by Pallant (2001) and Field (2005).

Concerning outliers, an additional procedure was employed using Mahalanobis distances. In order to check the influence of outliers, the critical chi-square value has to be determined by using the number of independent variables as the degrees of freedom. According to Pallant (2001) the critical chi-square value for six independent variables is 22.46. Although two cases have been identified with values slightly over the critical chi-square value, it has been decided to retain these outliers within the analysis following Pallant's observations. An inspection of the scatterplot provides further confirmation that outliers are not a problem as residuals fall within the recommended range of -3.3 and +3.3 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

II. Evaluating the model

The evaluation of the model fit is also known as cross-validation according to Field (2005). In order to assess how well the model can predict the outcome in a different sample, Hair *et al.* (1998) and Pallant (2001) suggest that the R Square value and the Adjusted R Square value should be inspected. Field (2005) explains the difference between both values: 'Whereas R^2 tells us how much of the variance in Y is accounted for by the regression model from our sample, the adjusted value tells us how much variance in Y would be accounted for if the model had been derived from the population from which the sample was taken.' Tabachnick and Fidell (1996, p. 164) note that 'the R square value in the sample tends to be a rather optimistic overestimation of the true value in the population' when a small sample size is involved. Pallant (2001) recommends to report the adjusted R^2 rather than the normal R^2 with regards to small sample sizes.

The R^2 value identified for this model was 0.738, indicating that 73.8% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.730, indicating that 73% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. In comparison with other studies on relationship quality¹³ and according to Pallant (2001) this is more than a respectable result.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.859	.738	.730	.849

Table 8.15: model summary

An inspection of the ANOVA table (Table 8.16) confirms that the model is a significant fit of the data overall as it reaches statistical significance with Sig=.000.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	369.595	6	61.599	85.547	.000
Residual	131.051	182	.720		
Total	500.646	188			

Table 8.16: ANOVA table

III. Evaluating each of the independent variables

In order to assess the individual contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of the dependent variable, each predictor has to be evaluated by inspecting the relevant standardised Beta Coefficients. In addition, the p value of each predictor has to be checked. An independent variable, which meets the requirement of $p < .05$, is making a statistically significant unique contribution to the equation (Pallant, 2001). Each of the six independent variables was evaluated in order to confirm or reject the initial hypotheses.

¹³ Keating *et al.* (2003), for example, report a R^2 value of 0.477 and an adjusted R^2 value of 0.467

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance
(Constant)	-.986	.314		-3.138	.002	
COT	.113	.092	.078	1.228	.221	.353
TRU	.407	.109	.325	3.745	.000	.191
SAT	.320	.079	.244	4.051	.000	.395
UND	.061	.073	.053	.836	.404	.356
COO	.279	.079	.239	3.531	.001	.313
COM	.091	.064	.076	1.433	.154	.511

Table 8.17: table of coefficients

The independent variable 'commitment' reports the fourth largest standardised Beta coefficient (0.078) but fails to reach statistical significance with a *p* value of .221, indicating that commitment does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This does not therefore provide any support for the initially hypothesised relationship between commitment and relationship quality.

The independent variable 'trust' reports the largest standardised Beta coefficient (0.325) and reaches statistical significance with a *p* value of .000, indicating that trust makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This provides support for a relationship between trust and relationship quality, thereby proving the initially hypothesised relationship between them.

The independent variable 'satisfaction' reports the second largest standardised Beta coefficient (0.244) and reaches statistical significance with a *p* value of .000, indicating that satisfaction makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This provides support for a relationship between satisfaction and relationship quality, thereby proving the initially hypothesised relationship between them.

The independent variable 'cooperation' reports the third largest standardised Beta coefficient (0.239) and reaches statistical significance with a *p* value of .001, indicating

that satisfaction makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This provides support for a relationship between cooperation and relationship quality, thereby proving the initially hypothesised relationship between them.

The independent variable 'mutual understanding' reports the sixth largest (and therefore lowest) standardised Beta coefficient (0.053) and fails to reach statistical significance with a p value of .404, indicating that mutual understanding does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This does not therefore provide any support for the initially hypothesised relationship between mutual understanding and relationship quality.

The independent variable 'communication' reports the fifth largest standardised Beta coefficient (0.076) and fails to reach statistical significance with a p value of .154, indicating that communication does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality. This does not therefore provide any support for the initially hypothesised relationship between communication and relationship quality.

In order to summarise the above findings, it has to be noted that trust, satisfaction and cooperation make the strongest unique contributions to explaining relationship quality. Commitment, mutual understanding and communication, however, fail to prove any contribution. The above findings confirm previous studies in the case of trust and satisfaction as those two dimensions have been named as predictors in literature on relationship quality as outlined in Chapter 4 and 7. It seems strange though that commitment plays a relatively unimportant role according to the findings so far. However, with cooperation one of the dimensions, which came out of the qualitative interviews, has been confirmed to contribute significantly to relationship quality. The other two

dimensions – mutual understanding and communication – failed to prove any significant contribution.

IV. Verification of results

In order to validate the results of the MRA, Hair *et al.* (1998) recommend various approaches just as using additional or split samples. Testing the regression model on a new sample drawn from the general population is seen as the most appropriate empirical validation approach as a new sample ensures representativeness. Split samples are recommended in cases where the collection of new data is limited or precluded by limited resources such as time, cost or availability of respondents. Therefore, the researcher divides the sample into two parts, runs the MRA with both split samples and compares the results.

However, the above approaches were not applicable to this study's data owing to resource limitations, the small sample size and the consequential breach of requirements to run a MRA. Therefore another approach has been used to verify the findings following Chadwick's procedure (2004), who carried out a hierarchical MRA in order to verify the findings of his initial standard multiple regression.

In hierarchical regression, independent variables are selected based on previous findings. The researcher therefore decides in which order the predictors are entered into the regression model. Following Field's instructions (2005) the independent variables were inserted into the model based upon the results of the previous standard MRA. Hence, trust was inserted first, followed by satisfaction, cooperation, commitment, communication and mutual understanding consecutively.

As can be seen from Table 8.18 the model as a whole explains 73.8% of the variance in the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2 value indicates that the model accounts for 73% of

variance. An examination of the R Square Change values shows that 64.5% of the variance in relationship quality is explained by trust when the effects of other independent variables are controlled. An additional 3.2% and 5.5% of the variance is explained by satisfaction and cooperation respectively. Consequently, commitment, communication and mutual understanding make a minimal contribution to relationship quality. The ANOVA table (Appendix XXIII) indicates that the model as a whole is significant. Figures shown in the Sig. F Change column (Table 8.18) reveal that the addition of trust, satisfaction and cooperation to the model achieve statistical significance with $p = .000$, therefore confirming the findings of the standard MRA.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.803(a)	.645	.643	.975	.645	339.992	1	187	.000
2	.823(b)	.677	.674	.932	.032	18.629	1	186	.000
3	.856(c)	.732	.728	.851	.055	37.762	1	185	.000
4	.857(d)	.734	.729	.850	.002	1.519	1	184	.219
5	.859(e)	.737	.730	.848	.003	2.022	1	183	.157
6	.859(f)	.738	.730	.849	.001	.698	1	182	.404
a Predictors: (Constant), TRU									
b Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT									
c Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO									
d Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT									
e Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT, COM									
f Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT, COM, UND									
g Dependent Variable: overall relationship quality									

Table 8.18: model summary of hierarchical multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used in this section in order to confirm or reject the hypotheses which were generated from the literature review and the qualitative interviews. However, it is felt that subsequent analysis is needed in order to investigate in greater detail what drives the relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors. Therefore, a factor analysis (in the form of a principal component analysis) was carried out using the data generated from the quantitative survey.

8.4.2.4 Stage 2: Principal Component Analysis

Factor analysis is a generally accepted data analysis method that has been used in various studies on relationship quality (e.g. Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Bejou *et al.*, 1998; Lages *et al.*,

2005) and sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship (Chadwick, 2004). It is defined as a method for simplifying complex sets of data (Kline, 1994) by addressing the structure of interrelationships or correlations among a large number of variables by defining a set of common underlying dimensions (Hair *et al.*, 1992). Field (2005, p. 620) explains that 'by reducing a data set from a group of interrelated variables into a smaller set of factors, factor analysis achieves parsimony by explaining the maximum amount of common variance in a correlation matrix using the smallest number of explanatory concepts.' Pallant (2001, p.151) adds that 'factor analysis can also be used to reduce a large number of related variables to a more manageable number, prior to using them in other analyses such as multiple regression or multivariate analysis of variance'. Social research differentiates between two different approaches to locate underlying dimensions of a data set: factor analysis on the one hand and principal component analysis on the other hand. The difference between both approaches is based on the communality¹⁴ estimates that are used. Again Field (2005, p. 630) explains that 'factor analysis derives a mathematical model from which factors are estimated, whereas principal component analysis merely decomposes the original data into a set of linear variates.' Thus a principal component analysis is widely considered perfect, reliable and without error although proponents of factor analysis 'insist that components analysis is at best a common factor analysis with some error added and at worst an unrecognizable hodgepodge of things from which nothing can be determined' (Cliff 1987, p. 349, cited in Field, 2005, p. 631). In addition, one of the limitations of factor analysis generally and principal component analysis specifically is that it neither indicates the direction or the strength of relationships between variables. However, the principal component analysis has been chosen for subsequent analysis because it avoids factor indeterminacy and provides a good empirical summary of a data set (Stevens, 2001; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2000). Although Field (2005, p.631) assumes that hardcore statisticians would argue that 'when principal component analysis is

¹⁴ The communality is the proportion of a variable's variance that is shared by two or more variables.

used it should not be described as a factor analysis' both terms are used interchangeably owing to standard practice. With respect to that, Pallant (2001, p. 152) notes that 'factor analysis is used as a general term to refer to the entire family of techniques.'

The approach to principal component analysis as used in this study was adapted from other studies which used factor analysis as well. In this respect, Chadwick's thesis (2004) proved to be a good guide, bearing in mind that a similar nature of research has been investigated in a similar research context using a similar methodology in both his and this study. Whereas George and Mallery (2001) recommend four basic steps of conducting a principal component analysis¹⁵, Pallant (2001) suggests a three-stage-approach: First, assessment of the suitability of data for factor analysis. Second, factor extraction and third, factor rotation and interpretation. These three steps and the findings generated will be presented on the following pages.

I. Assessment of the suitability of data for principal component analysis

Before carrying out a principal component analysis, the researcher has to be sure that the data used for the analysis is suitable. Suitability of data mainly refers to an appropriate sample size and an appropriate strength of the correlation between the various items (Pallant, 2001).

The sample size determines the reliability of factor analysis as correlation coefficients fluctuate from (smaller) samples to (larger) samples. Pallant (2001) provides the overall rule that the larger the sample, the better. Field (2005) becomes more concrete by listing various classifications, ranging from 100 cases as a poor sample size to 1000 cases as being excellent. In addition, Kline (2000) recommends a minimum of 100 as a sample size suitable for factor analysis, whereas Hair *et al.* (1998) emphasise that the sample size

¹⁵ 1) Calculating a correlation matrix of all variables to be used in the analysis – 2) Extracting factors – 3) Rotating factors to create a more understandable factor structure – 4) Interpreting results.

should be 100 or larger. This study containing 189 responses is therefore more than adequate.

An alternative method of assessing the suitability of the sample size is to take the case-to-scale-ratio into consideration. Here again, suggestions differ. Kline (1994, p. 74) points out that 'for algebraic reasons it is essential that there are more subjects than variables.' Therefore, the minimum requirement is a ratio of two cases to one variable. Others, including Tabachnick and Fidell (2000), recommend a 5:1-ratio. Bearing in mind that in this study 189 cases and 28 variables are used for factor analysis, the ratio of cases to variables (6.75:1) exceeds the claims made by Kline (1994) as well as Tabachnick and Fidell (2000).

The second important issue relating to the assessment of data suitability is the appropriate strength of the relationships among the items. In order to carry out a factor analysis, a correlation matrix has to contain several sizeable correlations. Therefore, the starting-point for factor analysis is to produce a correlation matrix for all variables and check for coefficients greater than 0.3. Pallant (2001) notes that factor analysis may not be appropriate if only few correlations above this level are found. Fields (2005), however, suggests not only to eliminate variables, which correlate weakly with other variables but also to eliminate those variables, which correlate very highly with other variables (>0.9). The inspection of the correlation matrix produced for all 29 variables¹⁶ revealed the presence of many coefficients greater than 0.3. Besides, no coefficient exceeded the 0.9-mark. However, one item ('cot3') showed weak correlations with 26 out of 28 variables and was therefore eliminated.¹⁷

Another alternative for testing the strength of correlations between the items is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO), which indicates the reliability of

¹⁶ Unfortunately a graphical representation cannot be provided as the correlation matrix is just too big to present in an economical way.

¹⁷ However, a factor analysis including cot3 was run in order to test whether there are any major differences in comparison to the subsequent factor analysis. This test run revealed that cot3 negatively (and weakly) correlated with one of the factors. This supports the decision to eliminate 'cot3' from subsequent analysis.

correlations between pairs of variables by using an index ranging from 0 to 1. A value of 0 indicates that factor analysis is likely to be inappropriate, whereas a value of 1 indicates that factor analysis should yield reliable and distinct factors. According to convention, a value greater than 0.6 is an appropriate score, everything greater than 0.8 is very good. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy in this study was 0.929, indicating a very good value. In addition, the Bartlett’s test of sphericity is used to test whether the variables are uncorrelated in the population (i.e. the population matrix is an identity matrix). However, the test should be significant (i.e. $p < 0.05$) for the factor analysis to be considered appropriate according to Pallant (2001). In this study, the Bartlett’s test of sphericity reached statistical significance with $p = 0.000$ and therefore rejecting the notion that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.929
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3882.158
	df	378
	Sig.	.000

Table 8.19: assessment of factorability of data

In summary, the data (after eliminating ‘cot3’) was suitable for factor analysis according to the measures mentioned above. Appendix XXIV presents the statistical output relating to this section.

II. Extraction of factors

According to Pallant (2004) factor extraction seeks to identify the smallest number of factors underlying a set of measured variables. The principal component analysis identifies those factors which mainly account for the variance by analysing all the variance in observed variables.

The main question of how many factors to extract can be answered by two tests which are commonly used to limit the number of factors identified by the factor extraction. The Kaiser’s criterion retains those factors having an eigenvalue (i.e. the amount of variation

explained by a factor) greater than 1.0, which is based on the idea that an eigenvalue of 1.0 represents a substantial amount of variation (Field, 2005). However, the disadvantage of the Kaiser's criterion is that often too many factors are retained and that findings are likely to be inaccurate when the number of variables is larger than 30 or the sample size fewer than 250. In this study with the number of variables being 28, four factors were identified as having eigenvalues greater than 1, explaining 65.248% of the variance in the model.

An alternative to the Kaiser's criterion is the screening of a scree plot as advocated by Catell (1966). A scree plot graphs each eigenvalue against the factor with which it is associated and therefore reflects the relative importance of each factor. It is advisable to retain all factors above the cut-off point, i.e. where the line changes slope and becomes horizontal (Pallant, 2001). Field (2005) notes that the scree plot provides a fairly reliable criterion to identify the number of extracted factors whenever the sample size exceeds 200 participants. An inspection of the screeplot revealed a clear break after the third component. The following components were identified as having a lesser effect. In view of previous studies, which seldom identified more than three factors, it has been decided to retain three components following Catell's criterion (1966) for further investigation.

III. Rotation and interpretation of factors

The three extracted factors need to be interpreted in order to make sense. This is a difficult task because most variables generally have high loadings on the most important factor and small loadings on all others. Rotation can improve the interpretability of factors as it maximises the loading of each variable on one of the extracted factors and minimises the loading on all other factors.¹⁸ After rotation it is easier for the researcher to identify which variable relates to which factor (Field, 2005). The most commonly used rotation options are the orthogonal and the oblique rotation method according to Pallant (2004). The choice of rotation method is based on the belief whether the underlying factors should be related

¹⁸ For a detailed explanation how rotation works please see Field (2005, pp. 634)

(then the oblique option is appropriate) or unrelated (in this case the orthogonal rotation method applies). The recommendation of Field (2005, p. 637) to select the orthogonal varimax option for a first analysis, has been followed as this rotation method is ‘a good general approach that simplifies the interpretation of factors’. Therefore orthogonal varimax rotation was performed with 3 factors, converging in 25 iterations.

Kline (1994, p.52) emphasises that ‘it is necessary to know whether a factor loading is significant or not’ regardless of the rotation method used. He continues to say that factor loadings over 0.3 (which indicates that 9% of the variance is accounted for by the factor) is a reasonable criterion when the sample size is at least 100 subjects. According to Stevens (2001), only factor loadings greater than 0.4 should be retained for interpretation whereas Comrey (1973) and Miller *et al.* (2002) recommend that anything above 0.44 can be considered salient. Comrey and Lee (1992), however, state that loadings greater than 0.7 are considered to be excellent. It is fair to conclude that the greater the loading the more the variable is a pure measure of the factor. After various trials with various loadings had been run it has been decided to follow the recommendation of Comrey (1973) and Miller *et al.* (2002) and therefore retain factor loadings over 0.44. The rotated solution revealed three factors explaining 61.454% of total variance in the proposed model. Weightings loaded most heavily on component 1 (27.659% of variance) and to a lesser extent on component 2 (18.199%) and 3 (15.596%).

Comp	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cum. %	Total	% of Variance	Cum. %	Total	% of Variance	Cum. %
1	12.677	45.274	45.274	12.677	45.274	45.274	7.745	27.659	27.659
2	3.160	11.287	56.561	3.160	11.287	56.561	5.096	18.199	45.858
3	1.370	4.893	61.454	1.370	4.893	61.454	4.367	15.596	61.454

Table 8.20: total variance explained

	Component		
	1	2	3
cot1		.597	
cot2	.538	.543	
cot4		.827	
cot6		.641	
cot7		.654	
cot8		.766	
cot9			
cot10			.629
tru1	.664	.505	
tru2	.708		
tru3	.663	.477	
tru4	.792		
tru5	.745		
tru6	.659		
tru7	.751		
sat1	.563	.473	
sat2	.589		
sat3		.504	
und1	.737		
und3	.798		
coo1			.706
coo2	.779		
coo3			.647
coo4			.502
com1	.555		.491
com3			.819
com4			.782
com5			.719
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.a Rotation converged in 6 iterations.			

Table 8.21: rotated component matrix

In view of the fact that SPSS does not interpret or label the components, Pallant (2001) notes that it is up to the researcher to propose possible interpretations based on underlying theory and past research as well as an understanding of the content of the variables. Therefore the author of this thesis interpreted and labelled the three factors by comparing the various items and their wordings respectively. In order to avoid misinterpretation, a second and a third researcher have been asked to interpret and label the components in question separately. After that, results have been compared and discussed with each other. The three factors were finally interpreted as '*relationship compatibility*', '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*'.

The labelling of the three factors, a statement of loadings according to each factor, a commentary on the statistical findings and an analysis of the constitution of each factor following Chadwick's approach (2004) will be presented on the following pages.

▪ Component 1: '*relationship compatibility*'

14 variables load on the first factor explaining 27.66% of the variance. '*Relationship compatibility*' involves a sense of understanding and fairness in dealing with each other. When comparing the actual wording of items it becomes apparent that 'understanding' (as in 'und1', 'und3', 'tru2' and 'tru3') and 'fairness' (as in 'tru1', 'tru5' and 'tru7') are the principle issues in dealing with each other (as in 'coo2', 'tru5', 'tru7'). This component therefore combines the essence of trust, understanding and cooperation.

The high loadings of 'und3' (0.798) and 'und1' (0.737) indicate that both clubs and sponsors set great value on understanding each others needs and objectives. The importance of trust expressed in fair, knowledgeable and open dealings with each other is indicated by the relatively high loadings of 'tru4' (0.792), 'tru7' (0.751), 'tru5' (0.745) and 'tru2' (0.708). The lesser loadings of other variables such as 'sat2' (0.589), 'sat1' (0.563), 'com1' (0.555) or 'cot2' (0.538) indicate that a successful association/overall performance, as well as regular flow of information also have an impact on understanding and fairness in dealing with each other.

▪ Component 2: '*long-term perspective*'

10 variables load on this second component explaining 18.2% of the variance. The six strongest loadings relate to the initial commitment-scale and it becomes quite clear from the wording of the items that both sponsors and clubs have a long-term orientation in their mind as indicated by the three strongest loadings 'cot4' (0.827), 'cot8' (0.766) and 'cot7' (0.654). The loadings of the two trust-items 'tru1' (0.505) and 'tru3' (0.477) as well as the two satisfaction-items 'sat3' (0.504) and 'sat1' (0.473) indicate that the partner's reliability

and understanding of the others position, as well as being satisfied with the partner's overall performance and the results of the relationship, support long-term commitment. Although sponsors and clubs are prepared to commit to each other in the long-term, they also make clear that this should not be at any cost as the absence of 'cot9' and 'cot10' from this second component implies.

▪ Component 3: '*collaborative behaviour*'

8 variables load on the third component explaining 15.6% of the variance, involving all variables of the initial communication-scale, three variables of the cooperation-scale and one variable related to commitment. However, by comparing the wording of the questions it becomes clear that the underlying concept of this third component is the issue of collaborative behaviour, indicating a sense of working together and doing more than need to be done. 'Com3' as the strongest loading (0.819) implies involvement in each others marketing and planning efforts and therefore another form of cooperation. The willingness and behaviour of partners to work together indicate a good relationship quality. This is well illustrated by the loading of variable 'coo3' saying that football clubs and sponsors are cooperating closely outside the context of sponsorship. However, the absence of 'coo2' seems somehow strange as one would assume that cooperation of both partners within the context of the sponsorship is a crucial part of collaborative behaviour although one could also take the stance that collaborative behaviour is even more than just the initial sponsorship cooperation.

Previous studies on relationship quality have identified trust, commitment and satisfaction as the main determinants of RQ as described in Chapter 4 and 7. The components resulting from the principal component analysis in this study confirm previous findings as commitment is reflected explicitly as a single factor and trust is reflected implicitly in factor 1. Satisfaction, however, is represented only to a lesser extent in the above factors

and therefore plays only a limited role. Two of the three RQ-determinants, which came out of the interviews, are explicitly represented in factor 1 ('mutual understanding') and factor 3 ('cooperation'). The third determinant ('communication') is represented implicitly in the third factor.

In view of the above findings, subsequent analysis (by the means of another MRA) has been carried out in order to test whether the components identified in this subsection make a significant contribution to predict relationship quality.

8.4.2.5 Stage 3: Multiple Regression Analysis

The three components revealed by the previous factor analysis have been entered as independent variables in a second multiple regression analysis in order to test their impact on overall relationship quality as the dependent variable. The same approach as with the first MRA has therefore been used.

I. Checking the assumptions

Owing to the fact that 189 cases and three independent variables have been used for multiple regression analysis, the case-to-predictor-ratio increased to 63:1 therefore exceeding the desirable level recommended by Hair *et al.* (1998) by far. According to Green's criteria, 107 cases were needed. Here again, the requirement was outreached with 189 cases, thus qualifying the sample size for multiple regression analysis.

A scan of the correlation matrix (Table 8.22) and the Tolerance values (Table 8.25) revealed that multicollinearity is not an issue. An inspection of the Normal Probability Plot and the Scatterplot revealed no problems relating to linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of residuals or outliers. The latter has also been checked using the Mahalabonis distances. The critical chi-square value for three independent variables is 16.27 according to Pallant (2001). Although one case exceeded the critical chi-square

value, it has been decided to remain this case after a comparison of results of MRA with and without that particular case revealed no significant difference.

	ORQ	RELCOM	LTCOT	COLBEH
overall relationship quality	1			
Relationship Compatibility	.833	1		
Long-Term Perspective	.778	.862	1	
Collaborative Behaviour	.540	.486	.420	1
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)				

Table 8.22: correlation matrix of dependent and independent variables after factor analysis

II. Evaluating the model

The R^2 value identified for this model was 0.732, indicating that 73.2% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.727, indicating that 72.7% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. In comparison with the R^2 and the adjusted R^2 value of the MRA before factor analysis, the values are slightly lower although the first model incorporated three more independent variables. However, the variance in the dependent variable explained by the model is still relatively high compared to other studies on RQ.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.855	.732	.727	.852

Table 8.23: model summary

In addition, an inspection of the ANOVA table confirms that the model is a significant fit of the data overall as it reaches statistical significance with Sig=.000.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	366.375	3	122.125	168.265	.000(a)
Residual	134.271	185	.726		
Total	500.646	188			

Table 8.24: ANOVA table

III. Evaluating each of the independent variables

All independent variables reach statistical significance indicating that they all make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality (Table 8.25).

'*Relationship compatibility*' (RC) makes the largest individual contribution to the prediction of the overall relationship quality with a standardised Beta coefficient of 0.546. '*Long-term perspective*' (LP) makes the second largest contribution with a Beta coefficient of 0.233, followed by '*collaborative behaviour*' (CB) with a Beta coefficient of 0.176.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance
(Constant)	-.755	.273		-2.770	.006	
RC	1.042	.149	.546	6.999	.000	.238
LP	.495	.159	.233	3.106	.002	.257
CB	.335	.083	.176	4.052	.000	.764

Table 8.25: table of coefficients – MRA after factor analysis

IV. Verification of results

As can be seen from Table 8.26 the model as a whole explains 73.2% of the variance in the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2 value indicates that the model accounts for 72.7% of variance. An examination of the R Square Change values shows that 69.4% of the variance in relationship quality is explained by '*relationship compatibility*' when the effects of other independent variables are controlled. An additional 1.4% and 2.4% of the variance is explained by '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*' respectively. The ANOVA table (Appendix XXV) indicates that the model as a whole is significant. Figures shown in the Sig. F Change column reveal that the additions of '*relationship compatibility*', '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*' to the model achieve statistical significance, therefore confirming the findings of the previous standard MRA.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.833(a)	.694	.692	.905	.694	423.939	1	187	.000
2	.841(b)	.708	.705	.887	.014	8.974	1	186	.003
3	.855(c)	.732	.727	.852	.024	16.419	1	185	.000
a Predictors: (Constant), RC									
b Predictors: (Constant), RC, LP									
c Predictors: (Constant), RC, LP, CB									
d Dependent Variable: overall relationship quality									

Table 8.26: model summary of hierarchical multiple regression analysis after factor analysis

The above findings support the results of the factor analysis as all three components coming out of the principal component analysis make a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.

8.4.2.6 Comparison England – Germany

The results presented above are based on both English and German cases. In order to identify any significant differences between cases representing the English Premier League and cases representing the German Bundesliga, the above analysis methods were rerun for English and German cases separately.

In a first step, Mann-Whitney U test were carried out for all 30 items in order to reveal any differences between English and German responses. Statistically significant differences can be reported for the following seven items:

- ‘Cot 3’: German respondents ranked this item higher than English respondents (mean rank 104.53 compared to 77.64, $p = .000$), indicating that German clubs and sponsors are more likely to look for another sponsorship deal to replace their sponsorship partner than their English counterparts.
- ‘Cot 4’ and ‘Cot 8’: The statistically significant difference ($p = .002$) for both items leads one to conclude that German respondents show a longer-term orientation towards their sponsorship than English respondents (mean rank 103.64 vs. 79.26 and 103.95 vs. 78.70 respectively).
- ‘Cot 9’: The difference for this item ($p = .009$) implies that English respondents (mean rank = 108.77) are more patient with their sponsorship partner when they make mistakes than the German respondents (mean rank = 87.44).
- ‘Tru 1’: German respondents rated the statement that they can rely on their sponsorship partner statistically significant higher than English respondents (mean rank = 101.00 vs. 84.07, $p = 0.37$).

- 'Coo 3': The difference for this item ($p = .005$) implies that English respondents (mean rank = 109.81) cooperate more closely with their sponsorship partner outside the sponsorship deal than their German counterparts (mean rank = 86.86).
- 'Com 5': English respondents (mean rank = 115.92) seem to have a more open relationship with their sponsorship partner than German respondents (mean rank = 83.51) as indicated by the statistically significant difference for this item ($p = 0.000$).

Subsequent Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney U tests revealed statistically significant differences between English and German sponsors for the commitment items 4, 6, 8 and 9 as well as 'Com 5'. However, in the case of English and German clubs statistically significant difference can be reported only for 'Cot 3' as mentioned above.

In order to check whether the results of hypothesis testing apply for both English and German responses, multiple regression analysis was carried out for both samples. As can be seen from Table 8.27, R Square values, Adjusted R Square values and Significance values are nearly the same, indicating a good fit for all three models. According to the results of the initial multiple regression analysis, three hypotheses had to be rejected as commitment, mutual understanding and communication showed no statistically significant contribution to relationship quality as the dependent variable. All three rejections were confirmed by the English and German responses. However, differences have to be noted relating to the three other hypotheses including trust, satisfaction and cooperation. The initial multiple regression analysis confirmed that these three dimensions contribute significantly to relationship quality, whereas trust does not reach statistical significance according to German responses and satisfaction has to be rejected as a driver for relationship quality according to the English responses.

	Initial results	English responses	German responses
N	189	67	122
R Square	.738	.750	.751
Adjusted R Square	.730	.725	.738
Sig.-ANOVA	.000	.000	.000
COT Sig. (Beta)	.221 (.078)	.610 (.065)	.253 (.089)
TRU Sig. (Beta)	.000 (.325)	.001 (.532)	.083 (.197)
SAT Sig. (Beta)	.000 (.244)	.533 (.057)	.000 (.384)
UND Sig. (Beta)	.404 (.053)	.724 (-.041)	.353 (.072)
COO Sig. (Beta)	.001 (.239)	.021 (.358)	.003 (.231)
COM Sig. (Beta)	.154 (.076)	.639 (-.051)	.202 (.077)

Table 8.27: comparison of multiple regression analysis relating to English and German responses

Factor analysis was also carried out for English and German responses separately although the results have to be handled with care owing to the very small sample size. However, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value indicates very strong correlations between the variables. Table 8.28 reveals no big differences between the initial factor analysis and the English/German responses.

	Initial analysis	English responses	German responses
N	189	67	122
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.929	.849	.901
Components Eigenvalue >1	4	6	4
Scree plot break	after 3	after 3 and after 5	after 3
Extracted factors 3: total variance explained	61.454%	65.392%	62.253%

Table 8.28: comparison of results relating to the initial factor analysis and English/German responses

However, differences become apparent when comparing the three rotated component matrixes.

	Initial Component Matrix			Component English responses			Component German responses		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
cot1		.597		.702				.616	
cot2	.538	.543		.685			.465	.633	
cot4		.827		.692				.600	
cot6		.641				.604		.765	
cot7		.654		.754				.736	
cot8		.766		.726			.473	.638	
cot9								.743	
cot10			.629	.459	.532			.558	
tru1	.664	.505		.657					.664
tru2	.708			.733			.697	.505	
tru3	.663	.477		.760			.685		
tru4	.792			.673		.468	.673	.456	
tru5	.745			.818			.797		
tru6	.659			.701			.752		
tru7	.751				.470	.491	.666		
sat1	.563	.473		.579			.776		
sat2	.589					.864	.596	.542	
sat3		.504				.712	.692		
und1	.737			.825				.593	
und3	.798			.722			.781		
cool			.706		.905		.800		
coo2	.779			.772					.633
coo3			.647	.685			.774		
coo4			.502	.630	.443				.663
com1	.555		.491	.751				.514	.443
com3			.819		.895		.482		
com4			.782		.877				.761
com5			.719		.590				.742

Table 8.29: rotated component matrix based on combined, English and German responses

The rotated component matrix based on English responses differs considerably from the other two matrixes. In the English matrix commitment-items load heavily on the first component, whereas in the initial and the German matrix commitment-items load heavily on component two (*‘long-term perspective’*). A difference can also be noted for the third component (*‘collaborative behaviour’*) with loadings of cooperation and communication items in the initial and the German matrix, but heavy loadings of satisfaction in the matrix based upon English responses. It also seems that it is more difficult to interpret and label the English matrix than the other two.

Finally, the second multiple regression analysis was rerun with data relating to English and German responses. Table 8.30 compares the results.

	Initial results	English responses	German responses
N	189	67	122
R Square	.732	.755	.734
Adjusted R Square	.727	.743	.727
Sig.-ANOVA	.000	.000	.000
RELCOM Sig. (Beta)	.000 (.546)	.001 (.473)	.000 (.543)
LGPERSP Sig. (Beta)	.002 (.233)	.012 (.387)	.005 (.260)
COLLBEH Sig. (Beta)	.000 (.176)	.646 (.043)	.000 (.189)

Table 8.30: comparison of multiple regression analysis relating to English and German responses

Here again, R Square values, Adjusted R Square values and Significance values are nearly the same, indicating a good fit for all three models. The German responses confirm the initial findings, whereas results relating to English responses only confirm that '*relationship compatibility*' and '*long-term perspective*' make a statistically significant contribution to relationship quality, in contrast to '*collaborative behaviour*' which fails to reach statistical significance.

All in all, some differences between English and German responses were revealed. These differences have to be handled with care after all, since some of the tests were run with very small sample sizes and therefore the results are not as sound as they appear to be.

8.5 Summary of the quantitative findings

This section summarises the key findings of the quantitative research phase as presented in this chapter. Table 8.31 compares the initial principal research propositions (PRPs) and the results revealed by the statistical methods used for each proposition. All in all, three PRPs were confirmed by the results, whereas four PRPs were partially confirmed. This speaks for the quality of the research propositions which were built upon the findings of the qualitative interviews and the insight gained by the literature review.

PRP/hypotheses	statistical method(s) used	results	conclusion
PRP-1: <i>Premier League and Bundesliga clubs rate football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage, but as a small business in terms of turnover.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics 	The participating clubs perceive football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage but only a medium-sized business in terms of clubs' annual turnover.	PRP-1 was partially confirmed.
PRP-2: <i>German clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship more highly than their English counterparts, whereas the English Premier League clubs rate the future importance of sponsorship more highly than German Bundesliga clubs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Mann-Whitney U test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test 	English clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship as an income stream for their club as well as the future importance of sponsorship revenues significantly more highly than German clubs.	PRP-2 was partially confirmed.
PRP-3: <i>Clubs see sponsorship both as an income stream and as an opportunity to build the brand of the club and to network with the sponsors.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Mann-Whitney U test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test 	The participating clubs appreciated the importance of sponsorship as brand building and networking opportunity although sponsorship is mainly perceived as an important source of income.	PRP-3 was confirmed.
PRP-4: <i>Commercial reasons for companies to go into football sponsorship prevail over personal reasons.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Mann-Whitney U test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test Kruskal-Wallis test 	The results show that the vast majority of English and German sponsors sponsor their respective clubs for pure commercial reasons. Only a minority admitted that personal reasons also play a role.	PRP-4 was confirmed.
PRP-5: <i>The World Cup 2006 is an important reason for German sponsors to sponsor Bundesliga clubs, but does not play an important motivating role for sponsors in England.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Mann-Whitney U test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test Kruskal-Wallis test 	The forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany plays an important role only for the minority of sponsors, although a statistically significant difference between English and German statements exists.	PRP-5 was partially confirmed
PRP-6: <i>Brand awareness and image transfer prevail over other sponsorship objectives.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Mann-Whitney U test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test Kruskal-Wallis test 	Objectives relating to awareness and image are placed at the top of the objective ranking indicating a clear preference.	PRP-6 was confirmed.
PRP-7: <i>The majority of sponsors/clubs perceive relationship quality as being important for the success of their sponsorship, but then only the minority of sponsors/clubs measure or even manage it.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics Kruskal-Wallis test Mann-Whitney U test 	The participating clubs and sponsors agreed that relationship quality is important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole. The majority already manage their relationships proactively but does not evaluate the relationship quality.	PRP-7 was partially confirmed

Table 8.31: summary of findings regarding the principal research propositions

Table 8.32 compares the initial hypotheses with the final results generated from multiple regression analysis.

hypotheses	statistical method(s) used	results	conclusion
H-1: <i>Commitment positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standard Multiple Regression Analysis ▪ Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis (Validation) 	Commitment does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-1 was rejected
H-2: <i>Trust positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>		Trust makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-2 was confirmed
H-3: <i>Satisfaction positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>		Satisfaction makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-3 was confirmed
H-4: <i>Mutual understanding positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>		Mutual understanding does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-4 was rejected
H-5: <i>Cooperation between both parties positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>		Cooperation makes a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-5 was confirmed
H-6: <i>Communication positively influences the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors.</i>		Communication does not make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of relationship quality.	H-5 was rejected

Table 8.32: summary of findings regarding the hypotheses

The results were quite surprising with three confirmed hypotheses and three hypotheses which had to be rejected. Therefore, trust, satisfaction and cooperation have a positive impact on relationship quality, whereas commitment, mutual understanding and communication seem not to have any impact on the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors in the English Premier League und the German Bundesliga. As these findings contradict results of previous studies and findings of the qualitative interviews, the decision was made to investigate further by using a principal component analysis in order to identify underlying dimensions. Indeed, three factors were revealed incorporating all six dimensions. The factors which were labelled as '*relationship compatibility*', '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*' all make a statistically significant contribution to relationship quality as confirmed by a second

multiple regression analysis. Finally, all statistical tests were rerun for English and German responses separately in order to detect any statistical differences between them.

The key findings of the quantitative survey are as follows:

- Premier League and Bundesliga clubs perceive football as ‘big business’ in terms of public perception and media coverage, but only as ‘medium-sized’ business in terms of clubs’ annual turnover. This qualifies the common opinion that football was ‘big business’ in purely financial terms.
- Concerning sponsorship as an income stream, English Premier League clubs rate its current importance more highly than their German counterparts and expect a significant increase in the foreseeable future whereas German Bundesliga clubs doubt that the importance of sponsorship as an income stream will significantly increase in the next five years.
- The vast majority of English and German sponsors are into football sponsorship for pure commercial reasons. Only a handful sponsors stated that personal reasons play a role in their decision to sponsor a football club.
- ‘Increasing public awareness’ and ‘enhancing the image of the company/brand’ are the top commercial objectives of English and German sponsors, followed by various other commercial objectives.
- The majority of clubs and sponsors think that maintaining a good relationship quality is important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole. Consequently most of the clubs and sponsors manage their relationship proactively. In contrast, only the minority evaluates the quality of relationship between them and their sponsorship partner.
- A good relationship quality between professional football clubs and their respective sponsors is mainly determined by three factors: ‘*relationship compatibility*’ (involving a sense of understanding and fairness in dealing with each other), ‘*long-term*

perspective' (involving mutual commitment) and '*collaborative behaviour*' (involving cooperation and communication).

The next chapter will put the above findings into context of this research by linking the results of the quantitative survey with the findings of the qualitative interviews and the literature review and therefore complete the process of triangulation.

9 TRIANGULATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter triangulates the main findings of the quantitative survey (as presented in Chapter 8) with the findings of the qualitative interviews (Chapter 6) and the findings of the literature review (Chapter 1 – 4) as illustrated in Figure 9.1.

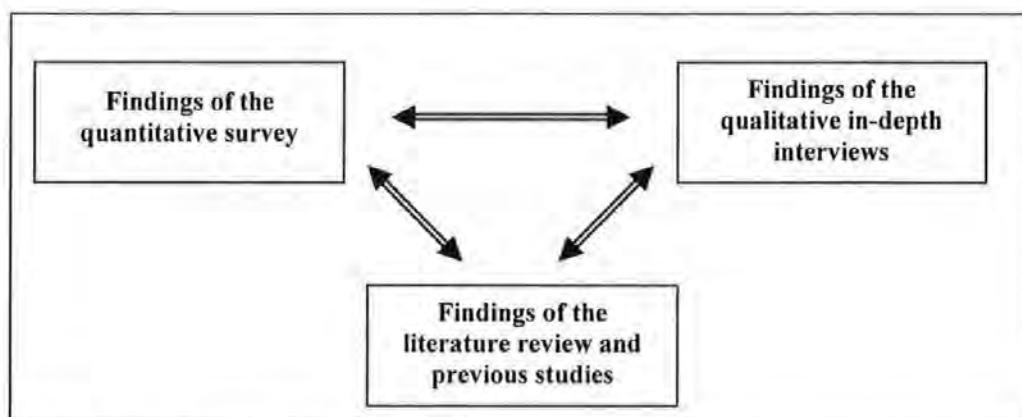


Figure 9.1: triangulation of findings

As described in Appendix IX, there are four main types of triangulation. This research uses two types, namely ‘methodological triangulation’ (the use of different data collection methods) and ‘data triangulation’ (the use of different data sources or different survey periods).

9.1 Findings relating to sponsorship as an income stream

This section discusses the findings relating to sponsorship as an income stream, starting with the question whether football is a big business, as portrayed by football clubs and the media.

9.1.1 *The size of the football business*

As outlined in Chapter 1, football is widely described as a big business in the literature (e.g. Michie and Walsh, 1999; Poli, 2001). The findings of the qualitative interviews, however, suggest a more nuanced perspective. According to the majority of interviewees,

football is not a big business in financial terms, but can be seen as a big business in terms of public interest and media appeal. Consequently, a research proposition was formulated by assuming that the clubs of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga rate football as a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage on the one hand, but as a small business in terms of annual turnover of professional football clubs on the other hand. The results of the quantitative survey confirm this research proposition partially as the responding English and German clubs perceive football as a big business in terms of media coverage and in terms of public perception, but do not view football as a small business in financial terms. They rated football rather as a medium-sized business in terms of football clubs' annual turnover. All in all, it can be concluded that – according to an insider group – one has to differentiate when talking about the size of the football business.

Simply calling football a big business does not reflect the real situation bearing in mind that the annual turnover of professional football clubs (although they differ considerably) are relatively low in comparison with the turnover of enterprises of other businesses. Manchester United, indisputably the most profitable football club in the world in 2004, turns over less money (£169m) than companies in other business sectors such as Vodafone (telecommunication/£33bn/2004), Tesco (retail/£37.1bn/2004) or DaimlerChrysler (automotive/€142bn/2004). Therefore, football is a serious business in terms of clubs' turnover, but not a big business. However, in terms of public perception and media coverage, football may be seen as a big business according to football clubs (as revealed in both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews). This is in line with the findings of the literature stating that public perception (Shilbury *et al.*, 1998) and media coverage (Morrow, 1999) are unique characteristics of the football business (see Chapter 1).

9.1.2 The importance of sponsorship as an income stream

Regarding sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs, Chapter 2 revealed that the German Bundesliga is the benchmark in terms of sponsorship, whereas the English Premier League trails behind. Therefore, sponsorship is seen as the second most important income stream for Bundesliga clubs (after television income) and only the third important income stream for clubs of the English Premier League (after television income and matchday income). This difference in terms of significance was confirmed by the interviewees during the qualitative research phase. Consequently, it has been proposed that German clubs rate the current importance of sponsorship more highly than their English counterparts.

However, some interviewees of the qualitative research phase assumed that the gap between the German Bundesliga and the English Premier League in terms of sponsorship income will narrow in the foreseeable future. Especially representatives of English Premier League clubs emphasised a clear desire to strengthen sponsorship as an income source within the next couple of years. Therefore, the second principal research proposition has been expanded by the assumption that English Premier League clubs rate the future importance of sponsorship as an income stream more highly than the German clubs.

PRP 2 was partially confirmed by the results of the quantitative survey. As assumed, English Premier League clubs rated the future importance more highly than the German clubs. Surprisingly, more English than German clubs agreed with the statement that sponsorship is currently a very important source of revenue. Why more than one third of responding German clubs disagreed with the above statement, is open to speculation. All in all, it has to be noted that the majority of both English and German clubs see sponsorship as a very important income stream.

9.1.3 The importance of sponsorship as a brand-building and networking opportunity

The qualitative interviews revealed that football clubs see sponsorship not only as an important source of income for professional football clubs but also as an important tool to raise the profile of the club and to grow the club at a national and/or international level by networking with sponsors. This view is supported by the results of the quantitative survey. The vast majority of responding clubs appreciated the importance of sponsorship as a brand-building and networking opportunity. One of the best real-life examples is Manchester United, which grew its brand and business in cooperation with its shirt sponsor Vodafone and therefore benefited from the image and international appeal of a large corporation. However, the relevant literature (e.g. Tripodi, 2001; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2002; Smith, 2004; Cliffee and Motion, 2005) may list sponsorship as a brand-building tool for sponsors, but it ignores the possibility of using sponsorship as an opportunity to build the brand of the sponsee (i.e. the club). Gwinner and Eaton (1999) note that it is possible that the image transfer occurs from the sponsor to the sponsee rather than from the sponsee to the sponsor and that further research is needed. Indeed, it would be interesting to examine empirically whether the image of the sponsor has an impact on the image of the club.

9.2 Findings relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool

This section discusses the findings relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool, starting with the motives of sponsors to go into football sponsorship.

9.2.1 The motives of sponsors for investing in football sponsorship

Various authors (e.g. Sleight, 1989; Randall, 1993; Brassington and Pettitt, 2003; Walliser, 2003) emphasise the commercial nature of sponsorship and argue that sponsorship investments should be based on commercial motives rather than on personal reasons. This

view is supported by the insider group of the qualitative research phase, who note a shift from previously common sweetheart-deals to business-related deals. However, some authors (e.g. Wragg, 1994; Ridding, 2002) and interviewees also raise doubts as to whether sponsorships in professional football are based on purely commercial motives or whether some of them represent the classical 'chairman's whim syndrome' as outlined in Chapter 3.

Consequently, a principal research proposition was formulated (stating that commercial reasons to go into football sponsorship prevail over personal reasons for companies) and tested in the quantitative survey. The results were clear as the vast majority of sponsors of English Premier League and German Bundesliga clubs declared that they sponsor their respective club for purely commercial reasons. Only a minority admitted that personal reasons also play a role. Based upon the findings of the literature review, the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey, it can therefore be concluded that professional football sponsorship is mainly seen as a commercial investment by the main protagonists.

9.2.2 The objectives of football sponsors

Regarding sponsors' objectives, previous studies (e.g. Chadwick and Thwaites, 2005; Pilot Group, 2005) revealed that companies invest in professional football sponsorship for a multitude of benefits. The most popular objectives related to brand awareness and image transfer. This is in line with the statements made by English and German sponsors' representatives during the qualitative interviews. They, too, stated that sponsors tend to have multiple objectives, differing from company to company. In addition to brand awareness and image transfer, the interviewees also mentioned staff motivation, improving business links and meeting social responsibilities as likely objectives of football sponsors.

The findings of the quantitative survey confirmed the above statements. Objectives relating to awareness and image were stated most frequently. This is in line with the findings of

Chadwick and Thwaites' study (carried out in 2000), which identifies 'generating public awareness' and 'generating media attention' as well as 'enhancing the image of the corporation' as the most popular objectives at a corporate level. Additional support comes from another study, carried out by Bembenek and Meier (2003), who investigated sport sponsorship in the area of professional football, handball, and basketball in Germany. According to their findings, 93.5% of sponsors are seeking to increase awareness for their company and/or brand and 95.7% want to benefit from a positive image transfer through their sponsorship. Staff motivation and reinforcement of business relations have been listed as the least popular objectives of sponsors. This, again, is reflected in the results of the quantitative survey to some extent. The above findings are also in line with results from a market research study by the Pilot Group (2005), which reports that image (88%) and awareness-raising (78%) are the most popular objectives of companies sponsoring football clubs. However, the Pilot Group also reports high levels of agreement with objectives which rated rather low in this research, such as 'improving relationship with business partners' (85% of the German companies in the Pilot Group study compared to 54.4% of German sponsors in this survey) or 'improve employee motivation' (70% vs. 40%).

One difference to a previous study occurs in relation to setting formal objectives in general. In the quantitative survey, English and German sponsors stated in the vast majority of cases (96.9%) that they have particular objectives concerning their football sponsorship. In only four cases (all of them relating to the German Bundesliga), sponsors noted that they do not have any objectives at all. In comparison with the study of Chadwick and Thwaites (2005), who report that 54% of English sponsors set specific objectives, the number appears to be considerably higher. This increase within the last five years might be explained by an attitude change of sponsors who had to realise that they need to set formal objectives in order to make their sponsorship work. This, in turn, would

confirm the view that football sponsorship is becoming even more important as a marketing tool.

It may be concluded that sponsors of professional football clubs seek various objectives with their sponsorship. The most popular objectives are related to raising awareness and image levels as mentioned in previous studies and confirmed by the findings of the quantitative and qualitative research phase.

9.2.3 The areas for improvement in football sponsorship

A major theme during the qualitative interviews was the question of what can be improved in the area of football sponsorship. Providing more exclusivity, enabling more networking between sponsors, solving the problem of sponsorship evaluation, increasing the professionalism of both sponsorship partners and being more imaginative were the main suggestions of the interviewees.

In order to test empirically which areas for improvements are the most important ones, clubs and sponsors were provided with a list of six potential areas based on the findings of the qualitative research phase and a previous study by the Bob Bomlitz Group (2004). The most important area for improvement according to the results of the quantitative survey seems to be the creativity on part of the clubs – stated by sponsors and clubs alike. This leads to the conclusion that clubs could do better in making the sponsorship work for the sponsors and that sponsors demand more creativity from the clubs they sponsor.

The second most important area for improvement is one of the main disadvantages of sponsorship as outlined in Chapter 3: the evaluation of sponsorship effects. Isolating the sponsorship effect is a problem widely discussed in the relevant literature (e.g. Pepels, 2001; Brassington and Pettitt, 2003) and mentioned in the qualitative interviews. The

newly introduced FASPO-conventions – as mentioned in Chapter 3 – might contribute to an improvement in this area.

Using sponsorship as a networking opportunity for sponsors is the third important area for improvement according to the respondents of the questionnaire survey, and this confirms the statements made by some interviewees during the qualitative research phase to the effect that more and more sponsors see sponsorship as an opportunity to meet potential business customers and that clubs should proactively support networking between sponsors. Some German Bundesliga clubs have designed their hospitality area in a way that makes networking easier for their sponsors, e.g. with particular getting-to-know-each-other-corners (Sohns, 2003). The networking approach in professional football sponsorship could be an implication for further research, as addressed in Chapter 10.

However, besides public discussion and reproaches relating to the degree of professionalism of clubs and sponsors in the media (e.g. Sohn and Weilguny, 2003; Sohn, 2004) – and to a lesser degree during the qualitative interviews – improving professionalism (either on the part of sponsors or on the part of the clubs) seems not to be an important issue according to the respondents. Therefore, it may be concluded that both sponsorship parties have become more professional in recent years and that some topics – such as the discussion as to which of the sponsorship partners is the less professional – have been exaggerated in public discussion.

Exclusivity of the sponsorship seems to be the least important area of sponsorship despite claims made during the qualitative interviews that sponsorship clutter has to be reduced. Sponsors and clubs are obviously quite happy with the number of sponsors and therefore do not see any need for action.

The above findings are in line with the Bob Bomlitz Group study in 2004, which reports creativity and evaluation of sponsorship effects as the most important areas for improvement and exclusivity of the sponsorship as the least important one.

9.3 Findings relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship

This section discusses the findings relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship, with the focus on the relationship quality.

9.3.1 The importance of relationship quality for the sponsorship

Various papers (e.g. Bejou *et al.*, 1996; Kiedaisch, 1997; Werner, 1997; Hennig-Thurau, 2000; Ivens, 2004) have shown that the quality of relationship between business partners have an impact on the success of the relationship. Representatives of football clubs and sponsors indicated during the qualitative research phase that they are seeking to maintain a good relationship quality in order to make the sponsorship work. Consequently, a research proposition has been formulated which states that the majority of football clubs and sponsors perceive relationship quality as being important for the success of their sponsorship. Indeed, the majority (80.3%) of the survey respondents agreed with the above statement and therefore confirmed that relationship quality is an important issue in the football sponsorship relationship.

However, as there were no indications either from previous studies or from the qualitative interviews that football clubs and sponsors *evaluate* the quality of their relationship or *manage* their relationship, PRP 7 has been extended accordingly. The results of the quantitative survey confirmed that only the minority of clubs and sponsors evaluate the quality of their relationship. This is not unexpected in view of the fact that little research has been done on relationship quality in the area of (professional football) sponsorship and

therefore clubs and sponsors have only a limited understanding of the concept of relationship quality in professional football sponsorships. Thus, an effective evaluation tool is difficult to design if one does not know what to measure.

However, PRP 7 was confirmed only partially because the majority of respondents stated that they proactively manage their relationship and therefore rejected the assumption. In this respect, it would be valuable to know how clubs and sponsors actually manage their relationship. However, the answer to this question can only be an implication for further research, as addressed in the final chapter.

It may be concluded that relationship quality is important for the sponsorship as a whole according to previous studies and the findings of the qualitative and quantitative research. The majority of clubs and sponsors in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga proactively manage their relationship with each other, but fail to evaluate it. However, there is still too little known about the concept of relationship quality in the area of professional football sponsorship, and a higher degree of understanding is needed in order to manage and evaluate the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors more effectively.

9.3.2 The concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship

As explained in Chapter 4, relationship quality (RQ) is a multi-dimensional construct. Most studies on RQ have focused on business-to-consumer or business-to-business relationships in various industry sectors. Sponsorship – despite being a B-2-B relationship as well – has been widely ignored in RQ research.

However, commitment, trust and satisfaction have been identified as the most established and well-researched dimensions of RQ. These dimensions also apply for sponsorship relationships according to Farrelly and Quester (2005), who have published the one and only paper on relationship quality in a sports sponsorship context. During the qualitative research phase, commitment and trust were mentioned by the interviewed insider group, in contrast to satisfaction, which was not mentioned. The interviews nevertheless revealed three other dimensions as being important for the relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors: mutual understanding, cooperation, and communication. Consequently, based on the findings of the literature review and the qualitative interviews, six hypotheses have been proposed stating that commitment, trust, satisfaction, mutual understanding, cooperation and communication each positively influence the quality of relationship between the sponsorship partners in professional football.

The results of the quantitative survey and the applied multi regression analyses (both standard and hierarchical) confirmed that trust, satisfaction and cooperation positively influence the relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors.

The confirmation of trust as a crucial dimension of RQ in the football sponsorship dyad makes sense, as with a lack of trust the relationship is unlikely to be a happy one. A look at the actual wording of the trust-items used for this study explains what trust in the football sponsorship relationship is all about. The sponsorship partners should therefore be knowledgeable about the sponsorship, understand each other's position, care for each other's welfare and be fair and open in dealing with each other. This is in line with the relevant literature (e.g. Achrol, 1991; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Roberts *et al.*, 2003) pointing out that a belief in each other's reliability and integrity makes relationships work.

Satisfaction as an important dimension of RQ is confirmed not only by the results of the quantitative survey but also by previous studies (e.g. Bejou *et al.*, 1998; Hsieh and Hiang, 2004; Wong, 2004; Farrelly and Quester, 2005). The quality of the sponsorship relationship is unlikely to be a good one if one (or both) of the partners are not satisfied with the sponsorship, as the actual wording of the satisfaction items implies. In this respect, sponsorship partners should try to meet each other's expectations and objectives in order to make the relationship work.

Finally, the confirmation that cooperation is an important dimension of relationship quality supports the statements made by some interviewees during the qualitative research. It therefore seems that close cooperation within the sponsorship agreement (e.g. joint communication campaigns) and outside the sponsorship (private activities) increases the quality of relationship between football clubs and their sponsors. However, cooperation as a dimension of RQ has been mentioned only occasionally in the literature (e.g. Keating *et al.*, 2003; Woo and Ennew, 2004), and therefore this study broadens our understanding of its role.

However, the results of the quantitative survey and the applied multi regression analyses do not provide further support for the assumption that commitment, mutual understanding and communication positively influence relationship quality. This comes as a surprise, especially in the case of commitment in view of the fact that commitment has been named quite frequently as an important dimension of RQ in previous studies (e.g. Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Diller and Kusterer, 1998; Roberts *et al.*, 2003). Chadwick (2004), for example, emphasises the importance of commitment in professional football sponsorship relationships. Commitment was also mentioned during the qualitative interviews. The other two dimensions – mutual understanding and communication – have been mentioned only occasionally in the RQ literature (e.g. Mohr and Spekman, 1994; Naudé and Buttle, 2000;

Keating *et al.*, 2003, Lages *et al.*, 2005) and never in a sponsorship context, but came through strongly in the qualitative interviews.

In view of the above findings, the decision was taken to carry out a factor analysis in order to reduce the data and enhance the informativeness of the results. The principal component analysis revealed three factors which have been named as '*relationship compatibility*', '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*'. Subsequent multi regression analysis confirmed that all three factors positively influence the quality of relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. As these three factors are newly created, they cannot be compared with previous studies, but can only be explained by their composition. The next chapter, however, provides guidance for clubs and sponsors as to how to translate these factors in real-life sponsorships.

'*Relationship compatibility*' combines the essence of trust, understanding and cooperation. It also involves a great sense of understanding and fairness on the part of those involved in dealing with each other, as partners do not want to be treated unfairly. In addition, if one party does not feel understood (involving either misunderstanding or the lack of understanding) the relationship quality is unlikely to be good. According to the subsequent multi regression analysis, '*relationship compatibility*' has the strongest impact on relationship quality between professional football clubs and sponsors. Clubs and sponsors would therefore be well advised to attach value to understanding each other's objectives and needs on the one hand and to open, fair and knowledgeable dealings with each other on the other hand.

'*Long-term perspective*' implies that the quality of relationships between football clubs and sponsors is likely to be good when both partners commit to each other in the long-term and tends to be poor if the relationship is determined by a lack of commitment. In relation to

this factor, commitment is a crucial indicator of relationship quality in contrast to the initial findings. However, although sponsors and clubs are prepared to commit to each other in the long-term, they also make clear that this should not be at any cost, as only a minority of clubs and sponsors agreed with the statement that they are willing to dedicate whatever people and resources it takes to grow the sponsorship.

'Collaborative behaviour' indicates that a good relationship quality is based on the willingness and behaviour of partners to work together and doing more than needs to be done. This is well illustrated by the overall agreement with a statement saying that football clubs and sponsors cooperate closely outside the context of sponsorship. In addition, *'collaborative behaviour'* also implies mutual involvement in each other's marketing and planning efforts.

These three new factors add to our understanding of what relationship quality implies in the context of professional football sponsorships.

9.4 Summary of findings

This chapter discussed the main findings of this research by triangulating the results of the quantitative survey, the qualitative research phase and the literature review.

It has been concluded that one has to differentiate when referring to the size of the football business, as football might be a big business in terms of public perception and media coverage, but only a medium-sized business in financial terms compared to businesses of other industry sectors. It has also been revealed that clubs of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga see sponsorship as an important income stream now and in the future. However, the importance of sponsorship in professional football is not only

restricted to its function as an income source, but also highly appreciated as a brand-building tool and as an opportunity for clubs to network with sponsors in order to grow as a business at a national/international level. It has also been concluded that further research in this area is necessary.

The findings relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool revealed that professional football sponsorship is mainly a commercial investment based on commercial motives rather than on the personal reasons of sponsors. Consequently, companies seek to gain various commercial objectives through their football sponsorship. The most popular objectives are related to awareness and image levels. In relation to areas of potential improvements, it has been revealed that clubs and sponsors alike have to be more imaginative in order to make the sponsorship work. Evaluation of sponsorship effects and using sponsorship as a networking opportunity for sponsors are further areas for improvement in professional football sponsorship. However, it has also been concluded that the public discussion as to whether football clubs are less professional than sponsors (or the other way round) is rather exaggerated, as the degree of professionalism of both sponsorship partners seems to be satisfactory according to the results of the quantitative survey.

The findings relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship revealed that the importance of relationship quality for the success of the sponsorship as a whole is strongly appreciated by clubs and sponsors alike. Consequently, the majority of clubs and sponsors proactively manage their relationship with each other. However, in view of the fact that only the minority evaluate the quality of their relationship, it has been concluded that a deeper understanding of the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship is needed. In this respect, the findings of this research revealed that trust, satisfaction and cooperation positively influence the quality of relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. Surprisingly, there was

no further support for commitment, mutual understanding and communication being crucial dimensions of relationship quality. In order to reduce the data and to gain a deeper understanding, a factor analysis has been carried out revealing three factors which have a strong positive impact on the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. These three factors were identified as '*relationship compatibility*' (involving a sense of understanding and fairness in dealing with each other), '*long-term perspective*' (involving mutual commitment) and '*collaborative behaviour*' (involving cooperation and communication).

The next – and final – chapter provides practical advice for clubs and sponsors as to how to make use of the above findings in order to improve their sponsorships. It also discusses theoretical implications for the sponsorship and relationship marketing literature as well as for further research.

10 IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The previous chapter put the findings of this study into context by triangulating the results of the literature review, the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey. This final chapter, however, presents the theoretical and practical implications resulting from these findings. It emphasises the contributions this study makes to the literature on sponsorship and relationship marketing. This chapter also addresses the main limitations of this research and provides directions for further research. It then concludes with a brief summary dealing with the novelty of this thesis.

10.1 Evaluation of the research objectives

The overarching aim of this thesis was to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship in the context of the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. This aim has been achieved in view of the fact that all main research objectives – as introduced in Chapter 1 – have been fulfilled. Table 10.1 presents an overview of how this study dealt with these respective research objectives.

research objective	addressed as follows
To identify the characteristics of the football business.	Chapter 1 introduced the unique characteristics of the football business as the context in which professional football sponsorship takes place. In addition, the size of the football business was examined in greater detail during the primary research phase.
To identify the importance of sponsorship for professional football clubs.	Chapter 2 described the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga and highlighted the importance of sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs. Furthermore, the importance of sponsorship as an income stream and a brand-building opportunity was emphasised by the findings of the primary research phase.
To identify the motives of sponsors for going into professional football sponsorship.	Chapter 3 described professional football sponsorship as a commercial investment. The results of the primary research phase confirmed the motives of sponsors as being commercial ones.
To identify the objectives of football sponsors.	Chapter 3 identified the most popular objectives of football sponsors which were extended during the qualitative research phase and consequently ranked in their importance following the results of the quantitative survey.
To identify potential areas for improvement in professional football sponsorship.	Chapter 3 identified some areas for improvement in professional football sponsorship. These areas were extended following the qualitative interviews and ranked in their importance following the results of the quantitative survey.

To establish the relational aspects of football sponsorships.	Chapter 4 and the primary research phase examined professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. This thesis is one of only few studies dealing with the relational aspects of football sponsorships and therefore adds to a further establishment of this perspective.
To examine the importance of relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors.	Chapter 4 described the importance of relationship quality for the success of business-to-business relationships. The findings of the primary research phase subsequently emphasise the importance of relationship quality between professional football clubs and their sponsors.
To examine the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship.	Chapter 4 linked the concept of relationship quality (RQ) with professional football sponsorship. The primary research phase further examined the dimensions of RQ. This thesis is therefore the first study to examine the concept of RQ in the context of professional football sponsorship.
To identify an appropriate definition of professional football sponsorship.	Chapter 3 provided a discussion of various definition of (sports) sponsorship and identified a lack of an appropriate definition reflecting professional football sponsorship. Consequently, a new definition was proposed reflecting the nature and characteristics of professional football sponsorship.

Table 10.1: main research objectives and how they were addressed by this study

10.2 Theoretical implications

This thesis incorporates various theoretical implications relating to all three perspectives of professional football sponsorship under scrutiny. It also contributes to existing knowledge by its very nature as the first subsection will show. The other subsections then describe the theoretical implications relating to sponsorship as an income stream, a marketing tool and an inter-organisational relationship.

10.2.1 Theoretical implications resulting from the nature of this thesis

A vast majority of the existing sponsorship literature examines sponsorship from one perspective only. Most studies on sponsorship investigate sponsorship as a marketing tool and therefore apply the sponsor’s view of point. Fewer studies take the sponsee’s point of view into consideration, and hardly any of them – Farrelly and Quester (2003, 2005) and Chadwick (2004) being exceptions – ever look at sponsorship from a joint perspective by taking both the sponsor’s and the sponsee’s point of view into consideration. This study is the first – and to date the only – study examining sponsorship from three different perspectives (i.e. sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs, as a

marketing tool for companies, and as an inter-organisational relationship). Therefore, it helps to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship as postulated by the overall aim of this thesis.

Another unique characteristic of this study relates to the sponsors under scrutiny. Most studies on football sponsorship focus on shirt sponsors and therefore limit their scope to one type of football sponsorship only. In addition, the sole focus on shirt sponsors involves the problem of small sample sizes, as each club has only one shirt sponsor. In order to expand the sample size and capture the whole range of football sponsorship, this study took other clubs' sponsors – such as commercial partners and smaller sponsors – into consideration as well.¹ This research therefore provides a wider context for the study of football sponsorship. In addition, the classification of football sponsors as used in this study might be adopted by future studies on football sponsorship.

In addition, despite football being a popular subject of research, only a few studies have focused exclusively on professional football sponsorship. Consequently, a definition of professional football sponsorship has been proposed in view of the fact that such a definition does not exist to date. It was felt that professional football sponsorship is somehow different from other forms of sponsorship, because it incorporates the unique characteristics of sport (the nature of the consumer, the special features of the product, and the peculiarities of the business), and it distinguishes itself from general sports sponsorship, because no other sport attracts as much attention from the public and the media on a global scale than soccer. The proposed new definition, which makes a significant contribution to the literature on sponsorship, deserves to be given consideration as the foundation for future studies on professional football sponsorship.

¹ Section 10.4 addresses the issue of cultural variations in perceptions of sponsorship

10.2.2 Theoretical implications relating to sponsorship as an income stream

The findings relating to sponsorship as an income stream support much of what has been published in market research reports and other publications (e.g. Grünitz and von Arndt, 2002; Key Note, 2002; WGZ-Bank, 2002; Deloitte, 2005; DFL, 2005a). Sponsorship is an important income stream for professional football clubs and a main market of the football business. However, Chapter 2 examined the importance and interrelatedness of the main income streams of professional football clubs in more detail than other studies. Furthermore, the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga has never been analysed and described in greater detail than in Chapter 2 of this study. Therefore, this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of the importance of sponsorship for professional football clubs and provides a useful source of reference for future studies examining sponsorship from the clubs' perspective.

Furthermore, this study also revealed – and this is a new insight not previously explored in any detail in the preceding literature– that sponsorship is seen not only as an important income stream for professional football clubs, but also as a brand-building tool for them. Much has been written about the potential of sponsorship as a brand-building tool for sponsoring companies, but so far no academic research has been done examining sponsorship as an opportunity to grow the brand of the sponsee. This study has therefore identified the need for further research examining the branding opportunities for football clubs through sponsorship.

10.2.3 Theoretical implications relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool

The majority of findings relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool confirm earlier research and publications, as well as adding value to the existing sponsorship literature, in that this research could easily serve as a benchmark study for other research into the context of (football) sponsorship. The findings of this study contribute three main elements

to the literature on sponsorship. First, it provides empirical data which clearly indicates that sponsors invest in sponsorship for commercial reasons and therefore supports the view that (professional football) sponsorship has nothing to do with pure patronage. Thus it confirms the findings of a number of marketing papers (e.g. Sleight, 1989; Randall, 1993; Brassington and Pettitt, 2003; Walliser, 2003) which describe sponsorship as a commercial investment. Second, the study supports with empirical data the widely published perception in the sponsorship literature that the most popular objectives of sponsors are related to awareness and image levels. Third, it reveals that (professional football) sponsorship is seen not only as a marketing tool for companies, but also as an opportunity to network with other sponsors. As research on sponsorship as a networking tool is in its infancy, it is hoped that this study may serve as the trigger for further research.

10.2.4 Theoretical implications relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship

Although this thesis examined professional football sponsorship from three different perspectives, it has to be emphasised that the main contribution of this study is related to the third perspective under scrutiny (i.e. professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors), bearing in mind that this is a relatively new area of research.

This thesis followed calls for research examining sponsorship from a relational perspective made by Cousens and Slack (1996), McDonald and Milne (1997), Olkkonen (2001), Farrelly and Quester (2003) and Chadwick (2004) and therefore augments the case for viewing (football) sponsorship as a relational construct. Consequently, it makes a significant contribution to the sponsorship literature in view of the fact that most studies on sponsorship have so far focused on the transactional paradigm. Furthermore, this is only the second study to examine the concept of relationship quality in the area of sports

sponsorship; and the very first to do so in the context of professional football sponsorship. It makes clear that relationship quality is an important concept in this context and that the quality of the relationship between sponsors and sponsees has an impact on the success of the sponsorship as a whole. Future studies examining the success of sponsorships cannot ignore the concept of relationship quality. In this respect, the work of this thesis is therefore innovative in the context of professional football sponsorship.

This study also contributes to the literature on relationship marketing in the following five ways:

- First, it adds another context of research in view of the fact that the concept of relationship quality has been examined in various different business contexts, but only once in a sponsorship context (Farrelly and Quester, 2005) and never before in the context of (professional) football sponsorship. Therefore, it is hoped that this study opens the door for further research on RQ in the field of (sports) sponsorship.
- Second, it is one of just three studies applying a dyadic approach by incorporating both sponsor and sponsee in the analysis. Thus hopefully its findings lead to a deeper understanding of sponsorship as a relational construct. Applying a dyadic approach is even more important in view of the paradigm shift from the transactional perspective to the relational perspective, as such a dyadic perspective emphasises the nature of (professional football) sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between sponsors and sponsees.
- Third, the three confirmed hypotheses further establish trust, satisfaction and cooperation as relationship quality determinants and therefore add greater value to the relationship marketing literature by confirming the findings of previous studies. However, the failure to establish a positive impact of the three other dimensions (namely commitment, mutual understanding and communication) on relationship

quality is valuable information in itself, and provides argument for further research to re-examine their impact.

- Fourth, the introduction of three new dimensions of relationship quality (*'relationship compatibility'*, *'long-term perspective'* and *'collaborative behaviour'*) resulting from the applied factor analysis, is a new contribution to existing relationship marketing literature, because these dimensions have never been identified in previous studies. The implication for future studies on relationship quality is the justification for discussing these three hybrid forms of well established RQ dimensions (i.e. trust, commitment, satisfaction, mutual understanding, cooperation and communication) and for re-examining their impact on relationship quality.
- Fifth, the reliability of the questionnaire scales used to operationalise dimensions of relationship quality in this study provides further insight into the nature of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship. The scales relating to commitment, trust and satisfaction (adopted from previous studies) show good reliability and therefore strengthen the case for further establishment of these scales in the relationship marketing literature. Also, the study adds another new scale measuring cooperation, the reliability of which has been demonstrated. Further studies on relationship quality (especially in a sponsorship context) might use these scales for measuring commitment, trust, satisfaction and cooperation.

All these points contribute to the literature on relationship marketing and therefore to existing knowledge. Even more importantly, they add a further understanding of the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship and consequently to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors. Subsequently, this study serves as the foundation for further research in this relatively new research area by linking the literature on relationship

marketing and the literature on sponsorship and therefore further establishing the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorship.

10.3 Practical implications for professional football clubs and football sponsors

The previous section offered theoretical implications and described the main contribution of this study to existing literature. This section, however, presents practical implications for clubs and sponsors and answers the question as to how both sponsorship parties might benefit from this research. It therefore adds value to the practical aspects of professional football sponsorship.

10.3.1 Practical implications relating to sponsorship as an income stream

This study confirmed the notion that clubs see sponsorship mainly as an income source. This is understandable, as football clubs need revenues from sponsorship in order to survive. Companies, who see football sponsorship mainly as a marketing tool, should therefore understand the clubs' perspective. It is not a crime that football clubs are interested in the sponsors' money, it is a necessity. However, football clubs have also to bear in mind that they should not appear too money-orientated, as this could lead to a greedy image. Image, on the other hand, is an important issue, as sponsors select their sponsorships based on the image of the club in order to improve their own image through the association with the club. In turn, football clubs have obviously realised that sponsorship can also be an opportunity to grow their own brand by associating themselves with a well-known and popular sponsorship partner. This implies a change in thinking. Football clubs therefore have to appreciate sponsorship not only as an income stream but also as a business-related partnership – as implied by the proposed definition of professional football sponsorship – where both partners trade off advantages and work together.

10.3.2 Practical implications relating to sponsorship as a marketing tool

One of the main distinguishing features of professional football sponsorship in comparison with other forms of (sports) sponsorship is the context in which it takes place, i.e. the business of football. In order to understand professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool, one has to understand football as a business as well. Chapter 1 described the unique characteristics of the football business. Football clubs and sponsors need to understand and appreciate the peculiarities of the football business (e.g. the extraordinary public appeal and media coverage) and the football product (e.g. the uncertainty of outcome). Even more important, they need to understand the nature of the main football customer, i.e. the football fan. The traditional football supporter shows a high level of passion, irrationality and loyalty. But this loyalty is not blind loyalty, as one interviewee put it during the qualitative research phase. Therefore, all activities of the football clubs and sponsors addressed at football fans should benefit rather than exploit them. The credibility of a whole business, including clubs and sponsors, is at stake.

Professional football sponsorship as a marketing tool needs to be developed and improved steadily. The findings of this research provide some proposals for improvement. The most important area for improvement – according to the sponsors – is creativity on part of the clubs. This should be a warning bell for professional football clubs. Sponsors obviously expect (more) imagination from their sponsorship partners. Clubs have therefore a clear mission not only to sell the sponsorship, but also to provide clear ideas as how to make the sponsorship work. Just offering a name on the shirt or on a perimeter board and providing some business seats in the stadium seem not to be enough anymore. Clubs need to work proactively on their sponsorship deals to satisfy their sponsors. However, sponsors also have responsibility for making the sponsorship work – for their own sake. Just leaving the implementation to the clubs is not effective. Clubs and sponsors need to work together on the sponsorship, a point which is strongly linked to cooperation, as addressed later. This

goes hand in hand with another important area of sponsorship improvement. According to the findings of the questionnaire survey, sponsorship as a networking opportunity for sponsors needs to be improved. Here again, clubs have responsibility for developing sponsorship as an networking tool for sponsors by proactively introducing sponsors to each other and providing a sophisticated networking platform. This could be an exclusive website with access for the club's sponsors and the opportunity to contact each other, for example. Or it could take the form of joint events where sponsors get to know each other in a private atmosphere. Here again, a lot of creativity is required. Although professionalism on the part of the clubs was rather seen as satisfactory by sponsors according to the findings of the quantitative and qualitative research phase, clubs would be well advised to become even more professional by employing more (sports) marketing experts in the future. Sponsors, on the other hand, are generally quite professional in marketing terms, but sometimes fail to understand unique characteristics of the football context, as mentioned earlier. Sponsoring companies would therefore be well advised to build up a certain level of football knowledge. If both clubs and sponsors have an appropriate level of sports marketing skills, they might see eye to eye and therefore might make it easier for each other to work together as partners.

This study also revealed that the sponsors' decision to invest in football sponsorship is based on clear commercial motives rather than on personal reasons. Football clubs have to understand that sponsorship is a commercial investment for sponsors and that sponsors need to get a return from their investment. In this regard, servicing the sponsor and proactively trying to make the sponsorship work are a clear task for clubs. It is important that clubs understand the needs of their sponsors and that they know about the sponsors' objectives. However, with regard to the objectives of football sponsors, this research revealed that the majority of sponsors use football sponsorship as a marketing tool in order to increase public awareness levels and to improve their image. The resulting implication

for clubs would therefore be not to gain a bad reputation in any way, as this might lead to a negative image transfer on to the sponsor thus putting existing sponsorship relationships at risk and devaluating both the clubs' and sponsors' brands.

10.3.3 Practical implications relating to sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship

This study revealed that the quality of the relationship between professional football clubs and sponsors can be crucial for the success of the sponsorship as a whole. Clubs and sponsors alike appreciate the importance of relationship quality. In view of the importance of relationship quality for the success of the sponsorship, sponsors might want to think about changing their approach towards evaluating the success of sponsorship. Rather than measuring increases in awareness/image levels or sales figures it might be worth adding an element which measures the quality of the relationship between them and the sponsored property. Understanding the concept of relationship quality is a first step in this direction.

However, relationship quality as a concept seems to be widely unknown among clubs and sponsors, as implied by the fact that few clubs and sponsors measure the relationship between each other. This study therefore serves as a first guideline for assessing the quality of relationship between professional football clubs and sponsors by introducing three new dimensions to the construct of relationship quality. The following paragraphs provide some suggestions as what clubs and sponsors can actually do in order to ensure '*relationship compatibility*', '*long-term perspective*' and '*collaborative behaviour*'. In this respect, it has to be emphasised that clubs are responsible for serving the sponsor as a matter of principle (after all, sponsors are buyers and clubs are sellers of sponsorships, and therefore clubs should be the service provider). However, sponsors should also be proactively engaged in making the relationship – and therefore the sponsorship – work.

'Relationship compatibility' involves a sense of understanding and fairness in dealing with each other. Consequently, football clubs have to make sure that they understand the objectives and the needs of their sponsorship partner. Only then can clubs help their sponsor to reach the partner's objectives. Therefore, a regular flow of information is required. Sponsors, on the other hand, have to understand the requirements of the football club (primarily the financial needs, but also the focus on sporting performance) and the pressure football clubs face in view of the public and media interest. This implies some kind of appreciation for the unique characteristics of the football business as well. Therefore, clubs and sponsors alike might need to employ more people who understand the principles of both marketing and sports. Another important point with regard to *'relationship compatibility'* is that football clubs have to make sure that they deal fairly and openly with their sponsors. This implies that football clubs should not make any promises they cannot possibly keep, as breaking promises reduces the confidence the sponsor has in the sponsorship partner. Open dealings imply the courage to communicate unpleasant truths as well. The same applies for the sponsoring company as well, of course. In the past, some sponsors broke their promise to pay the agreed sponsorship fee or paid later than expected. This not only caused financial problems for football clubs who depended on the sponsor's payment but also reduced the confidence the football club had in the sponsor's integrity.

'Long-term perspective' implies mutual commitment of clubs and sponsors. This requires a change of thinking. Clubs should see their sponsors as long-term partners rather than as companies spending money for a couple of seasons. Here again, reliability and understanding influences the perspective of both partners. However, sponsors and clubs might be prepared to commit to each other in the long-term, but the factor loadings imply that this commitment should not be at any costs. Clubs and sponsors have therefore to re-evaluate their sponsorship arrangement on a regular basis as it may be the case that the

sponsorship does not make sense for one of the two partners in the long term. In this respect, it has to be emphasised that some sponsorship deals in professional football are short-term orientated and one-off transactions rather than sponsorships based on relational exchange. This might be because the football club needs immediate and direct revenues from sponsorship in order to survive on the one hand. On the other hand, sponsors might have short-term objectives in mind and are therefore interested in buying some advertising space rather than in building up a relationship. For them, the concept of relationship quality is rather irrelevant. Clubs and sponsors must not be blamed for such an attitude, especially if it benefits both sides. However, sponsorship partners who look for long-term success would be well advised to build up a relationship with each other and to take the concept of relationship quality into consideration when doing so. The segmentation into 'transactional-orientated' and 'relational-orientated' sponsors might help professional football clubs in their decision whether to establish a long-term partnership based on the evaluation of their sponsor's relationship orientation.

'Collaborative behaviour' involves a sense of working together and doing more than needs to be done. Involvement in each other's marketing and planning efforts is one form of cooperation and makes sense in view of the fact that it helps to achieve both partners' sponsorship objectives. Sponsors have generally more marketing skills than football clubs and could therefore support clubs in marketing issues, whereas clubs could provide sponsors with football know-how in order to improve their communication with football fans, for example. Creating a joint promotion campaign could also be an example of clubs and sponsors working together. However, cooperation is not only limited to the context of the sponsorship, but also important outside the initial agreement. Clubs should consider offering sponsors activities and events besides the football game (e.g. a golf or tennis tournament, a family weekend) and therefore prove that they are prepared to do more than just execute the sponsorship agreement. Another important point to bear in mind is that

clubs and sponsors have to ensure a high level of communication at all levels of cooperation.

All of the above suggestions might address clubs and sponsors in general terms. However, finally it all comes down to the people working for clubs and sponsors, their attitudes and behaviour. This study can only contribute to their understanding of the matter and emphasise the importance of relationship quality and its dimensions for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.

10.4 Limitations of the study

Although the results of this study contribute to existing knowledge and provide managerial implications for practitioners as well, some caution should be taken in applying the proposals that have been made, because of the limitations of the study.

This study employed a cross-sectional research design. Therefore, the findings of the quantitative survey relate to the 2004/05 season only. The problem with cross-sectional studies is that they might reveal correlations, but they do not explain those correlations. Unfortunately, this study excludes the benefits of a longitudinal research design (i.e. investigating the dynamics of sponsorship by studying the phenomenon continuously over a couple of years). As a consequence, the cross-sectional nature of the data may not reflect the dynamic and changeable nature of professional football sponsorship. In addition, the fact that relationships (such as professional football sponsorships) change over time has not been addressed in this research. However, a longitudinal study was not realisable because of time restrictions. In addition, there are practical difficulties with carrying out a longitudinal study in this area as sponsors join and leave football clubs on a regular basis. It is therefore very challenging to build up a longitudinal data base. Furthermore, labour

turnover at football clubs and sponsors seems to be above average. Useful key contacts might therefore not be contactable anymore. This is well illustrated by the fact that three of the six clubs' representatives who were interviewed during the qualitative research phase do not work for the clubs in question anymore. In view of these difficulties, it was decided to focus on one season only.

The decision to use the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga was based on the fact that both leagues are the most business-like football leagues in the world. However, the focus on only two of many professional football leagues limits the generalisability of findings. What works in England and/or Germany might not work in Spain, Italy or France, for example. Therefore, while it is hoped that this study will have implications for the other leagues, it has to be remembered that all findings relate to the specific Anglo-German context.

Another limitation of this study stems from the small sample size, a problem which is experienced in other studies on sports sponsorship and in the area of professional football as well. This is attributable to the relatively small universe of clubs and sponsors in professional football sponsorship. There is only a limited number of clubs playing in the top English and the top German football league. One option to overcome this problem would have been the inclusion of clubs of lower professional football leagues (i.e. additional 72 English and 18 German clubs), but then the term 'professional' football sponsorship might not have been justified anymore, and the nature of the research questions might have been compromised. However, the problem of the small universe was partially overcome with the structure of the questionnaire, which asked football clubs to give answers respectively for the group of shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors. Consequently, football clubs' cases were multiplied by three. However, despite a highly satisfactory response rate (55.3% of clubs) and the increased number of clubs'

cases, the sample size of football clubs remained relatively small. This resulted in limited use of statistical techniques. Therefore, descriptive and non-parametric tests were used, in themselves revealing statistically sound results.

The problem of the relative small universe was linked to the sponsors as well. The aim of this research was to investigate professional football sponsorship in a broad sense, and therefore research was not limited to shirt sponsors only. As a consequence, the group of commercial partners and smaller sponsors was included as well. In this context, consideration has to be given to a problem which has been encountered during the course of this research project: the cultural variations in perceptions of football sponsorship. A football sponsor as perceived in one country might not be perceived as a football sponsor in another country. For example, there is an inclination in the UK to see only shirt sponsors as sponsors of football clubs, whereas in Germany nearly every company involved in any kind of association with the respective football club is called a 'sponsor'.

In order to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship, a more German-based perception of football sponsorship was applied to this study (the author is, after all, of German background). Therefore, a football sponsor was defined as any company which associates itself with a club in any way over the period of one season at least (see subsection 2.2.1). The analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga as presented in Chapter 2 consequently incorporated shirt sponsors, kit suppliers, commercial partners and smaller sponsors. Kit suppliers, however, were pruned from further analysis in the primary research phase in view of the fact that there are only a limited number of kit suppliers in both leagues and that most of them have multiple partnerships with clubs.

The cultural variations in perceptions of who is a sponsor and who is not can therefore lead to a biased reflection of the real sponsorship situation as presented in this study. For example, the identification of commercial partners (subsections 2.2.2.3 and 2.2.3.3) was

mainly based on a content analysis of football clubs' websites. As a matter of fact, all German Bundesliga clubs mentioned their sponsors on their website and therefore a significant number of commercial partners of Bundesliga clubs was identified. In contrast, only half of all English Premier League clubs provided a list of their various sponsors on their website, resulting in a limited number of identifiable commercial partners of English clubs. This difference might owe to the cultural variation in perceptions of sponsorship.

Furthermore, the different perception of football sponsors can sometimes lead to some misunderstandings when referring to football sponsors in general, as was experienced during the qualitative interview phase. When being asked about their sponsors some English clubs' representatives referred to their shirt sponsor only, whereas the German interviewees took it for granted to include sponsors on lower levels of the sponsorship pyramid (see Figure 2.1) in their analysis of football sponsors. Therefore, it had to be pointed out to some English interviewees that this study not only examines the shirt sponsorship situation, but also incorporates commercial partners and smaller sponsors. This sometimes led to a rethink and review of the answers supplied by the English respondents. One representative of an English Premier League club, for example, said that they probably had more sponsors than they would say they had if promotional partners (i.e. companies renting perimeter boards) were called sponsors as well.

The problem of the cultural variations in perceptions of (football) sponsorship as encountered to some extent in this study is an interesting research topic in itself and warrants further analysis in future studies.

However, besides the option for companies to give answers for more than just one club (of which some sponsors made use) and the relatively satisfactory response rate of 22.8%, the sample size was still too low for advanced statistical analyses such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). However, clubs' and sponsors' cases combined were sufficient enough

to carry out some multivariate parametric tests (e.g. multi regression analysis and factor analysis), resulting in statistically sound findings.

Despite the above limitations it has to be emphasised that this study is built upon solid foundations in view of the fact that methods, techniques and scales used in previous studies on sponsorship were replicated. Furthermore, by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods and triangulating the findings of the literature review, the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey (see Chapter 9), the overall research objectives have been accomplished as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

10.5 Implications for further research

In view of the above implications and limitations the following implications for further research are proposed:

- *Examining sponsorship as a brand-building tool for sponsees:* This study revealed that football clubs see sponsorship not only as an important source of income for them but also as an important tool to build their brand and to network with sponsors in order to grow their business at a national/international level. However, hardly any research has been done in this area. In order to deepen our understanding of the matter and provide clubs with practical implication of how to use the association with a sponsor to build the brand of the club, further research is necessary.
- *Examining professional football sponsorship as a networking tool for sponsors:* This study revealed that sponsors see professional football sponsorship also as a networking tool. However, academic research virtually ignores the networking approach in

sponsorship (with Olkkonen, 2001, being the exception), and therefore more research in this area is needed.

- *Examining relationship management:* The majority of clubs and sponsors stated in the quantitative survey that they proactively manage the relationship with their sponsorship partner. Further research might seek to examine how they actually do this. Identifying the main aspects could then lead to an improvement in relationship management.
- *Using other research designs (e.g. longitudinal studies):* One of the limitations of this study was the sole focus on one season. The problem of cross-sectional studies is that they only reveal the existence of certain phenomena, but cannot explain them. Therefore prospective researchers should consider examining professional football sponsorship in longitudinal studies by studying the phenomenon continuously over a couple of seasons. They would therefore overcome another limitation of this research by considering the life-cycle aspects of sponsorship relations.
- *Expanding and improving ways of identifying football sponsors:* This research used a comprehensive content analysis of clubs' websites and tapes of televised football games in order to identify as many sponsors as possible. Future research might expand this data collection method or find other ways to expand the sample size.
- *Establishing the proposed classification of sponsors:* This research differentiated between shirt sponsors, kit suppliers, commercial partners and smaller sponsors as professional football sponsors. Future investigators would be well advised to take more than just the shirt sponsors into consideration and to differentiate between the various levels of football sponsorship involvement as proposed by this study.

- *Establishing the measurement scales:* The scales used in this study to measure commitment, trust, satisfaction and cooperation proved to be reliable. Therefore, other researchers might wish to adopt these scales for future studies on relational aspects in a sponsorship context. The initial scales measuring mutual understanding and communication might need further development in subsequent studies.

- *Establishing the relational aspects of professional football sponsorship:* This study is one of only few studies examining the relational aspects of professional football sponsorship. Further research is needed in order to establish a relational view of (professional football) sponsorship.

- *Establishing the dyadic view of relationships:* In order to examine and understand sponsorship as a relational construct, one should not focus on one side of the sponsorship dyad only. Future studies on professional football sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship would therefore be well advised to take both sides of the sponsorship dyad into consideration and therefore further establish the approach of this study.

- *Re-examining certain relationship variables:* This study surprisingly failed to establish a strong link between commitment and relationship quality despite strong evidence in previous studies on relationship quality. Subsequent analyses of relationship quality in the context of (professional football) sponsorship might consider re-examining this relationship.

- *Aiming for generalisability and applying more advanced statistical techniques, particularly when exploring the nature of relationships and RQ:* While this study was carried out in an Anglo-German context, it might be worth replicating this study by

incorporating other professional football leagues as well (maybe as a joint research project involving numerous researchers across various countries). This would inevitably increase the generalisability of findings. As a consequence, the sample size would be increased and more advanced techniques such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) could then be used, thereby generating a deeper understanding of professional football sponsorship.

- *Examining the cultural variations in perceptions of (football sponsorship)*: One of the limitations of this study referred to the different perception of who can be called a football sponsor. There is an inclination in the UK to see shirt sponsors as football sponsors only, whereas in Germany other companies associating themselves with football clubs (e.g. commercial partners and smaller sponsors) are seen as football sponsors. Future studies examining (football) sponsorship across different countries may well benefit from taking the cultural variations in perceptions of sponsorship into consideration. In addition, further research examining the nature of those differences seems warranted

10.6 Summary

The opening sentence of this thesis refers to a statement made by the marketing director of an English Premier League club, who expressed the need for football clubs to get more scientific about sponsorship. This study has sought to gain a broader understanding of professional football sponsorship by looking at it from three different perspectives. Based on a sound methodology, sponsorship was examined as an income stream for professional football clubs, as a marketing tool for companies and as an inter-organisational relationship between clubs and sponsors. The two most business-like football leagues in the world, the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga, served as the context of research.

The findings of this research contributed significantly to the existing literature (mainly the literature on sponsorship and on relationship marketing). In this respect, it has to be pointed out that the main contribution of this thesis is related to the third perspective in view of the fact that (professional football) sponsorship as an inter-organisational relationship is under-examined so far. This study therefore further establishes the relational aspects of (professional football) sponsorship.

Besides the theoretical contribution to existing literature on relationship marketing and sponsorship, the thesis provides managerial implications for both professional football clubs and their sponsors by broadening the understanding of the football business, identifying possible areas for improvement, and helping to appreciate the importance of the concept of relationship quality in the professional football sponsorship dyad.

To sum up and to highlight the value of this thesis once again, it has to be emphasised that this study incorporates some kind of novelty in view of the fact that

- it is the first study examining professional football sponsorship from three different perspectives.
- it is the first study examining professional football sponsorship not only at a shirt sponsorship level, but also incorporating other types of football sponsors such as commercial partners and smaller sponsors.
- it is the first study providing an in-depth analysis of the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga.
- it is the first study comparing the sponsorship situation of the English and German top league.
- it is the first study examining the concept of relationship quality in the context of professional football sponsorship.

- this is the first study providing a distinctive definition of professional football sponsorship.

However, whilst this study is an initial step, further research is needed to understand better the nature of professional football sponsorship. Only then will the full potential of professional football sponsorship as an income stream for professional football clubs, as a marketing tool for companies and as an inter-organisational relationship between professional football clubs and their sponsors become explicit.

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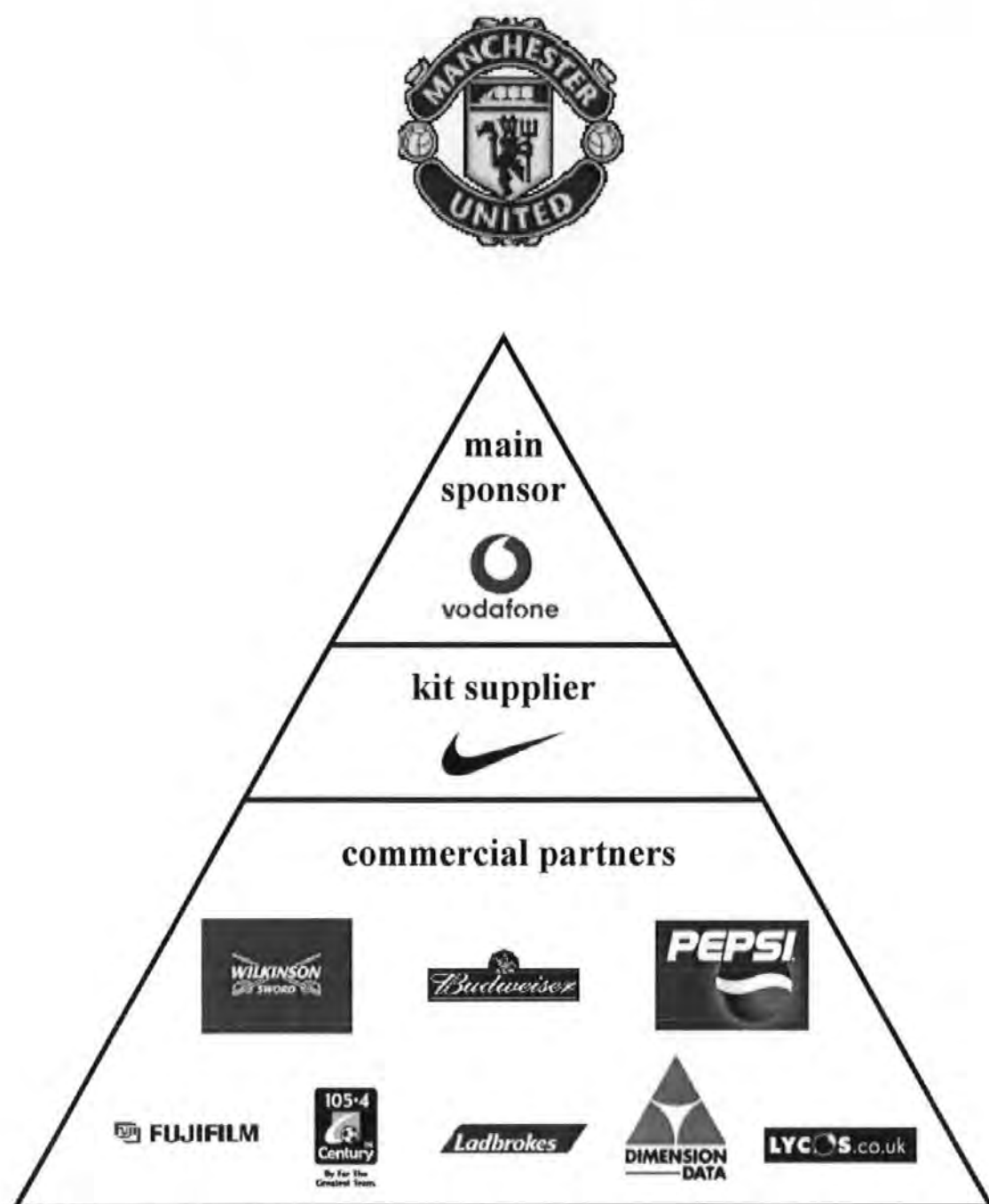
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Appendix I: Clubs of the English Premier League - season 2004/05

Arsenal 	Aston Villa 
Birmingham City 	Blackburn Rovers 
Bolton Wanderers 	Charlton Athletic 
Chelsea 	Crystal Palace 
Everton 	Fulham 
Liverpool 	Manchester City 
Manchester United 	Middlesbrough 
Newcastle United 	Norwich City 
Portsmouth 	Southampton 
Tottenham Hotspur 	West Bromwich Albion 

Appendix II: Clubs of the German Bundesliga - season 2004/05

<p>Hertha BSC Berlin</p> 	<p>Arminia Bielefeld</p> 
<p>VfL Bochum</p> 	<p>Werder Bremen</p> 
<p>Borussia Dortmund</p> 	<p>SC Freiburg</p> 
<p>Hamburger SV</p> 	<p>Hannover 96</p> 
<p>1.FC Kaiserslautern</p> 	<p>Bayer 04 Leverkusen</p> 
<p>FSV Mainz 05</p> 	<p>Borussia Mönchengladbach</p> 
<p>1.FC Bayern München</p> 	<p>1.FC Nürnberg</p> 
<p>FC Hansa Rostock</p> 	<p>FC Schalke 04</p> 
<p>VfB Stuttgart</p> 	<p>VfL Wolfsburg</p> 





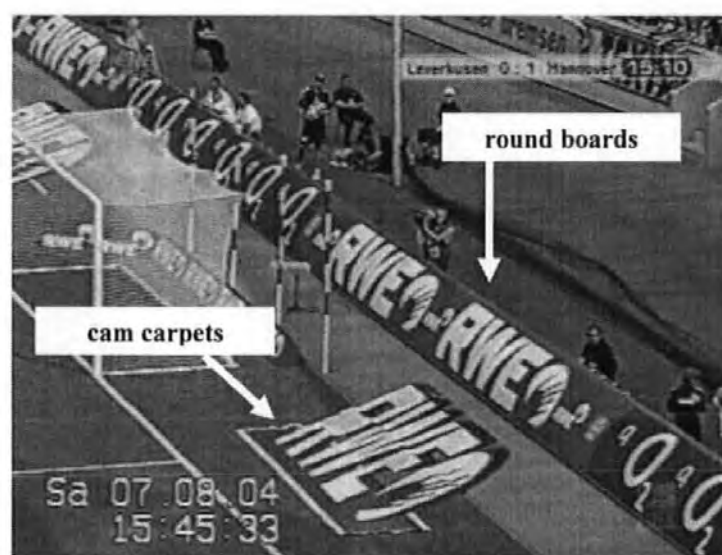
Appendix V: Number of commercial partners and smaller sponsors for each Premier League club in 2004/05 as revealed by content analysis of clubs' websites and televised football games.

Club	number of commercial partners*	number of smaller sponsors**		type of perimeter board and number of different sponsors on perimeter boards along the pitch***
		total	adjusted	
Arsenal	9	18	6	12 sponsors on rotating boards along the pitch
Aston Villa	9	19	9	14 normal boards in the first row and 12 in the second row
Birmingham City	7	23	13	18 normal boards in the first row and 15 in the second row
Blackburn Rovers	0	25	19	15 normal boards in the first row plus one rotating board in the middle and 14 in the second row
Bolton Wanderers	0	19	14	17 normal boards in the first row and 16 XL-boards in the second row
Charlton Athletic	0	16	10	11 sponsors on rotating boards along the pitch
Chelsea	5	9	1	9 sponsors (plus one club message) on rotating boards along the pitch
Crystal Palace	0	26	21	14 normal boards in the first row and 10 in the second row
Everton	8	25	16	14 normal boards in the first row and 12 in the second row
Fulham	3	25	15	14 normal boards
Liverpool	4	21	10	17 normal boards
Manchester City	7	19	10	13 sponsors on rotating boards along the pitch
ManchesterUtd	7	12	1	11 sponsors (+ 2 club messages) on animated video boards along the pitch
Middlesbrough	0	19	13	19 normal boards
Newcastle United	0	24	18	18 normal boards + one rotating board in the first row and second row completely with one sponsor
Norwich City	0	31	25	14 normal boards in the first row and 11 in the second row
Portsmouth	0	24	19	17 normal boards
Southampton	5	26	15	15 normal boards in the first row and 14 in the second row
Tottenham Hotspur	1	13	7	14 normal boards in the first row and 10 in the second row
West Brom Albion	0	38	32	18 normal boards in the first row and 16 in the second row
* as identified on the clubs' website ** as identified by the video analysis *** only front side				

Total: companies on perimeter boards

Adjusted companies on perimeter boards, excluding shirt sponsors, kit suppliers and commercial partners of the club as well as the Premier League sponsors (Barclays, Sky Sports, Nivea and Lucozade).

Appendix VI: Various types of perimeter boards used in the German Bundesliga



Appendix VII: Selected definitions of relationship quality

Definition of relationship quality	author
'High relationship quality means that the customer is able to rely on the salesperson's integrity and has confidence in the salesperson's future performance because the level of past performance has been consistently satisfactory.'	Crosby, Evans and Cowles (1990, p. 70)
'The joint cognitive evaluation of business interactions by significant individuals in both firms in the dyad. The evaluation encompasses a comparison with potential alternative interactions of a similar kind which represent comparison standard.'	Holmlund (1996, p. 14)
'Degree of appropriateness of a relationship to fulfil the needs of the customer associated with the relationship.'	Henning-Thurau and Klee (1997, p. 751)
'The overall depth and climate of the interfirm relationship.'	Johnson (1999, p.6)

Appendix VIII: Studies on relationship quality (in chronological order)

relationship quality measures	context	author
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ satisfaction ▪ minimal opportunism ▪ trust 	automobile industry, marketing channels	Dwyer and Oh (1987)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust in the salesperson ▪ customer satisfaction with the salesperson 	life insurance, policyholders	Crosby <i>et al.</i> (1990)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust in the salesperson ▪ satisfaction with the salesperson 	physicians and pharmaceutical salespeople, suppliers and resellers	Lagace <i>et al.</i> (1991)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ perceived quality of interaction ▪ researcher involvement in research activities ▪ commitment to relationship 	market research firms and clients	Moorman <i>et al.</i> (1992)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ commitment ▪ coordination ▪ communication ▪ joint problem solving 	vertical partnerships in the computer industry	Mohr and Spekman (1994)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust in the salesperson ▪ satisfaction with the relationship 	financial services	Wray <i>et al.</i> (1994)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ affective conflict ▪ manifest conflict ▪ commitment ▪ willingness to invest ▪ expectation of continuity 	new car dealers, large suppliers and small resellers	Kumar <i>et al.</i> (1995)
components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ customer's trust in the salesperson ▪ customer's satisfaction determinants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ seller's ethical orientation ▪ seller's expertise ▪ relationship duration ▪ customer orientation ▪ selling orientation 	random sample size per telephone, consumers	Bejou <i>et al.</i> (1996)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ commitment ▪ overall quality 	consumers and firms (theoretical only)	Henning-Thurau and Klee (1997)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ buyer satisfaction ▪ buyer trust ▪ initiating behaviour ▪ signaling behaviour ▪ disclosing behaviour ▪ frequency 	business-to-business, supplier-buyers, random sample of buyers	Leuthesser (1997)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ satisfaction ▪ commitment ▪ minimal opportunism ▪ customer satisfaction ▪ ethical profile 	purchasing executives	Dorsch <i>et al.</i> (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ satisfaction ▪ commitment 	industrial, purchasing executives	Smith (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ fairness ▪ absence of opportunism 	industrial distribution channels	Johnson (1999)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ power ▪ integration ▪ mutual understanding of needs ▪ profit 	executives	Naudé and Buttle (2000)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ customer satisfaction ▪ customer commitment 	consumer services, customers	Henning-Thurau <i>et al.</i> (2002)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ commitment 	industrial, purchasing executives	Hewett <i>et al.</i> (2002)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust in salesperson ▪ trust in store ▪ commitment to contact employee ▪ commitment to store 	departmental store, customers	Wong and Sohal (2002b)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ value ▪ effort ▪ communication ▪ customer power ▪ understanding 	internet shoppers	Keating <i>et al.</i> (2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ social bonds ▪ commitment ▪ satisfaction ▪ trust ▪ conflict 	financial service provider and customers	Lang and Colgate (2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust in partner integrity ▪ trust in partner benevolence ▪ affective commitment ▪ satisfaction ▪ affective conflict 	service firms and customers	Roberts <i>et al.</i> (2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ satisfaction 	three different industries in Taiwan (photograph developing shops, banks and hospitals)	Hsieh and Hiang (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ trust ▪ commitment ▪ economic satisfaction ▪ social satisfaction 	business-to-business, market research	Ivens (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brand loyalty ▪ customer satisfaction 	two large security firms in China with their customers as respondents	Wang <i>et al.</i> (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ emotional satisfaction 	Australian retail stores, customers	Wong (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cooperation ▪ adaptation ▪ atmosphere 	B-2-B professional services (consulting engineering industry – Hong Kong)	Woo and Ennew (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ loyalty ▪ satisfaction 	supplier firms and industrial buyers	Auh and Shih (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ satisfaction ▪ quality of the charity's relationship marketing 	charitable organisations and their beneficiaries	Bennet and Barkensjo (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ commitment ▪ trust ▪ economic satisfaction ▪ non-economic satisfaction 	sponsors in Australian Football	Farrelly and Quester (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ amount of information sharing ▪ communication quality ▪ long-term orientation ▪ satisfaction with the relationship 	exporting firms and importing firms (UK)	Lages <i>et al.</i> (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ customer satisfaction ▪ trust ▪ commitment ▪ customer behavioural loyalty 	Taiwanese merchant banking sector	Liang and Wang (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ satisfaction ▪ trust 	customers in the communication industry	Lin and Ding (2005)

Appendix IX: Research Methods for Business Researchers

The following pages introduce the basic issues of social research and address the following aspects:

IX.i)	Introduction
IX.ii)	Research Philosophies
IX.iii)	Research Approaches
IX.iv)	Research Strategies
IX.v)	Time Horizons
IX.vi)	Data Collection Methods
IX.vii)	Triangulation
IX.viii)	Criteria in Business Research

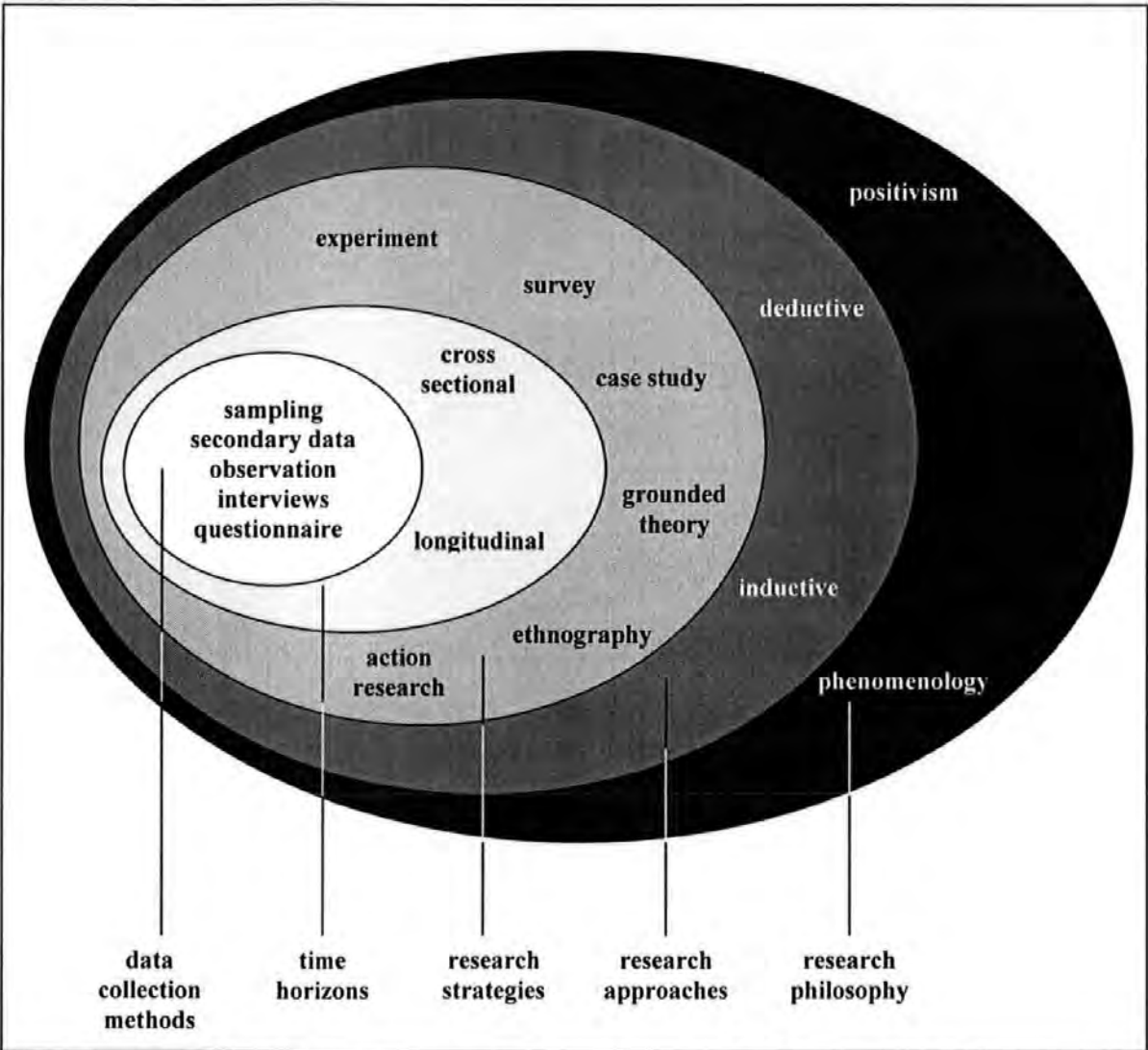


Figure IX.a: the research process ‘onion’ adopted from Saunders *et al.* (2000), p. 85

IX.i) Introduction

Reviewing the literature on (social) research methods can be quite confusing, as terms are used interchangeably and classifications differ from one source to another. For example, Bryman (2004) uses the term ‘research strategy’ in order to describe ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ research, whereas Saunders *et al.* (2003) describe ‘grounded theory’, ‘case studies’ or ‘surveys’ using the same term. Confusion reaches its climax when one compares different classifications of ‘epistemological’ and ‘ontological’ consideration.

Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2002), for example, refer to 'positivism' and 'relativism' as the 'epistemology of science' and to 'realism' and 'relativism' as the 'ontology of science'. In contrast, Bryman (2004) lists 'interpretivism' and 'positivism' under 'epistemological' and 'objectivism' and 'constructionism' under 'ontological'. In addition, various authors focus on a number of issues when describing the research methodology. Therefore, one is well advised to stick to one (or only a few – but similar) classifications, without ignoring the insights of the others. For the purpose of this research, the illustration used by Saunders *et al.* (2000) was selected¹, which reflects the various issues of the research process as layers of an onion (Figure 1). They argue that just as one has to peel away the outer layers of the onion before reaching the core, so one has to understand the research philosophy and the various approaches to research before dealing with the selection of appropriate data collection methods.

IX.ii) Research Philosophies

A research philosophy reflects the way we think about the development of knowledge and is usually associated with the term 'paradigm' which in turn 'refers to the progress of scientific practice based on people's philosophies and assumptions about the world and the nature of knowledge; in this context, about how research should be conducted' (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, p. 47).

There are two main views about the research process which dominate the literature and which play an important role in business and management research: positivism and phenomenology².

The positivist paradigm is historically linked to natural sciences (such as physics or biology) and the belief that laws provide the basis of explanation. The highly successful approaches used by natural scientists were adopted by social scientists at the end of the nineteenth century. One of the early adopters of this philosophy was Emile Durkheim (1951), who held the view that there was little difference between physical science and social science considering that social phenomena must follow underlying social laws just as physical phenomena follow physical laws. He concluded that sociologists could therefore use the same methods employed in the natural sciences to explain social phenomena. However, over the years more and more social scientists began to argue against positivism, pointing out that the social sciences deal with behaviour and actions which are generated from within the human mind, whereas the physical sciences deal with objects which are outside us. This view follows the approach of Max Weber (1949), who found quantitative methods legitimate but inadequate in order to understand processes and human behaviour.

Creswell (1994), Hussey and Hussey (1997) and Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2002) characterise both paradigms by the means of various assumptions:

- The *ontological assumption* deals with the nature of reality and the question as to whether the world is socially constructed and can only be understood by examining the perceptions of the human actors, or the world is objective and external to the researcher. The latter understanding reflects the positivistic philosophy, where reality is objective and singular, and apart from the researcher. Reality from the

¹ Although most references from Saunders *et al.* refer to their third edition (2003), the slightly different illustration of the second edition (2000) was selected.

² Some researchers use different terms such as 'objectivism', 'experimentalism' or 'traditionalism' for positivism. Others refer 'subjectivist', 'humanistic' or 'interpretivist' to the phenomenological paradigm. Interestingly, Saunders *et al.*, in their third edition (2003), term 'phenomenology' as 'interpretivism' and add a third paradigm to their research onion: 'realism', which is based on the belief that a reality exists that is independent of human beliefs and thoughts, but also recognises that people themselves are not objects to be studied in the style of natural sciences.

phenomenological point of view is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in a study.

- The *epistemological assumption* deals with the question of what we accept as valid knowledge and asks about the relationship between the researcher and the subject of research. Positivists see the researcher as independent from that being researched, whereas phenomenologists consider that the researcher interacts with what is being researched.
- The *axiological assumption* is concerned with the role of values. Positivists believe that the process of research is value-free and unbiased. This view is commonly held in the area of natural science, where the outcome of research is more or less the same regardless of the researcher's values. Social science, however, is concerned with the people (for example, their activities or behaviour). Here the phenomenological view applies, where the researcher has values which have an impact on recognised facts and interpretations. Therefore research is value-laden and biased.
- The *rhetorical assumption* deals with the language of research. Positivists tend to use a more formal language and a set of definitions in order to describe their research. Phenomenologists, on the other hand, tend to use informal language and evolving decisions in their research reports.

Apart from these assumptions, positivism and phenomenology can be differentiated by a number of other points. For example, positivists try to deliver explanations to demonstrate causality, whereas phenomenologists use explanations in order to increase general understanding of the situation. Therefore, positivistic research is reduced to the simplest terms, whereas phenomenological studies include the complexity of whole situations. This, in turn, determines the choice of research design, with large numbers selected randomly in positivistic research and small numbers of cases chosen for specific reasons in phenomenological research. All in all, positivism versus phenomenology can also be described as measurement versus meaning.

The world of social research differentiates not only between different paradigms, but also between different distinctions of research, namely that of quantitative and qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) note that the measurement and analysis of quantitative studies are based on large amounts of data which relate to causal relationships between variables rather than processes. Therefore, quantitative research consists of mathematical models, graphs and statistical tables. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, investigate things in their natural settings and try to make sense of phenomena using and collecting a variety of empirical materials such as case studies, observations or interviews to name the most common ones. As implied earlier, quantitative research is usually associated with positivism and qualitative research with phenomenology, although Hussey and Hussey (1997, p. 55) indicate that 'it is possible for a positivistic paradigm to produce qualitative data and vice versa.'

IX.iii) Research Approaches

The second layer of the research process onion deals with two different research approaches: the deductive and the inductive approach. Although both approaches are linked to the main two research philosophies³, labelling them would not only be of no practical value but also potentially misleading according to Saunders *et al.* (2003).

³ The deductive approach refers more or less to the positivistic paradigm, whereas the inductive approach is based on phenomenology.

The question whether to use a deductive or inductive approach is based on one's views on what should come first – the theory or the data. However, opinions differ widely. In short, deduction is about testing a theory, whereas induction is about generating a theory.

Saunders *et al.* (2003) list various characteristics of the deductive approach, such as the search to explain causal relationships between variables, controls to allow the testing of hypotheses, the need for a highly structured methodology in order to ensure reliability, the need to operationalise concepts to measure facts quantitatively, the need to reduce problems to the simplest possible elements in order to understand them better as a whole and last but not least the principle of generalisation.

The process of deduction can be broken down into six steps. The starting point is theoretical knowledge, which derives from earlier literature and/or studies. The theory therefore already exists. The second step involves the building of research propositions/hypotheses and expressing them in operational terms. The ensuing steps consist of data collection and analysis. The findings then lead to the confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis. The modification of the theory in the light of the findings (if necessary) is the final step. The deductive approach seems to be a linear process where one step follows the other in logical and clear sequence. However, Bryman and Bell (2003) argue that this is not always the case. For example, the data collected may not fit the original hypotheses, or the relevance of the data may become apparent only after data collection. It could also be the case that new theoretical findings have been published by other researchers shortly before the own research. All these instances lead to a change of the researcher's view of the theory as a result of the data analysis.

The deductive approach has some advantages: the initial objective of investigation is clearly stated (which in turn means that data can be collected straight away), and it is easy for researchers to replicate the methods used due to their clarity. In addition, deductive research can be quicker to complete (in comparison to inductive research). On the other hand, the findings of deductive research describe what is happening rather than explain why something is happening. Consequently, deductive research tends to confirm what is already known rather than expanding knowledge.

Inductive research, on the other hand, increases the complexity of data by adding context to it. With an inductive approach, theory is the outcome of research. Therefore, inductive research is often described as building theory. The most famous inductive example is known as 'grounded theory'⁴ developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in a medical field and expanded by other researchers in many disciplines. Grounded theory enters the fieldwork phase without a hypothesis and therefore gives preference to the subject, data and field under study rather than theoretical assumptions. Thus it starts at the empirical level and ends at the conceptual level by using concepts that are produced through the analysis of empirical data.

In comparison to the deductive approach, inductive research is more flexible and can give new insights and further explanations into the research area. But it is also more time-consuming, and there is always the risk that no useful data patterns and theory will emerge. In addition, the inductive approach might lack clarity and standardisation of methods and can therefore lack reliability.

The selection of the appropriate research approach depends on the nature of the research topic, as Saunders *et al.* (2003, p. 90) explain:

A topic on which there is a wealth of literature from which you can define a theoretical framework and a hypothesis lends itself more readily to the deductive approach. With research into a topic that is new, is exciting much debate, and on which there is little existing literature, it may be more

⁴ Although Hussey and Hussey (1997) call 'grounded theory' an inductive/deductive approach.

IX.iv) Research Strategies

A research strategy is a general plan of how the researcher is going to answer the research questions. Saunders *et al.* (2003) make a clear distinction between strategy and tactics. The research strategy refers to the overall approach that the researcher adopts, whereas the tactics deal with the finer detail of data collection and data analysis. Saunders *et al.* list the following strategies:

- *Experiment*: the classical form of research which is traditionally linked to natural science, although some social sciences such as psychology use it strongly. Experiments are conducted in a systematic way either in a natural setting or in a laboratory. They typically involve the definition of a theoretical hypothesis, the selection of samples and their allocation to different experimental conditions, the introduction of planned change on one (or more) of the variables, the measurement of a small number of the variables and the control of other variables. Experiments are therefore linked to a positivistic paradigm and a deductive approach.
- *Survey*: a popular and common strategy in business management research owing to the advantage of collecting a large number of data from a sizable population in a highly economical way and to have control over the research process. Questionnaires, structured observations and structured interviews are the most common data collection devices which belong to the survey category. Social research differentiates between descriptive and analytical surveys. The former deals with identifying and counting the frequency of a specific population. The latter is concerned with determining whether there is any relationship between different variables. Surveys are linked to a positivistic paradigm and a deductive approach.
- *Case study*: a research strategy which deals with a single case or a small number of related cases in order to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research. A variety of data collection methods such as interviews, questionnaires, documentary analysis or observations can be used. The main advantage of case studies is that they can answer the 'why?'-questions. It is a good research strategy to generate theories and can therefore be seen as an inductive approach.
- *Ethnography*: although participant observation (as the most popular ethnographical research method) is used in some business studies as an inductive approach, ethnography is not very dominant in business research. However, ethnography is the classical example of fieldwork research.
- *Action research*: a research strategy which assumes that the social world is constantly changing and the research as well as the researcher are part of this change as well. Consequently, the purpose of action research, which is used in applied sciences, is to find an effective way of bringing about a conscious change in a partly controlled environment. Thus action research is attached to a phenomenological philosophy.

'Grounded theory', as described earlier, is also listed as a further research strategy by Saunders *et al.* (2000).

IX.v) Time Horizons

The time perspective to research design is an important issue. Researchers can carry out either cross-sectional studies or longitudinal studies. The former takes a snapshot of an ongoing situation or a particular phenomenon at a particular time. Cross-sectional studies can use quantitative research strategies (e.g. survey) or qualitative methods (such as unstructured interviews over a short period of time). They are often conducted when resources (i.e. time and money) are limited because data is collected just once, and over a short period of time, before it is analysed. However, Hussey and Hussey (1997, p.60) argue that 'cross-sectional studies do not explain why a certain correlation exist, only that it does or does not.' Longitudinal studies, on the other hand, investigate the dynamics of the problem by studying the same people or situation several times or continuously over time. Therefore, researchers can establish as to whether there has been a change over a period of time. Longitudinal studies are often, but not always, associated with qualitative research. The choice between different time horizons is also a decision as to how large a sample to examine. Cross-sectional research usually deals with a large number of situations/organisations/individuals, whereas longitudinal research deals with only a few subjects.

IX.vi) Data Collection Methods

When all the outer layers of the research onion have been peeled away (i.e. the researcher is sure about the philosophy and the research approach applied to the study, and has set an appropriate research strategy as well as considering the time horizon), the core of the research process (i.e. collecting data) can be reached. Hussey and Hussey (1997) present an illustration of the data collection process (see Figure IX.b).

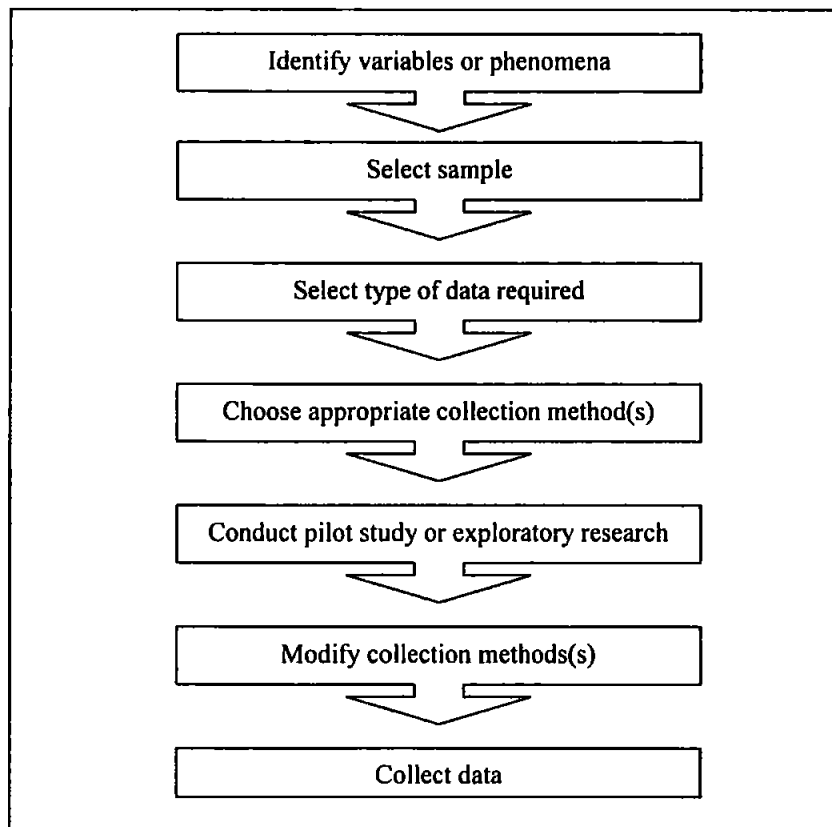


Figure IX.b: overview of the data collection process adopted from Hussey and Hussey (1997), p. 141

The first choice is whether primary or secondary data are appropriate to answer the research questions. Sekaran (2000, p. 255) defines secondary data as data referring to

'information gathered by someone other than the researcher conducting the current study'. There are several sources for secondary data such as newspaper and magazine articles, previous studies and reports, books, and government or company publications. However, sometimes secondary data exist but are not available, because researchers and/or organisations do not provide their data material. Sometimes secondary data simply do not exist because nobody before bothered to collect the specific sort of data. In both cases, researchers need to collect new – or primary – data. The most common primary data collection methods in social sciences are:

- *Observations*: this data collection method can take place in a natural setting or in a laboratory and can be conducted either as participant or as non-participant observation. In the latter, the observer is separate from the activities taking place and therefore the researcher can observe and record what people do in terms of their behaviour and their action. In participant observation, the researcher is fully involved in order to provide a detailed understanding of practices, values and motives of those being observed. Observations can generate a lot of valuable data. The problems of observations are concerned with objectivity, ethics and observer bias (e.g. if one observer perceives and interprets an action differently from another observer).
- *Interviews*: a data collection method in which selected participants are asked questions in order to find out what they feel, know, do or think. Interviews can be structured, unstructured or semi-structured, they can be carried out face-to-face or over the telephone, individually or in groups. Interviews can be a challenging method to collect data, as they can be time consuming and expensive. Access to particular participants can also be a problem. The data which is generated from interviews (especially when open questions are asked) can be huge on the one hand, but prove to be valuable on the other hand.
- *Questionnaires*: a list of structured questions in written form in order to find out what participants feel, know, do or think. Questionnaires may be used for large-scale surveys (especially appropriate when closed questions are involved) as well as for studies with small sample sizes (where open-ended questions can be used). Questionnaires may be dispatched by post or by e-mail, they may be carried out face-to-face or on the telephone. Postal questionnaire surveys are a popular data collecting method in business research, because they are relatively cheap, less time-consuming and can take very large samples into account. One of the main problems associated with questionnaires is the non-response bias (either questionnaire non-response or item non-response).

In addition, social sciences might also use other methods such as diaries or focus groups in order to collect data.

IX.vii) Triangulation

The previous sections described distinct elements of the research process which are mainly opposed to each other (e.g. the positivistic versus phenomenologist paradigm, quantitative versus qualitative research, the deductive versus inductive approach). However, the world of social research is not black and white, and no individual method has been named as being universally acceptable for being best in all situations. Therefore, it is quite common in business research to use more than one method. Besides, multi-methods approaches enable triangulation to take place. Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 21) state that 'the basic idea of triangulation is that data are obtained from a wide range of different and multiple sources, using a variety of methods, investigators or theories.' Consequently, social research differentiates between four types of triangulation:

- *Data triangulation*: the use of a research design where data is collected from different sources or at different times in the study of a phenomenon.
- *Methodological triangulation*: the use of different data collection methods, e.g. a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection.
- *Investigator triangulation*: a research project where different researchers with a shared interest in a subject independently collect data on the same phenomenon and then compare the results.
- *Theoretical triangulation*: phenomena are researched from different theoretical perspectives or by the means of theories from other disciplines.

According to Arksey and Knight (1999) triangulation is not an end in itself, but it can enhance a study when carefully considered. It can increase confidence in results and strengthen the completion of a study. Triangulation can also enhance interpretability as one set of data might give handle to understanding another set. One of the main advantages of triangulation is that it can overcome the potential bias and sterility of a single-method-approach. On the other hand, it can be time-consuming and depends on resources. In addition, triangulation can make it difficult for other researchers to undertake replication and comparative studies.

IX.viii) Criteria in Business Research

Saunders *et al.* (2003) emphasise that a sound research design is important in order to make the research findings as credible as possible. With respect to this, Bryman and Bell (2003, p. 33) state that 'three of the most prominent criteria for the evaluation of business and management research are reliability, replication and validity.' All three criteria are explained in the following:

- *Reliability* is concerned with the question of whether the research findings can be repeated. Although reliability is usually linked with quantitative research, it applies for the deductive approach (e.g. with the question 'Will the measure yield the same results on different occasions?') as well as the inductive approach ('Will similar observations be made by different researchers on different occasions?'). The major threats to reliability are bias concerning the subject⁵ or the observer⁶.
- *Replication* is close to the idea of reliability. In order to make a study reliable, it has to be replicable. Therefore, a researcher must explain the research process in great detail in order to make the study replicable.
- *Validity* is concerned with the question of whether the research results accurately represent what is really happening in the situation. Validity therefore deals with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from the study. Social research differentiates between measurement/construct validity ('Can the observations and research findings be explained by the construct under investigation?'), internal validity ('How likely is it that the independent variable really influences the dependent variable to the extent the research findings suggest?') and external validity. The latter refers to the generalisability of research findings ('Can the results of the research be generalised beyond the specific research context?'). Concerning generalisability, Saunders *et al.*

⁵ e.g. if a questionnaire completed at different times of the week produces different results.

⁶ e.g. if researchers use different approaches to interpret the data.

(2003, p. 84) indicate that 'the social world of business and management is far too complex to lend itself to theorising by definite "laws" in the same way as the physical sciences.' Complexity might be one feature of business situations; another one is the uniqueness as they are determined by different circumstances and individuals. This, in turn, has an impact on generalisability, which is not of crucial importance from a phenomenological position according to Saunders *et al.* (2003, p. 84), who continue to say:

We are constantly being told of the ever-changing world of business organisations. If we accept that the circumstances of today may not apply in three months time then some of the value of generalisation is lost. Similarly, if we accept that all organisations are unique, that too renders generalisation less valuable.

Appendix X: Covering letter quantitative survey

John Smith
Marketing Director
ABC Company Ltd
A-Street
B-Town
AB1 2BA

Dear John,

The Marketing Director of an English Premier League club recently said:

**"Sponsorship is the biggest area of opportunity.
But it's something that we really need to get more scientific
about."**

We agree. This is why we are currently running a doctoral research project at the University of Plymouth Business School investigating the sponsorship situation in the English Premier League and the German Bundesliga. You can help us since your company has been identified as a sponsor of an English Premier League club.

We would be grateful if you fill in the attached questionnaire and return it in the FREEPOST envelope. We guarantee that what you tell us will be treated with absolute confidentiality. It will take you just 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire, but this could make a difference to the prospects for football sponsorship. We are confident that the results will be of great interest to you as well.

We will be happy to provide you with a summary of the main findings if you fill in the attached request form and send it back to us. Your questionnaire and request form will be separated immediately after arrival to ensure your anonymity. All request forms will be entered into a draw. If you win, you can choose between a magnum of champagne for yourself and a donation of £100 to a charity of your choice.

Many thanks for your co-operation

(André Bühler)

Note: we are sending this questionnaire to you because we believe that you are the key person primarily responsible for (football) sponsorship decisions in your company. If this is not the case, we would really appreciate your passing this to the relevant person.

If you have any questions or comments do not hesitate to contact us.

contact details:	phone	e-mail
André W. Bühler	07743 959919	andre.buehler@plymouth.ac.uk
Professor David Head	01752 232888	david.head@plymouth.ac.uk
Dr. Jasmine Williams	01752 232821	jasmine.williams@plymouth.ac.uk

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The contents of this form are absolutely confidential. Information identifying the respondents will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

If you would like a copy of the research findings, please complete the section below:

Name:

Company:

E-Mail-Address:

Your name will automatically be entered into a prize draw. You have the choice of the following prizes:

- ☐ a magnum bottle of champagne for yourself.
- ☐ a donation of £100 to a charity of your choice.

If you do not want to enter the draw, please tick here ☐

**Many thanks for your time and co-operation
in completing this questionnaire!**

Appendix XII: Example of covering letter/questionnaire list sent to pilot testers

Dear Mike,

Many thanks for your offer to test my questionnaire. The research is about football and sponsorship as you know. Attached please find the principal research propositions and hypotheses, which come out of the literature review and the qualitative interviews I have carried out.

The quantitative research phase involves the following target groups:

- 20 clubs of the English Premier League and 18 clubs of the German Bundesliga
- Around 150 companies sponsoring English Premier League clubs and 300 companies of German Bundesliga clubs (divided into shirt sponsors, commercial partners and smaller sponsors)

Therefore a questionnaire for the clubs and one for the sponsors have been designed. The questionnaires will be sent either by e-mail or by post. You will receive the e-mails/questionnaires regarding the clubs and the sponsors in a minute. It would be of great help if you could go through them bearing in mind the following questions:

covering letter:

- Does the covering letter fulfil its purposes (providing information, guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity, motivate addressee to respond)?
- Are the instructions on the covering letter clear?

questionnaire:

- Is it user-friendly?
- How long does it take to complete it?
- Are the instructions clear?
- Is the design okay?
- Are the questions clear?
- Are the questions appropriate to measure the dimensions indicated (e.g. trust, commitment, etc.)?
- Does it make more sense to jumble the questions relating to the various dimensions?

inforequest:

- Do you think that it's a good idea to use incentives such as the ones suggested?

Please let me know if you have any other comments or suggestions.

Thanks again!

André

Appendix XIII: Examples of rejections in the quantitative survey

Example 1

From: victoria.xxxx@xxxx.com
Sent: Mon 16/05/2005 09:58
To: Andre Buehler
Subject: questionnaire survey

Dear Andre,

I'm writing to let you know that Dora xxxx has now retired from xxxx.

Unfortunately we do not have anyone else that is able to complete your survey on English and German football.

Best regards
Victoria xxxxx
Corporate Communications
xxxxxxx

Example 2

From: Sharon xxxx
Sent: Fri 22/04/2005 16:11
To: Andre Buehler
Subject: Questionnaire

Dear Andre

I am in receipt of your email earlier this month enclosing your questionnaire.

Unfortunately, it is not the Club's policy to complete and return questionnaires/surveys and we are therefore unable to help you in this way.

However, the Club's Commercial Director, xxxxx xxxxx, is willing to speak with you on the telephone for a couple of minutes concerning your project but he will not be able to go through the questionnaire point by point; it will need to be more of a generic brief discussion.

If you feel it would be helpful for you to speak with xxxx, please prepare a couple of questions regarding your research and then telephone myself on 0xxxx 67xxxx. If it is convenient, and xxxx is available, I will be able to put you through.

Yours sincerely

Sharon xxxx
PA to xxxx (Commercial Director)
xxxx Football Club

Example 3

From: garry.xxxx@xxxx.com
Sent: Tue 05/04/2005 16:38
To: Andre Buehler
Subject: Your survey

I wanted to write to you just to let you know that I am afraid your survey will not be completed by us. The details of our deals with xxxx Football Club are confidential as is the company information that you have requested. Although we will not be able to contribute I wanted to make sure that you received a reply from us rather than simply hearing nothing back. Nonetheless I wish you well with your work.

Regards
Garry



SPONSORSHIP IN ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

A doctoral research project from
the University of Plymouth Business School



-QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE CLUBS-

A) YOUR VIEWS ON THE FOOTBALL BUSINESS

Please tick the appropriate box below

A-1: In terms of annual turnover of Premier League clubs do you think football is a

☐ big business

☐ medium-sized business

☐ small business

A-2: In terms of public perception do you think football is a

☐ big business

☐ medium-sized business

☐ small business

A-3: In terms of media coverage do you think football is a

☐ big business

☐ medium-sized business

☐ small business

B) QUESTIONS ABOUT SPONSORSHIP AS AN INCOME STREAM

Please tick the box which best represents your agreement with the following statements
on a scale from 1 to 7, where 7 = strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>B-1: For our club sponsorship is a very important source of revenue</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>B-2: For our club sponsorship is a very important opportunity to build our brand</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>B-3: For our club sponsorship is a very important opportunity to network</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>B-4: The importance of revenues from sponsorship for our club will increase significantly in the next five years</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

C) QUESTIONS ABOUT SPONSORSHIP IN GENERAL

Because professional football clubs have a number of different sponsors, we differentiate between three different groups of sponsors, as follows:

shirt sponsor: usually the principal sponsor of the football club who advertises on the club shirts.

commercial partners: usually sponsors with some communication rights who are named as "Official Partners" or "Premium Partners".

smaller sponsors: sponsors who primarily advertise on perimeter boards, match day programmes or who rent executive boxes.

In order to develop a sophisticated picture of the football sponsorship business, we ask you to consider all three groups in turn. In the case of commercial partners and smaller sponsors please give an overall (aggregate) rating for each group if you have more than one commercial partner and/or smaller sponsor. Please **WRITE IN THE NUMBER** which best represents your level of agreement with each of the following statements ranging from 1 to 7 where 7 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree.

C-1 We select our sponsors on the basis of...

	shirt sponsor	comm. partners	smaller sponsors
the image of the sponsor			
the financial resources of the sponsor			
the industry sector of the sponsor			
the actual sponsorship fee			
no specific criteria			
we don't select the sponsor, the sponsor selects us			

Anything else, please specify:

C-2 The following areas of football sponsorship need to be improved...

	shirt sponsor	comm. partners	smaller sponsors
exclusivity of the sponsorship			
creativity on the part of the clubs			
creativity on the part of the sponsors			
professionalism on the part of the club			
professionalism on the part of the sponsors			
evaluation of the effects of the sponsorship			
using the sponsorship as a networking opportunity for sponsors			

Anything else, please specify:

D) QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SPONSORS

D-1: In this section we would like to know how you perceive certain aspects of the relationship between your football club and your sponsors. Please **WRITE IN THE NUMBER** which best represents your level of agreement with each of the following statements ranging from 1 to 7 where 7 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree.

	shirt sponsor	comm. partners	smaller sponsor
The sponsor understands our needs as a football club.			
We have a strong sense of loyalty to the sponsor.			
The sponsor co-operates closely with us within the context of the sponsorship.			
We hesitate to give the sponsor too much information.			
We and the sponsor are doing many things together.			
We proactively manage the relationship between our club and the sponsor.			
The sponsor understands what we want from the sponsorship.			
We are quite willing to make long-term investments in our relationship with the sponsor.			
We defend the sponsor whenever others criticise them.			
The sponsor is knowledgeable about the sponsorship relationship.			
The sponsor cares for our welfare in the sponsorship relationship.			
The sponsor leaves a lot to be desired from an overall performance standpoint.			
We are quite heavily involved in the marketing and planning efforts of the sponsor.			
Whenever possible we work jointly on projects.			
We measure the quality of relationship between us and the sponsor.			
Overall, the results of our relationship with the sponsor fall far short of our expectations.			
We are willing to dedicate whatever people and resources it takes to grow this sponsorship.			
We expect to be working with the sponsor for some time.			
The sponsor understands our position in the sponsorship relationship.			
The sponsor is well known for their fair dealings with sponsorship partners.			
The sponsor co-operates closely with us outside the context of the sponsorship.			
Our relationship with the sponsor is like an open book.			
The quality of relationship between our club and the sponsor is very good.			
We are patient with the sponsor when they make mistakes that cause us trouble.			
The sponsor is open in dealing with us in the sponsorship relationship.			
The sponsor does not understand the pressure of our business.			
Our association with the sponsor has been a highly successful one.			
We are not very committed to the sponsorship.			
We trust that the sponsor will serve our best interests.			
We and the sponsor make a point of keeping each other well informed.			
We are continually on the lookout for another sponsorship deal to replace the sponsor.			
We can rely on the sponsor in this sponsorship relationship.			
The sponsor seeks our advice and opinion concerning their marketing efforts.			
Our relationship with the sponsor is a long-term alliance.			
Maintaining a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.			
If another company offered us a better sponsorship deal, we would most certainly take them on, even if it meant dropping the sponsor.			

D-2: Overall, how successful has this sponsorship been in achieving your (club's) overall objectives on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 = very successful and 1 = not successful at all.

shirt sponsor	comm. partners	smaller sponsor

E) GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CLUB

Please tick the most appropriate box for each question below

E-1: *In terms of UK's public perception would you consider yourself a*

☐ large club

☐ a medium-sized club

☐ a small club

within the Premier League?

E-2: *How many people work for your football club on a fixed basis (everyone who is on your payroll, including players, managers, back office staff, directors, groundsmen, caretakers – full-time or equivalent)?*

☐ less than 50 people

☐ between 50 and 99 people

☐ between 100 and 199

☐ between 200 and 249 people

☐ between 250 and 300 people

☐ more than 300 people

E-3: *How many people work for your marketing department (full-time or equivalent)?*

☐ no dedicated marketing staff

☐ less than 1 full-time or equivalent

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4 or more

E-4: *How many people work solely on sponsorship for your football club (full-time or equivalent)?*

☐ no dedicated sponsorship staff

☐ less than 1 full-time or equivalent

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4 or more

E-5: *Which of the bands below best indicates your club's last year's turnover? (optional)*

☐ less than £1.5m

☐ from £1.5m to £7m

☐ from £7m to £35m

☐ from £35m to £70m

☐ more than £70m

E-6: *Finally, please write in your job title:*

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please return this questionnaire to

**André W. Buehler, University of Plymouth, FREEPOST, Plymouth Business School,
Cookworthy Building, Plymouth, PL4 8ZZ, UK**



SPONSORSHIP IN ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

A doctoral research project from
the University of Plymouth Business School



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR (SHIRT) SPONSORS OF ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE CLUBS

A) QUESTIONS ON YOUR FOOTBALL SPONSORSHIP(S)

Please think about the **PREMIER LEAGUE CLUB** you are sponsoring and use column "club 1" for your answers. However, IF you are sponsoring two or three Premier League clubs please use column "club 2" for the second club, and column "club 3" for the third club. If you are sponsoring more than three clubs please select the three clubs which best reflect your sponsorship arrangements. Please make sure that you always refer to the same club within the three columns and that you **WRITE IN THE MOST APPROPRIATE NUMBER** relating to this particular football club using the indicated scales.

A-1: In terms of public perception would you consider this club to be a

	club 1	club 2	club 3
1 = large club			
2 = medium club			
3 = small club			
within the Premier League?			

A-2: How long have you been sponsoring this club?

	club 1	club 2	club 3
1 = less than 1 year			
2 = between 1 and 2 years			
3 = more than 2 years but less than 5 years			
4 = 5 and more years			

A-3: For how much longer do you intend to sponsor this club?

	club 1	club 2	club 3
1 = less than 1 year			
2 = between 1 and 2 years			
3 = more than 2 years but less than 5 years			
4 = 5 and more years			
5 = not sure			

A-4: What is the annual financial value of your sponsorship contract with this football club (without benefits)?

	club 1	club 2	club 3
1 = less than £100,000			
2 = between £100,000 and £499,999			
3 = between £500,000 and £1,000,000			
4 = more than £1,000,000			
5 = do not wish to disclose			

For questions A-5 to A-8 please **WRITE IN THE NUMBER** which best represents your level of agreement with each of the following statements, ranging from 1 to 7, where 7 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree.

A-5: Our objective(s) in sponsoring this football club is (are) to...

	club 1	club 2	club 3
increase public awareness of the company	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
generate media attention for the company	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
generate media attention for the brand(s)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
enhance the image of our company	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
increase awareness levels of our brand(s)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
improve the target market's perception of our company	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
improve the target market's perception of our brand(s)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
increase sales leads	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
improve our relationship(s) with other businesses/partners	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
improve employee motivation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
promote community involvement	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
network with other sponsors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
position ourselves as a football sponsor in view of the forthcoming World Cup 2006 in Germany	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
we have no particular objectives	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Anything else, please specify:

A-6: Our overall motive(s) for sponsoring this football club was (were)...

	club 1	club 2	club 3
commercial reasons	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
personal reasons	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

A-7: The following areas of our sponsorship with the club need to be improved...

	club 1	club 2	club 3
exclusivity of the sponsorship	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
creativity on the part of the clubs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
creativity on the part of the sponsors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
professionalism on the part of the club	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
professionalism on the part of the sponsor	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
evaluation of the effects of the sponsorship	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
using the sponsorship as a networking opportunity for sponsors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Anything else, please specify:

A-8: We selected this football club on the basis of...

	club 1	club 2	club 3
the image of the club	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
the size of the fan base	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
local proximity	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
the actual sponsorship fee	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
their serious business practices	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
no specific criteria	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
we didn't select them, they selected us	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Anything else, please specify:

B) QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FOOTBALL CLUB(S) YOU SPONSOR

B-1: In this section we would like to know how you perceive certain aspects of the relationship between your company and the football club(s) you are sponsoring. Please WRITE IN THE NUMBER which best represents your level of agreement with each of the following statements in the appropriate box, where 7 = strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree.

	club 1	club 2	club 3
This football club understands our needs as a sponsor.			
We have a strong sense of loyalty to this football club.			
This football club co-operates closely with us within the context of the sponsorship.			
We hesitate to give this football club too much information.			
We and this football club are doing many things together.			
We proactively manage the relationship between us and this football club.			
This football club understands what we want from the sponsorship.			
We are quite willing to make long-term investments in our relationship with this football club.			
We defend this football club whenever others criticise it.			
This football club is knowledgeable about the sponsorship relationship			
This football club cares for our welfare in the sponsorship relationship.			
This football club leaves a lot to be desired from an overall performance standpoint off the field.			
We are quite heavily involved in the marketing and planning efforts of this football club.			
Whenever possible we work jointly on projects.			
We measure the quality of relationship between us and this football club.			
Overall, the results of our relationship with this football club fall far short of our expectations.			
We are willing to dedicate whatever people and resources it takes to grow this sponsorship.			
We expect to be working with this football club for some time.			
This football club understands our position in the sponsorship relationship.			
This football club is well known for their fair dealings with sponsors.			
This football club co-operates closely with us outside the context of the sponsorship.			
Our relationship with this football club is like an open book.			
The quality of relationship between our company and this football club is very good.			
We are patient with this football club when they make mistakes that cause us trouble.			
This football club is open in dealing with us in the sponsorship relationship.			
This football club does not understand the pressures of our business.			
Our association with this football club has been a highly successful one.			
We are not very committed to this sponsorship.			
We trust this football club to serve our best interests.			
We and this football club make a point of keeping each other well informed.			
We are continually on the lookout for another sponsorship deal to replace this football club.			
We can rely on this football club in the sponsorship relationship.			
This football club seeks our advice and opinion concerning its marketing efforts.			
Our relationship with this football club is a long-term alliance.			
Maintaining a good quality of relationship between our company and this football club is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.			
If another football club offered us a better sponsorship deal, we would most certainly take them on, even if it meant dropping this football club.			

B-2: Overall, how successful has this sponsorship been in achieving your (company's) overall objectives on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 = very successful and 1 = not successful at all.

club 1	club 2	club 3

C) GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR COMPANY

Please tick the most appropriate box for each question below

C-1: a) Please tick the box below that best represents the geographical spread of your company's activities.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> local | <input type="checkbox"/> regional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> national | <input type="checkbox"/> international |

b) If international, please indicate the number of country markets in which your company operates.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 20 |

C-2: How many people are employed by your company in total (full-time or equivalent)?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> between 10 and 49 | <input type="checkbox"/> between 50 and 249 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> between 250 and 499 | <input type="checkbox"/> between 500 and 1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 1000 |

C-3: How many people work for your marketing department (full-time or equivalent)?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 5 people | <input type="checkbox"/> between 6 and 10 people | <input type="checkbox"/> between 11 and 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> between 16 and 20 people | <input type="checkbox"/> between 21 and 25 people | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 25 people |

C-4: How many people work solely on sponsorship for your company (full-time or equivalent)?

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> no dedicated sponsorship staff | <input type="checkbox"/> less than 1 full-time or equivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more |

C-5: In which of the following industry sectors does your company operate?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Electric, Gas, Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Communications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail Trade | <input type="checkbox"/> Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other, please specify: |

C-6: Which of the bands below best indicates your club's last year's turnover? (optional)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than £1.5m | <input type="checkbox"/> from £1.5m to £7m | <input type="checkbox"/> from £7m to £35m |
| <input type="checkbox"/> from £35m to £70m | <input type="checkbox"/> more than £70m | |

C-7: Finally, please write in your job title:

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Please return this questionnaire to:

**André W. Buehler, University of Plymouth, FREEPOST, Plymouth Business School,
Cookworthy Building, Plymouth, PL4 8ZZ, UNITED KINGDOM**



SPONSORING IM DEUTSCH- ENGLISCHEN PROFIFUSSBALL

Ein doktorales Forschungsprojekt an der
University of Plymouth (UK)



-FRAGEBOGEN FÜR BUNDESLIGAKLUBS-

A) IHRE MEINUNG ZUM WIRTSCHAFTSMARKT FUSSBALL

Kreuzen Sie bitte das entsprechende Kästchen an.

A-1: *Ist Fußball Ihrer persönlichen Meinung nach anhand der jährlichen Umsatzzahlen der Bundesligaklubs ein*

☐ großer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ mittlerer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ kleiner Wirtschaftsmarkt

A-2: *Ist Fußball Ihrer persönlichen Meinung nach anhand der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung ein*

☐ großer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ mittlerer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ kleiner Wirtschaftsmarkt

A-3: *Ist Fußball Ihrer persönlichen Meinung nach anhand der medialen Berichterstattung ein*

☐ großer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ mittlerer Wirtschaftsmarkt ☐ kleiner Wirtschaftsmarkt

B) FRAGEN BEZÜGLICH SPONSORING ALS EINNAHMEQUELLE

Kreuzen Sie bitte das Kästchen an, das am ehesten Ihre Zustimmung/Ablehnung zu den folgenden Aussagen wiedergibt. Die Skala reicht von 1 bis 7, wobei 7 = "stimme vollkommen zu" und 1 = "stimme überhaupt nicht zu" bedeutet.

B-1: *Für unseren Klub ist Sponsoring eine sehr wichtige Einnahmequelle.* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

B-2: *Für unseren Klub ist Sponsoring eine sehr wichtige Möglichkeit um unsere Marke aufzubauen.* ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

B-3: *Für unseren Klub ist Sponsoring eine sehr wichtige Möglichkeit zur Netzwerkbildung.* ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

B-4: *Für unseren Klub wird die Bedeutung der Einnahmen aus Sponsoring in den nächsten fünf Jahren signifikant zunehmen.* ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

C) FRAGEN ZUM SPONSORING ALLGEMEIN

Da professionelle Fußballklubs sehr viele unterschiedliche Sponsoren haben, unterscheiden wir zwischen drei verschiedenen Sponsorengruppen:

Trikotsponsor: üblicherweise der Hauptsponsor des Klubs, dessen Logo auch auf den Trikots zu sehen ist.

Kommerzielle Partner: üblicherweise Sponsoren, die diverse Kommunikationsrechte bzw. offizielle Prädikate erwerben (z.B. "Offizieller Partner" oder "Premium Partner").

kleinere Sponsoren: Sponsoren, die keine Trikotsponsoren oder kommerzielle Partner sind, aber auf Banden oder im Stadionheft werben oder VIP-Logen oder Business Seats mieten.

Um ein differenziertes Bild zu erlangen, bitten wir Sie im Folgenden alle drei Gruppen zu berücksichtigen und einzeln zu bewerten. Im Falle der kommerziellen Partner und kleinerer Sponsoren geben Sie bitte einen Durchschnittswert an. Tragen Sie dazu bitte die NUMMER, die am ehesten Ihre Zustimmung/Ablehnung zu den folgenden Aussagen wiedergibt, in die grauen Felder ein. Die Skala reicht von 1 bis 7, wobei 7 = "stimme vollkommen zu" und 1 = "stimme überhaupt nicht zu" bedeutet

C-1 Wir wählen unsere Sponsoren aufgrund der folgenden Kriterien aus	Trikot-sponsor	kommerz. Partner	kleinere Sponsoren
Image der Sponsoren			
finanzielle Situation der Sponsoren			
Wirtschaftssektor der Sponsoren			
Abschlußsumme des Sponsoringvertrages.			
keine speziellen Kriterien			
Wir wählen nicht die Sponsoren aus, die Sponsoren wählen uns aus.			

Sonstiges, bitte beschreiben:

C-2 Wo sehen Sie Verbesserungsbedarf im Bereich Sponsoring?	Trikot-sponsor	kommerz. Partner	kleinere Sponsoren
Exklusivität des Sponsorings			
Kreativität seitens des Klubs			
Kreativität seitens des Sponsors			
Professionalisierung seitens des Klubs			
Professionalisierung seitens des Sponsors			
Evaluierung der Sponsoringeffekte			
Sponsoring als Network-Plattform für und zwischen Sponsoren			

Sonstiges, bitte beschreiben:

D) FRAGEN ZUR BEZIEHUNG ZWISCHEN IHREM KLUB UND IHREN SPONSOREN

D-1: In diesem Abschnitt würden wir gerne wissen, wie Sie bestimmte Aspekte der Beziehung zwischen Ihnen und Ihren Sponsoren wahrnehmen. Tragen Sie dazu bitte die NUMMER, die am ehesten Ihre Zustimmung/Ablehnung zu den folgenden Aussagen wiedergibt, in die grauen Felder ein. Die Skala reicht von 1 bis 7, wobei 7 = "stimme vollkommen zu" und 1 = "stimme überhaupt nicht zu" bedeutet.

	Trikot-sponsor	kommerz. Partner	kleinere Sponsoren
Der Sponsor versteht unsere Bedürfnisse als Fußballklub.			
Wir zeigen dem Sponsor gegenüber ein hohes Maß an Loyalität.			
Der Sponsor arbeitet innerhalb des Sponsorings eng mit uns zusammen.			
Wir sind vorsichtig, dem Sponsor zu viele Informationen zu geben.			
Der Sponsor und wir machen vieles zusammen.			
Wir arbeiten proaktiv an der Beziehung zu dem Sponsor.			
Der Sponsor versteht, was wir uns von dem Sponsorship versprechen.			
Wir sind bereit, langfristig in die Beziehung zu dem Sponsor zu investieren.			
Wir verteidigen den Sponsor, wenn andere ihn kritisieren.			
Der Sponsor weiß über das Sponsoring Bescheid.			
Der Sponsor kümmert sich um unser Wohlergehen in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung.			
Der allgemeine Leistungsumfang des Sponsors lässt sehr zu wünschen übrig.			
Wir sind in die Marketing- und Planungsbestrebungen des Sponsors voll involviert.			
Wann immer es uns möglich ist, arbeiten wir mit dem Sponsor an gemeinsamen Projekten.			
Wir messen die Qualität der Beziehung zu dem Sponsor.			
Die Ergebnisse des Sponsorings entsprechen im Allgemeinen nicht unseren Erwartungen.			
Wir sind Willens jegliche persönliche und materielle Unterstützung zu gewähren um dieses Sponsoring gedeihen zu lassen.			
Wir haben vor, mit dem Sponsor noch eine Weile zusammenzuarbeiten.			
Der Sponsor versteht unsere Position in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung.			
Der Sponsor ist bekannt für seinen fairen Umgang mit seinen Sponsoringpartnern.			
Der Sponsor arbeitet außerhalb des Sponsorings eng mit uns zusammen.			
Die Beziehung zwischen uns und dem Sponsor ist wie ein offenes Buch.			
Die Qualität der Beziehung zu dem Sponsor ist sehr gut.			
Wir sehen dem Sponsor Fehler nach, auch wenn uns diese Fehler Probleme bereiten.			
Der Sponsor ist offen im Umgang mit uns.			
Der Sponsor kann den Druck, dem wir ausgesetzt sind, nicht nachvollziehen.			
Unsere Verbindung mit dem Sponsor ist sehr erfolgreich.			
Wir sind diesem Sponsoring nicht sehr verbunden.			
Wir vertrauen dem Sponsor, dass er uns nach bestem Willen vertritt.			
Der Sponsor und wir machen es uns zum Prinzip uns gegenseitig auf dem Laufenden zu halten.			
Wir sind auf der ständigen Suche nach anderen Sponsorships um den Sponsor zu ersetzen.			
Wir können uns auf den Sponsor in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung verlassen.			
Der Sponsor sucht unseren Rat bezüglich seiner Marketingbestrebungen.			
Unsere Beziehung zu dem Sponsor ist eine langfristige Verbindung.			
Für den Erfolg des Sponsorings im Allgemeinen ist es sehr wichtig eine gute Qualität der Beziehung zwischen unserem Klub und dem Sponsor aufrechtzuerhalten.			
Wenn uns ein anderes Unternehmen ein besseres Sponsoringgeschäft anbieten würde, dann würden wir annehmen, auch wenn wir dadurch einen bestehenden Sponsor ersetzen müssten.			

D-2: Wie erfolgreich war dieses Sponsoring bei der Umsetzung Ihrer allgemeinen Sponsoringziele auf einer Skala von 1 bis 10, wobei 10 = sehr erfolgreich und

Trikot-sponsor	kommerz. Partner	kleinere Sponsoren

E) ALLGEMEINE FRAGEN ZU IHREM KLUB

Kreuzen Sie bitte das entsprechende Kästchen an

E-1: *Würden Sie Ihren Klub anhand der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung in Deutschland als einen*

☐ großen Klub ☐ mittleren Klub ☐ kleineren Klub

innerhalb der Bundesliga einschätzen?

E-2: *Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte arbeiten für Ihren Klub (alle Mitarbeiter/innen, die auf der Gehaltsliste stehen, inklusive Spieler, Trainer, Betreuer, Verwaltung, Präsidium, Hausmeister, Platzwart, etc.)?*

☐ weniger als 50 ☐ zwischen 50 und 99 ☐ zwischen 100 und 199
☐ zwischen 200 und 249 ☐ zwischen 250 und 300 ☐ mehr als 300

E-3: *Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte arbeiten in Ihrer Marketingabteilung?*

☐ keine ☐ weniger als eine Vollzeitkraft ☐ 1
☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 und mehr

E-4: *Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte arbeiten speziell im Bereich Sponsoring?*

☐ keine ☐ weniger als eine Vollzeitkraft ☐ 1
☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 und mehr

E-5: *Wie hoch war Ihr letztjähriger Jahresumsatz in Millionen Euro? (optional)*

☐ weniger als 2 Millionen € ☐ zwischen 2 Millionen € und 10 Millionen €
☐ zwischen 10 Millionen € und 50 Millionen € ☐ zwischen 50 Millionen € und 100 Millionen €
☐ mehr als 100 Millionen €

E-6: *Teilen Sie uns abschließend bitte noch Ihre Position innerhalb Ihres Fußballklubs mit:*

NOCHMALS VIELEN DANK FÜR IHRE ZEIT UND MÜHE.

Senden Sie diesen Fragebogen nun bitte im beigelegten adressierten Rückumschlag zurück an uns.



SPONSORING IM DEUTSCH-ENGLISCHEN PROFIFUSSBALL

Ein doktorales Forschungsprojekt an der
University of Plymouth (UK)



FRAGEBOGEN FÜR (TRIKOT-)SPONSOREN DEUTSCHER FUSSBUNDESLIGAKLUBS

A) FRAGEN ZU IHREM SPONSORINGENGAGEMENT IN DER FUSSBALLBUNDESLIGA

Beziehen Sie sich bei Ihren Antworten bitte auf den Bundesligaverein, den Sie sponsern und verwenden Sie dafür die Spalte "Klub 1". FALLS Sie zwei oder drei Bundesligavereine sponsern, verwenden Sie bitte die Spalte "Klub 2" für den zweiten Klub und die Spalte "Klub 3" für den dritten Klub. Falls Sie mehr als drei Bundesligavereine sponsern, wählen Sie bitte die drei Bundesligavereine aus, die Ihres Erachtens am besten Ihr Sponsoringengagement in der Fußballbundesliga widerspiegeln. Beziehen Sie sich innerhalb der Spalten bitte immer auf denselben Klub, den Sie anfangs gewählt haben. Tragen Sie bitte die zutreffende NUMMER der in den Fragen angegebenen Skalen in die grauen Felder ein.

A-1: Würden Sie diesen Fußballklub anhand des öffentlichen Interesses in Deutschland als

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
1 = großen Klub			
2 = mittleren Klub			
3 = kleinen Klub			
innerhalb der Bundesliga beschreiben?			

A-2: Wie lange sponsern Sie diesen Klub schon?

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
1 = seit weniger als einem Jahr			
2 = zwischen 1 und 2 Jahren			
3 = zwischen 2 und 5 Jahren			
4 = mehr als 5 Jahre			

A-3: Wie lange haben Sie noch vor, diesen Klub zu sponsern?

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
1 = weniger als ein Jahr			
2 = zwischen 1 und 2 Jahren			
3 = zwischen 2 und 5 Jahren			
4 = noch mehr als 5 Jahre			
5 = weiß nicht			

A-4: Wie hoch ist die jährliche Grundsumme des Sponsoringvertrages (ohne Bonus)?

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
1 = weniger als 150.000 Euro			
2 = zwischen 150.000 und 749.999 Euro			
3 = zwischen 750.000 und 1.500.000 Euro			
4 = mehr als 1.500.000 Euro			
5 = keine Angaben			

Tragen Sie bitte die NUMMER, die am ehesten Ihre Zustimmung/Ablehnung zu den folgenden Aussagen wiedergibt, in die grauen Felder ein. Die Skale reicht von 1 bis 7, wobei 7 = "stimme vollkommen zu" und 1 = "stimme überhaupt nicht zu" bedeutet.

A-5: Wir sponsern diesen Fußballklub, um...

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
den Bekanntheitsgrad unseres Unternehmens zu steigern.			
mediale Aufmerksamkeit für unser Unternehmen zu erlangen.			
mediale Aufmerksamkeit für unsere Marke zu erlangen.			
das Image unseres Unternehmens zu verbessern.			
den Bekanntheitsgrad unserer Marke zu steigern.			
die Wahrnehmung unserer Unternehmens-Zielgruppe zu verbessern.			
die Wahrnehmung unserer Marken-Zielgruppe zu verbessern.			
unsere Verkaufszahlen zu steigern.			
unsere Geschäftsbeziehungen zu verbessern.			
unsere Belegschaft zu motivieren.			
unserer lokale Verantwortung gerecht zu werden.			
mit anderen Sponsoren ein Netzwerk aufzubauen.			
uns in Anbetracht der anstehenden Fußball-WM 2006 als Fußballsponsor zu positionieren.			
wir verfolgen mit diesem Sponsoring keine bestimmten Ziele			

Sonstiges, bitte beschreiben:

A-6: Insgesamt gesehen sponsern wir diesen Klub aus

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
kommerziellen Gründen			
persönlichen Gründen			

A-7: Wo sehen Sie Verbesserungsbedarf im Bereich Sponsoring?

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
Exklusivität des Sponsorings			
Kreativität seitens des Klubs			
Kreativität seitens des Sponsors			
Professionalisierung seitens des Klubs			
Professionalisierung seitens des Sponsors			
Evaluierung der Sponsoringeffekte			
Sponsoring als Network-Plattform für und zwischen Sponsoren			

Sonstiges, bitte beschreiben:

A-8: Wir haben diesen Fußballklub aus folgenden Gründen gewählt

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
Image des Klubs			
Größe der Anhängerschar			
Lokale Nähe			
Preis des Sponsoringpakets			
Das seriöse Geschäftsgebahren des Klubs			
Keine bestimmten Kriterien			
Wir wählten nicht den Fußballklub aus, dieser Fußballklubs wählte uns aus			

Sonstiges, bitte beschreiben:

B) FRAGEN ZUR BEZIEHUNG ZWISCHEN IHREM UNTERNEHMEN UND DEM FUSSBALLKLUB

B-1: In diesem Abschnitt wollen wir gerne wissen wie Sie bestimmte Aspekte der Beziehung zwischen Ihrem Unternehmen und dem Fußballklub wahrnehmen. Tragen Sie dazu bitte die NUMMER, die am ehesten Ihre Zustimmung/Ablehnung zu den folgenden Aussagen wiedergibt, in die grauen Felder ein. Die Skale reicht von 1 bis 7, wobei 7 = "stimme vollkommen zu" und 1 = "stimme überhaupt nicht zu" bedeutet.

	Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
Der Fußballklub versteht unsere Bedürfnisse als Sponsor.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir zeigen dem Fußballklub gegenüber ein hohes Maß an Loyalität.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub arbeitet innerhalb des Sponsorings eng mit uns zusammen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind vorsichtig, dem Fußballklub zu viele Informationen zu geben.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub und wir machen vieles zusammen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir arbeiten proaktiv an der Beziehung zu dem Fußballklub.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub versteht, was wir uns von dem Sponsorship versprechen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind bereit, langfristig in die Beziehung zu dem Fußballklub zu investieren.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir verteidigen den Fußballklub wenn andere ihn kritisieren.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub weiß über das Sponsoring Bescheid.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub kümmert sich um unser Wohlergehen in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der allgemeine Leistungsumfang des Fußballklubs lässt sehr zum Wünschen übrig.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind in die Marketing- und Planungsbestrebungen des Fußballklubs voll involviert.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Falls möglich, arbeiten wir mit dem Fußballklub an gemeinsamen Projekten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir messen die Qualität der Beziehung zu dem Fußballklub.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Die Ergebnisse des Sponsorings entsprechen im Allgemeinen nicht unseren Erwartungen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind Willens jegliche persönliche und materielle Unterstützung zu gewähren um dieses Sponsoring gedeihen zu lassen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir haben vor, mit dem Fußballklub noch eine Weile zusammenzuarbeiten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub versteht unsere Position in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub ist bekannt für seinen fairen Umgang mit seinen Sponsoringpartnern.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub arbeitet außerhalb des Sponsorings eng mit uns zusammen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Die Beziehung zwischen uns und dem Fußballklub ist wie ein offenes Buch.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Die Qualität der Beziehung zu dem Fußballklub ist sehr gut.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sehen dem Fußballklub Fehler nach, auch wenn uns die Fehler Probleme bereiten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub ist offen im Umgang mit uns.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub kann den Druck, dem wir ausgesetzt sind, nicht nachvollziehen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Unsere Verbindung mit dem Fußballklub ist sehr erfolgreich.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind diesem Sponsoring nicht sehr verbunden.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir vertrauen dem Fußballklub, dass er uns nach bestem Willen vertritt.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub und wir machen es uns zum Prinzip uns gegenseitig auf dem Laufenden zu halten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir sind auf der ständigen Suche nach anderen Sponsorships um den Fußballklub zu ersetzen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wir können uns auf den Fußballklub in dieser Sponsoringbeziehung verlassen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Der Fußballklub sucht unseren Rat bezüglich seiner Marketingbestrebungen.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Unsere Beziehung mit dem Fußballklub ist ein langfristiges Bündnis.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Für den Erfolg des Sponsorings im Allgemeinen ist es sehr wichtig eine gute Qualität der Beziehung zwischen uns und dem Fußballklub aufrechtzuerhalten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wenn uns ein anderer Fußballklub ein besseres Sponsoringgeschäft anbieten würde, dann würden wir annehmen auch wenn wir dadurch den Fußballklub ersetzen müssten.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B-2: Wie erfolgreich war dieses Sponsoring bei der Umsetzung Ihrer allgemeinen Sponsoringziele auf einer Skala von 1 bis 10, wobei 10 = sehr erfolgreich und 1 = gar nicht erfolgreich bedeutet.

Klub 1	Klub 2	Klub 3
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

C) ALLGEMEINE FRAGEN ZU IHREM UNTERNEHMEN

Kreuzen Sie bitte das entsprechende Kästchen an

C-1: a) Kreuzen Sie bitte das Kästchen an, das am ehesten Ihre Unternehmensaktivitäten geographisch beschreibt.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> lokal | <input type="checkbox"/> regional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> national | <input type="checkbox"/> international |

b) Falls international, in wie vielen Ländern ist Ihr Unternehmen aktiv?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> mehr als 20 |

C-2: Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte beschäftigt Ihr Unternehmen?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> weniger als 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 10 und 49 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 50 und 249 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 240 und 499 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 500 und 1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> mehr als 1000 |

C-3: Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte arbeiten in Ihrer Marketingabteilung?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> weniger als 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 6 und 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 11 und 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 16 und 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 21 und 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> mehr als 25 |

C-4: Wie viele Vollzeitkräfte arbeiten speziell im Bereich Sponsoring?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> keine | <input type="checkbox"/> weniger als eine Vollzeitkraft | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 und mehr |

C-5: In welchem Wirtschaftsbereich ist Ihr Unternehmen tätig?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bausektor | <input type="checkbox"/> Produktion | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport, Komm. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energiewirtschaft | <input type="checkbox"/> Kommunikation | <input type="checkbox"/> Handel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dienstleistung | <input type="checkbox"/> Finanzen, Versicherungen, Immobilien | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstige: |

C-6: Wie hoch war Ihr letzjähriger Jahresumsatz in Millionen Euro (optional)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> weniger als 2 Millionen € | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 2 Millionen € und 10 Millionen € |
| <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 10 Millionen € und 50 Millionen € | <input type="checkbox"/> zwischen 50 Millionen € und 100 Millionen € |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mehr als 100 Millionen € | |

C-7: Teilen Sie uns abschließend bitte noch Ihre Position innerhalb Ihres Unternehmens mit:

NOCHMALS VIELEN DANK FÜR IHRE ZEIT UND MÜHE.

Senden Sie diesen Fragebogen nun bitte im beigelegten adressierten Rückumschlag zurück an uns.

Appendix XVIII: Items of scales

coding	wording	questionnaire position
COMMITMENT – adopted from Anderson and Weitz (1992)		
cot1	We defend this football club whenever others criticise it.	9
cot2	We have a strong sense of loyalty to this football club.	2
cot3	We are continually on the lookout for another sponsorship deal to replace this football club.	31
cot4	We expect to be using this football club for some time.	18
cot5	If another football club offered us a better sponsorship deal, we would most certainly take them on, even if it meant dropping this football club.	36
cot6	We are not very committed to this sponsorship.	28
cot7	We are quite willing to make long-term investments in our relationship with this football club.	8
cot8	Our relationship with this football club is a long-term alliance.	34
cot9	We are patient with this football club when they make mistakes that cause us trouble.	24
cot10	We are willing to dedicate whatever people and resources it takes to grow this sponsorship.	17
TRUST – adopted from Farelly and Quester (2005)		
tru1	We can rely on this football club in the sponsorship relationship.	32
tru2	This football club is knowledgeable about the sponsorship relationship.	10
tru3	This football club understands our position in the sponsorship relationship.	19
tru4	This football club cares for our welfare in the sponsorship relationship.	11
tru4	This football club is open in dealing with us in the sponsorship relationship.	25
tru6	We trust this football club to serve our best interests.	29
tru7	This football club is well known for their fair dealings with sponsors.	20
SATISFACTION – adopted from Lages <i>et al.</i> (2004)		
sat1	Our association with this football club has been a highly successful one.	27
sat2	This football club leaves a lot to be desired from an overall performance standpoint off the field.	12
sat3	Overall, the results of our relationship with this football club fall far short of expectations.	16
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING – newly developed scale		
und1	This football club understands what we want from the sponsorship.	7
und2	This football club does not understand the pressures of our business.	26
und3	This football club understands our needs as a sponsor.	1
COOPERATION – newly developed scale		
coo1	Whenever possible we work jointly on projects.	14
coo2	This football club cooperates closely with us within the context of the sponsorship.	3
coo3	This football club cooperates closely with us outside the context of the sponsorship.	21
coo4	We and this football club are doing many things together.	5
COMMUNICATION – adopted from Chadwick (2004)		
com1	We and this football club make a point of keeping each other well informed.	30
com2	We hesitate to give this football club too much information.	4
com3	We are quite heavily involved in the marketing and planning efforts of this football club.	13
com4	This football club seeks our advice and opinion concerning its marketing efforts.	33
com5	Our relationship with this football club is like an open book.	22
OVERALL RELATIONSHIP QUALITY – newly developed item		
orq	The quality of relationship between our company and this football club is very good.	23

NB: the word ‘football clubs’ has been replaced by ‘sponsor’ in the clubs’ questionnaire

Appendix XIX: Frequency tables relating to PRP7 – importance of relationship quality

▪ Importance of relationship quality – English and German clubs and/or sponsors

Maintaining a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.	clubs & sponsors		clubs		sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
agree	151	80.3	54	85.7	97	77.6
disagree	23	12.2	6	9.5	17	13.6
undecided	14	7.4	3	4.8	11	8.8
Valid	188	100.0	63	100.0	125	100.0
Missing	2		0		2	
Total	190		63		127	

▪ Importance of relationship quality – English clubs and/or sponsors

Maintaining a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.	English clubs & sponsors		English clubs		English sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
agree	53	79.1	28	93.3	25	67.6
disagree	9	13.4	0		9	24.3
undecided	5	7.5	2	6.7	3	8.1
Valid	67	100.0	30	100.0	37	
Missing	0		0		0	
Total	67		30		37	

▪ Importance of relationship quality – German clubs and/or sponsors

Maintaining a good quality of relationship between the club and the sponsor is very important for the success of the sponsorship as a whole.	German clubs & sponsors		German clubs		German sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
agree	98	81.0	26	78.8	72	81.8
disagree	14	11.6	6	18.2	8	9.1
undecided	9	7.4	1	3.0	8	9.1
Valid	121	100.0	33	100.0	88	100.0
Missing	2		0		2	
Total	123		33		90	

▪ *Evaluating relationship quality – English and German clubs and/or sponsors*

We measure the quality of relationship between us and our partner.	clubs & sponsors		clubs		sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	59	31.2	23	36.5	36	28.6
no	100	52.9	24	38.1	76	60.3
undecided	30	15.9	16	25.4	14	11.1
Valid	189	100.0	63	100.0	126	100.0
Missing	1		0		1	
Total	190		63		127	

▪ *Evaluating relationship quality – English clubs and/or sponsors*

We measure the quality of relationship between us and our partner.	English clubs & sponsors		English clubs		English sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	23	34.3	11	36.7	12	32.4
no	29	43.3	8	26.7	21	56.8
undecided	15	22.4	11	36.7	4	10.8
Valid	67	100.0	30	100.0	37	100.0
Missing	0		0		0	
Total	67		30		37	

▪ *Evaluating relationship quality – German clubs and/or sponsors*

We measure the quality of relationship between us and our partner.	German clubs & sponsors		German clubs		German sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	36	29.5	12	36.4	24	27.0
no	71	58.2	16	48.5	55	61.8
undecided	15	12.3	5	15.2	10	11.2
Valid	122	100.0	33	100.0	89	100.0
Missing	1		0		1	
Total	123		33		90	

▪ **Managing relationship – English and German clubs and/or sponsors**

We proactively manage the relationship between us and our partner.	clubs & sponsors		clubs		sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	117	61.9	48	76.2	69	54.8
no	39	20.6	6	9.5	33	56.2
undecided	33	17.5	9	14.3	24	19.0
Valid	189	100.0	63	100.0	126	100.0
Missing	1		0		1	
Total	190		63		127	

▪ **Managing relationship – English clubs and/or sponsors**

We proactively manage the relationship between us and our partner.	English clubs & sponsors		English clubs		English sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	42	62.7	23	76.7	19	51.4
no	9	13.4	0	0.0	9	24.3
undecided	16	23.9	7	23.3	9	24.3
Valid	67	100.	30	100.0	37	100.0
Missing	0		0		0	
Total	67		30		37	

▪ **Managing relationship – German clubs and/or sponsors**

We proactively manage the relationship between us and our partner.	German clubs & sponsors		German clubs		German sponsors	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent	Count	Valid Percent
yes	75	61.5	25	75.8	50	56.2
no	30	24.6	6	18.2	24	27.0
undecided	17	13.9	2	6.1	15	16.9
Valid	122	100.0	33	100.0	89	100.0
Missing	1		0		1	
Total	123		33		90	

Appendix XX: Figures and tables relating to simple regression analysis

Correlations

		overall relationship quality	overall success of the sponsorship
overall relationship quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.691**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.000
	N	189	189
overall success of the sponsorship	Pearson Correlation	.691**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.
	N	189	189

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.691 ^a	.477	.474	1.397

a. Predictors: (Constant), overall relationship quality

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	332.714	1	332.714	170.439	.000 ^a
	Residual	365.042	187	1.952		
	Total	697.757	188			

a. Predictors: (Constant), overall relationship quality

b. Dependent Variable: overall success of the sponsorship

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.659	.333		7.977	.000
	overall relationship quality	.815	.062	.691	13.055	.000

a. Dependent Variable: overall success of the sponsorship

Appendix XXI: Descriptive statistics relating to the continuous variables

Commitment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
cot1	189	1	7	4.67	1.780
cot2	189	1	7	5.40	1.746
cot3	189	1	7	6.08	1.562
cot4	189	1	7	5.47	1.737
cot5	189	1	7	5.37	1.772
cot6	189	1	7	5.96	1.635
cot7	189	1	7	5.01	1.720
cot8	189	1	7	5.04	1.739
cot9	189	1	7	4.19	1.684
cot10	189	1	7	3.95	1.817
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		51.15	.781
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	49.61	
	Upper Bound	52.69	
5% Trimmed Mean		51.92	
Median		53.00	
Variance		115.418	
Std. Deviation		10.743	
Minimum		14	
Maximum		70	
Range		56	
Interquartile Range		14.00	
Skewness		-1.018	.177
Kurtosis		1.189	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)			
	Statistic	df	Sig.
COT	.090	189	.001

- No significant difference between the mean (51.15) and the 5% trimmed mean (51.92) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -1.018
- Kurtosis value of 1.189 indicating a leptokurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.001) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows some evidence of normal distribution, although this is not very strong.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a relatively straight line suggesting a normal distribution, but departures from the straight line at both the low and the high scores suggest this is not strong.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows the points of middle scores around the zero line, points of lower and higher scores considerably below the line
- Box plot reveals seven outliers but no extreme cases. For the purposes of this analysis, the outliers are retained because they are not thought to have a significant impact upon the findings of the quantitative data analysis.

Trust

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
tru1	189	1	7	5.02	1.608
tru2	189	1	7	5.17	1.593
tru3	189	1	7	5.01	1.579
tru4	189	1	7	4.61	1.661
tru5	189	1	7	4.69	1.481
tru6	189	1	7	4.77	1.591
tru7	189	1	7	4.85	1.434
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		34.12	.665
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	32.80	
	Upper Bound	35.43	
5% Trimmed Mean		34.51	
Median		35.00	
Variance		83.529	
Std. Deviation		9.139	
Minimum		8	
Maximum		49	
Range		41	
Interquartile Range		10.50	
Skewness		-.677	.177
Kurtosis		.168	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.105	189	.000

- No significant difference between the mean (34.12) and the 5% trimmed mean (34.51) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -0.677
- Kurtosis value of 0.168 indicating a leptokurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.000) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows some evidence of normal distribution, although this is not very strong.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot show a relatively straight line suggesting a normal distribution, but departures from the straight line at low scores suggest this is not strong.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows no evident clustering of values
- Box plot reveals seven outliers but no extreme cases. For the purposes of this analysis, the outliers are retained because they are not thought to have a significant impact upon the findings of the quantitative data analysis.

Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
sat1	189	1	7	5.08	1.410
sat2	189	1	7	5.61	1.687
sat3	189	1	7	5.59	1.484
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		16.28	.272
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	15.74	
	Upper Bound	16.82	
5% Trimmed Mean		16.60	
Median		17.00	
Variance		13.979	
Std. Deviation		3.739	
Minimum		5	
Maximum		21	
Range		16	
Interquartile Range		4.50	
Skewness		-1.211	.177
Kurtosis		1.171	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.169	189	.000

- No significant difference between the mean (16.28) and the 5% trimmed mean (16.60) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -1.211
- Kurtosis value of 1.171 indicating a leptokurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.000) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows strong evidence of normal distribution, although skewed towards top end values.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a slight S-curve, therefore breaching the assumption of normality
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows no evident clustering of values.
- Box plot reveals eight outliers but no extreme cases. For the purposes of this analysis, the outliers are retained because they are not thought to have a significant impact upon the findings of the quantitative data analysis.

Mutual Understanding

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
und1	189	1	7	4.87	1.550
und2	189	1	7	4.90	1.603
und3	189	1	7	4.60	1.556
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		14.37	.259
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	13.85	
	Upper Bound	14.88	
5% Trimmed Mean		14.41	
Median		15.00	
Variance		12.648	
Std. Deviation		3.556	
Minimum		7	
Maximum		21	
Range		14	
Interquartile Range		5.00	
Skewness		-.232	.177
Kurtosis		-.672	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.089	189	.001

- No significant difference between the mean (14.37) and the 5% trimmed mean (14.41) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -0.232
- Kurtosis value of -0.672 indicating a platykurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.001) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows some evidence of normal distribution, although this is not very strong.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a nearly straight line, suggesting a normal distribution.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows no evident clustering of values.
- Box plot reveals no outlying values.

Cooperation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
coo1	189	1	7	4.10	1.875
coo2	189	1	7	4.79	1.761
coo3	189	1	7	3.68	1.876
coo4	189	1	7	4.36	1.719
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		16.93	.407
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	16.13	
	Upper Bound	17.73	
5% Trimmed Mean		17.00	
Median		18.00	
Variance		31.373	
Std. Deviation		5.601	
Minimum		4	
Maximum		28	
Range		24	
Interquartile Range		8.00	
Skewness		-.204	.177
Kurtosis		-.412	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.108	189	.000

- No significant difference between the mean (16.93) and the 5% trimmed mean (17.00) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -0.204
- Kurtosis value of 0.168 indicating a platykurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.000) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows some evidence of normal distribution.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a relatively straight line suggesting a normal distribution, suggesting a normal distribution.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows no evident clustering of values
- Box plot reveals no outlying values.

Communication

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
com1	189	1	7	4.47	1.593
com2	189	1	7	5.17	1.582
com3	189	1	7	3.03	1.873
com4	189	1	7	3.04	1.859
com5	189	1	7	3.16	1.678
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		18.87	.417
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	18.05	
	Upper Bound	19.69	
5% Trimmed Mean		18.70	
Median		18.00	
Variance		32.803	
Std. Deviation		5.727	
Minimum		8	
Maximum		35	
Range		27	
Interquartile Range		8.00	
Skewness		.386	.177
Kurtosis		-.348	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.084	189	.002

- No significant difference between the mean (18.87) and the 5% trimmed mean (18.70) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Positively skewed distribution with a value of 0.386
- Kurtosis value of -0.168 indicating a platykurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.002) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows evidence of normal distribution.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a straight line suggesting a normal distribution, but departures from the straight line at low scores suggest this is not strong.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows point collected around the zero line with no evident clustering of values
- Box plot reveals two outliers but no extreme cases. For the purposes of this analysis, the outliers are retained because they are not thought to have a significant impact upon the findings of the quantitative data analysis.

Overall relationship quality

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
overall relationship quality	189	1	7	5.08	1.632
Valid N (listwise)	189				

		Statistic	Std. Error
Mean		5.08	.119
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	4.85	
	Upper Bound	5.32	
5% Trimmed Mean		5.20	
Median		5.00	
Variance		2.663	
Std. Deviation		1.632	
Minimum		1	
Maximum		7	
Range		6	
Interquartile Range		2.00	
Skewness		-.791	.177
Kurtosis		.019	.352

Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.188	189	.000

- No significant difference between the mean (5.08) and the 5% trimmed mean (5.20) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong influence on the mean
- Negatively skewed distribution with a value of -0.791
- Kurtosis value of 0.019 indicating a leptokurtic distribution
- Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (0.000) is highly significant (<0.05), breaching the assumption of normality.
- Distribution histogram shows little evidence of normal distribution.
- Normal Q-Q-Plot shows a relatively straight line suggesting a normal distribution, but departures from the straight line at low scores suggest this is not strong.
- Detrended Normal Q-Q-Plot shows point collected around the zero line with no evident clustering of values
- Box plot reveals three outliers but no extreme cases. For the purposes of this analysis, the outliers are retained because they are not thought to have a significant impact upon the findings of the quantitative data analysis.

Appendix XXII: Summary of standard multiple regression before factor analysis (MRA I)

▪ *Personian correlations*

	overall relationship quality	COT	TRU	SAT	UND	COO	COM
overall relationship quality	1						
COT	.711(**)	1					
TRU	.803(**)	.773(**)	1				
SAT	.722(**)	.701(**)	.752(**)	1			
UND	.676(**)	.616(**)	.799(**)	.603(**)	1		
COO	.722(**)	.622(**)	.678(**)	.529(**)	.592(**)	1	
COM	.475(**)	.370(**)	.381(**)	.259(**)	.338(**)	.687(**)	1

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

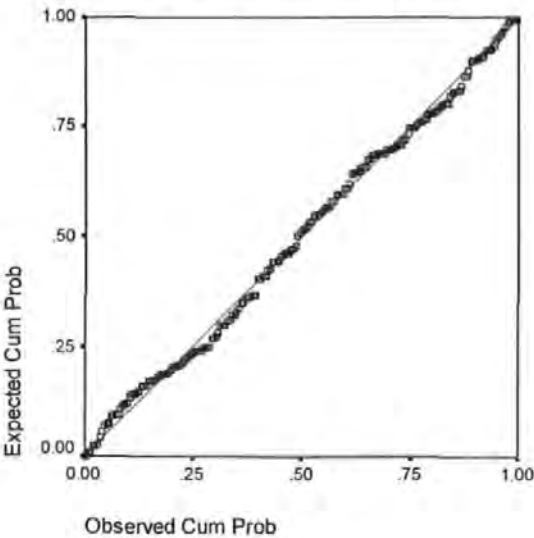
▪ *ANOVA*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	369.595	6	61.599	85.547	.000
Residual	131.051	182	.720		
Total	500.646	188			

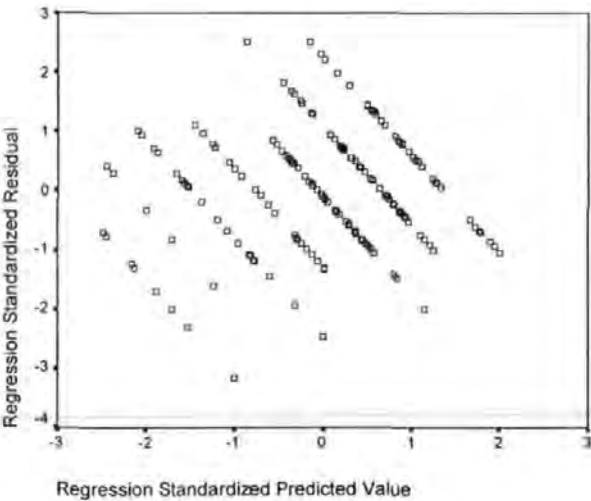
▪ *Tolerance coefficients*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance
(Constant)	-.986	.314		-3.138	.002	
COT	.113	.092	.078	1.228	.221	.353
TRU	.407	.109	.325	3.745	.000	.191
SAT	.320	.079	.244	4.051	.000	.395
UND	.061	.073	.053	.836	.404	.356
COO	.279	.079	.239	3.531	.001	.313
COM	.091	.064	.076	1.433	.154	.511

▪ *Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual*



▪ *Scatterplot*



▪

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.859	.738	.730	.849

Appendix XXIII: ANOVA table for the hierarchical MRA before factor analysis

▪ *ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	322.994	1	322.994	339.992	.000(a)
	Residual	177.651	187	.950		
	Total	500.646	188			
2	Regression	339.167	2	169.584	195.336	.000(b)
	Residual	161.478	186	.868		
	Total	500.646	188			
3	Regression	366.541	3	122.180	168.550	.000(c)
	Residual	134.105	185	.725		
	Total	500.646	188			
4	Regression	367.639	4	91.910	127.147	.000(d)
	Residual	133.007	184	.723		
	Total	500.646	188			
5	Regression	369.092	5	73.818	102.686	.000(e)
	Residual	131.554	183	.719		
	Total	500.646	188			
6	Regression	369.595	6	61.599	85.547	.000(f)
	Residual	131.051	182	.720		
	Total	500.646	188			

a Predictors: (Constant), TRU

b Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT

c Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO

d Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT

e Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT, COM

f Predictors: (Constant), TRU, SAT, COO, COT, COM, UND

g Dependent Variable: overall relationship quality

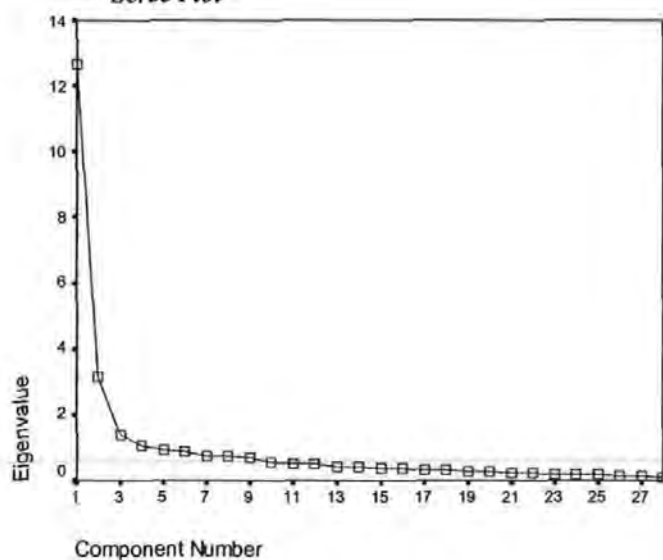
Appendix XXIV: Personian correlations and scree plot relating to the factor analysis

■ Personian correlations

	ORQ*	COT	TRU	SAT	UND	COO
ORQ*	1					
COT	.711(**)	1				
TRU	.803(**)	.773(**)	1			
SAT	.722(**)	.701(**)	.752(**)	1		
UND	.676(**)	.616(**)	.799(**)	.603(**)	1	
COO	.722(**)	.622(**)	.678(**)	.529(**)	.592(**)	1
COM	.475(**)	.370(**)	.381(**)	.259(**)	.338(**)	.687(**)

* ORQ = overall relationship quality ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

■ Scree Plot



Appendix XXV: ANOVA table for the hierarchical MRA after factor analysis

• ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	347.405	1	347.405	423.939	.000(a)
	Residual	153.241	187	.819		
	Total	500.646	188			
2	Regression	354.458	2	177.229	225.495	.000(b)
	Residual	146.188	186	.786		
	Total	500.646	188			
3	Regression	366.375	3	122.125	168.265	.000(c)
	Residual	134.271	185	.726		
	Total	500.646	188			

a Predictors: (Constant), RC

b Predictors: (Constant), RC, LP

c Predictors: (Constant), RC, LP, CB

d Dependent Variable: overall relationship quality