Article can be accessed online at http://www.publishingindia.com

Branding of Sport Teams: Re-conceptualizing the Fan Based Brand-Equity Model

Anish Yousaf Naik*, Anil Gupta**

Abstract

Previous frameworks on brand-equity in team sports had relied heavily on Aaker (1991) or Keller (1993) models and had also restricted themselves not taking a holistic view of responsibility of teams' management towards fans and society in order to attract and retain loyal fans. Although, Keller (2001) argued via his brand-equity pyramid the importance of holistic view of brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, judgement, and customer feelings, coupled with brand resonance, for leveraging long-term loyalty of the customers. In the light of the above mentioned strengths, this study aims at applying Keller's (2001) customer based brand-equity pyramid framework in context of sports marketing for building/ enhancing brand-equity of sport teams. It is argued that the first step for building strong brand-equity of sport teams starts with identifying their salience followed by teams performance and teams imagery (teams meaning), fans judgements and feelings (teams responses), and fans brand resonance (teams relationship with fans) building a team's brand-equity pyramid. A framework, named as Fan Based Brand-Equity Pyramid, is suggested and the consequences of building strong brand-equity are also discussed. The framework provides useful insights to the sport team managers to build the fan based brand-equity.

Keywords: Brand-Equity, Fans, Sports Marketing, Sport Teams, Team Branding

Introduction

In modern sports, teams like Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Manchester United, New York Yankees, Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings (to name a few) reflects how important brand management has been viewed by professional sport executives who are strategically managing their teams as '*brands*' leveraging long-term benefits which can't be provided by performance in isolation (Ross, 2006). Lombardo (2003) cited the example of development of team logos in NBA by National Basketball Development League (NBDL) aimed at helping franchises and providing them their identities. Interestingly, similar practice was done by the franchisees of Indian Premier League (IPL hereafter), in India, who were asked to build their own image by developing team name, logo, and jersey.

Some franchisees even moved a step further and created their own team anthems to attract fans and as a result IPL franchisees became multi-billion brands even before the inaugural match of the first edition (2008) making IPL worth $3 billion brand while Forbes labelling it as "the world's hottest sports league" (Business Strategy Review, 2012). The importance of branding has also been highlighted in the team sports literature offering many financial as well as non-financial benefits to the franchisees (Bauer et al., 2005). Despite understanding the importance of branding in sports, academicians and professional sport managers are still facing the problem of how to create strong brands (Ross, 2006).

The frameworks developed earlier had a very narrow view of the brand-equity dimension and restricted themselves only to Aaker (1991) or Keller (1993), Ross (2006) being the only exception but still lacking the understanding as well as importance of brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, judgement and feelings of fans coupled with the most important dimension called as consumer brand resonance (CSR) for leveraging long-term loyalty

* Ph.D Research Scholar, The Business School, University of Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir, India. E-mail: anishyousaf86@gmail.com

** Assistant Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir, India. E-mail: anil1975@yahoo.com

of the customers. Customer based brand-equity literature review revealed Keller (2001) customer based brand-equity pyramid as the most realistic, robust, and modern framework arguing that building brand-equity does not depend solely on brand awareness or brand knowledge but also on brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, judgement and feelings of fans coupled with a dimension called as brand resonance for leveraging long-term loyalty of the customers. In the light of the above cited facts, it is meaningful to take into consideration these dimensions while conceptualizing a framework for building teams' brand-equity.

In the present study, a framework named as Fan Based Brand-Equity Pyramid is suggested and it is argued that developing teams' brand-equity is not a one step process but involves a series of steps starting with identification of teams' salience followed by teams performance and teams imagery (teams meaning), fans judgements and feelings (teams responses), and fans brand resonance (teams relationship with fans). The framework also discusses about the consequences of building strong brands and provides useful insights to the sport team managers to build the fan based brand-equity.

Review of Literature

Brand-Equity in Sports

In brand-equity literature various conceptualizations exists where Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) are still viewed as the most well-known and used frameworks among academicians and marketing practitioners. Aaker's (1991) most popular work "Managing Brand-Equity" highlights why it is important for managers to create strong brands and how strong brand-equity can help brand managers to develop strong customer loyalty and leverage brand extensions by viewing their brands as one of the most valuable asset of the firm. Keller (1993) conceptualizes customer-based brand equity using associative network memory model as "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" and holds the view that brand familiarity coupled with strong and favourable positive associations forms the brand-equity of a brand. Researchers argue that consumers have a different perception and feelings towards a brand adding to its value when compared to a generic product (Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Yoo and Donthu, 2001).

With the passage of time, the concept of brand-equity was not limited by researchers to a particular field only but was also extended to other fields such as healthcare sector (Ferguson, Paulin, and Leiriao, 2006), services sector (Voss, Roth, and Chase, 2008), sports apparel industry (Tong and Hawley, 2009), financial sector (Taylor, Hunter, and Lindberg, 2007), FMCG sector (Netemeyer et al., 2004) and automobile industry (Tolba and Hassan, 2009) to name a few. Sports marketing is one such latest field where executives start leveraging the brand-equity concept just one decade back. Valued at an estimated $141 billion, researchers justified the application of brand-equity research to the sports industry where 'team branding' is now seen as a prominent characteristic of sport teams having the potential of generating revenues and influencing consumer purchase intentions (Ratten and Ratten, 2011; Klayman, 2009; Cobb-Walgren, Beal and Donthu, 1995). Various brand-equity frameworks had been put forward by researchers for explaining the concept of brand-equity in sports.

Gladden, Milne and Sutton (1998) were the first to explain, using Aaker (1991), how generating brand-equity could help in branding of the sport teams of the Division I College Athletics. Their conceptual framework talks of antecedents (team, organization and market related factors) of teams' brand-equity had a major impact on the outcomes such as perceived quality, brand awareness, brand associations and brand loyalty describing it as a continuing cycling process. Later on, Keller (1993) framework was used by Gladden and Funk (2002) to develop their Team Association Model (TAM) consisting of 16 dimensions classifying various brand associations on the basis of attributes, benefits, and attitudes. Based on these two original frameworks, researchers like Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer and Exler (2008) and Villarejo-Ramos and Martin-Velicia (2007) also come forward and present their brand-equity frameworks after making some modifications in the original frameworks.

Ross (2006) came up with his spectator based brand-equity (SBBE) scale for team sports, using Berry (2000), highlighting a major limitation of previous frameworks for not taken into consideration the fact that sports is an intangible product and should be considered into services marketing arguing that Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) serving as a foundation for other previous frameworks were basically focusing on marketing of products but not services. Ross (2006) conceptually examined via his framework how the marketing strategies of a team enhance/ dilute its brand-equity and, thus, related outcomes such as merchandise sales, ticket revenues, high profits, and spectator attendance. Ross, James, and Vargas (2006) came up with their Team Brand Association Scale (TBAS) for measuring various associations of spectators related to sport teams highlighting how sport executives can take advantage of their high brand-equity by providing a clear picture for understanding and development of brand-equity.

Ross, Russell, and Bang (2008) moved a step further and empirically examine the SBBE framework of Ross (2006), thus, providing a clear picture of the antecedents of brand-equity in team sports. Attempts were further made to investigate the validity of the SBBE framework in emerging economies where Naik and Gupta (2012) on the basis of their empirical examination of SBBE framework in Indian Premier League (IPL) argued that sport consumption and cultural differences do exist requiring modifications in the current SBBE framework. There is no doubt accepting the fact that SBBE framework was in a better position and covers the main limitation of previous brand-equity frameworks that considers sports industry as a tangible product. But despite overcoming the limitations, this framework too suffers a major limitation i.e. “Narrow Conceptualization” of the brand-equity concept in team sports. In addition, all the previous brand-equity frameworks in team sports had focussed either on the development or measurement of teams’ brand-equity focussing only on brand awareness, brand associations or brand knowledge. These frameworks had also restricted themselves by not taking a holistic view of responsibility of teams’ management towards fans and society in order to attract and retain loyal fans.

Extensive literature review of customer based brand-equity revealed that Keller (2001) customer based brand-equity pyramid represents the most realistic, robust, and modern framework arguing about building brand-equity as a series of steps and does not depends solely on brand awareness or brand knowledge. Importantly, the critical role of management of sport teams cant’ be ignored while building the same. Thus, management should have a holistic view and understanding of brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, judgement and feelings of fans coupled with the most important dimension called as consumer brand resonance (CSR) for leveraging long-term loyalty of the customers. This framework includes the brand association as well as brand image dimensions and in addition talks about enlightening the hierarchy of intent of the brands. In the light of the above mentioned strengths of the brand-equity pyramid this conceptual study, thus, aims at applying Keller’s (2001) customer based brand-equity pyramid framework in context of sports marketing for building/enhancing brand-equity of sport teams. It is argued that the first step for building strong brand-equity of sport teams starts with identifying their salience followed by teams performance and teams imagery (teams meaning), fans judgements and feelings (teams responses), and fans brand resonance (teams relationship with fans) building a team’s brand-equity pyramid.

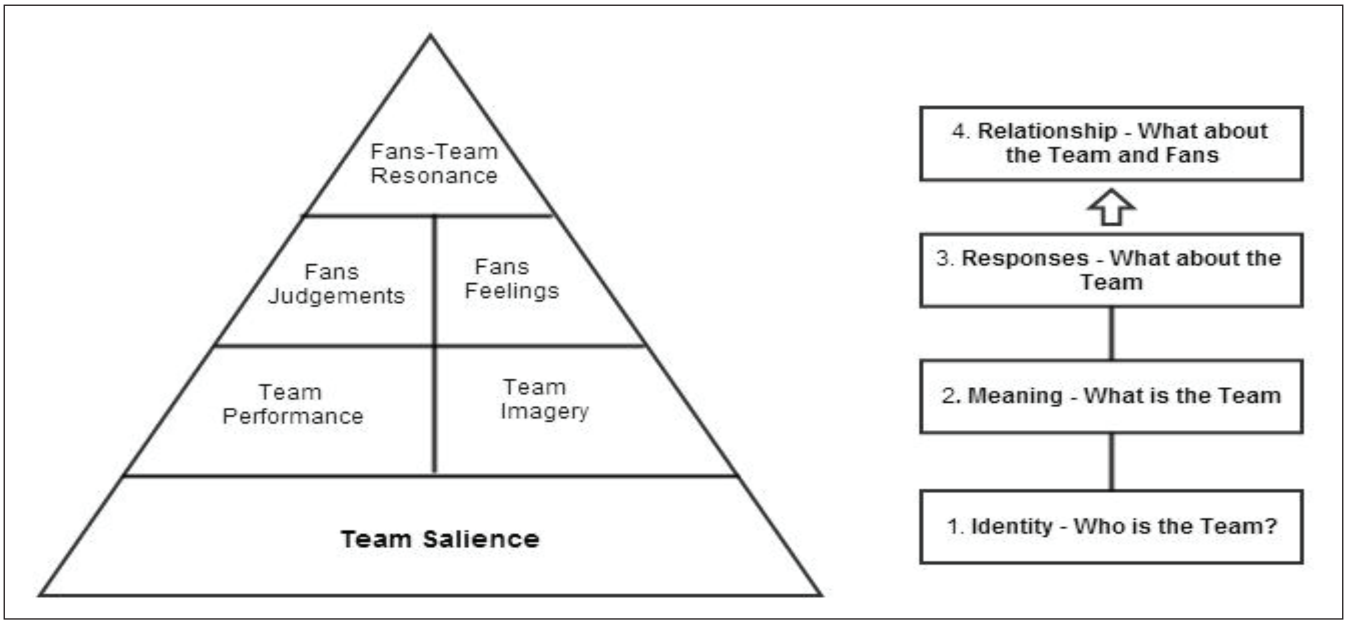
Conceptualizing Fan Based Brand-Equity Framework

Keller’s (2001) customer based brand-equity pyramid was purposely chosen to be applied in context of sport teams. It was argued that building brand-equity of sport teams involves a sequence of crucial steps forming a pyramid like structure where the very initial step is exploring the reasons for the teams’ existence which Keller called as brand salience and we named it as ‘team salience’ which is then followed by other crucial steps such as defining the team meaning, team response and finally team relationships with the fans. It is worth mentioning that each step is quite complex in itself and is dependent on the success of the previous step and management of the team cannot jump to the next step without defining the previous one. Like Keller, it is argued that six (6) questions needs to be answered first, known as ‘brand-building blocks’, in a sequential assembled manner forming a pyramid like structure. Sport executives needs to reach the top of the pyramid for creating strong brand-equity for the teams by placing building blocks at the appropriate place. Figure 1 shows the fan based brand-equity pyramid involving six brand-building blocks at different levels while Figure 2 gives a detailed and a clear picture of each block along with the consequences of following the same.

Team Identity

The brand identity construct has been given utmost importance by previous branding literature arguing that strong brand identity ensures employee retention (Wheeler et al., 2006), creating and designing corporate

Figure 1: Conceptualizing Fan Based Brand-Equity Framework



*Source: Based on Keller (2001) Brand-Equity Pyramid

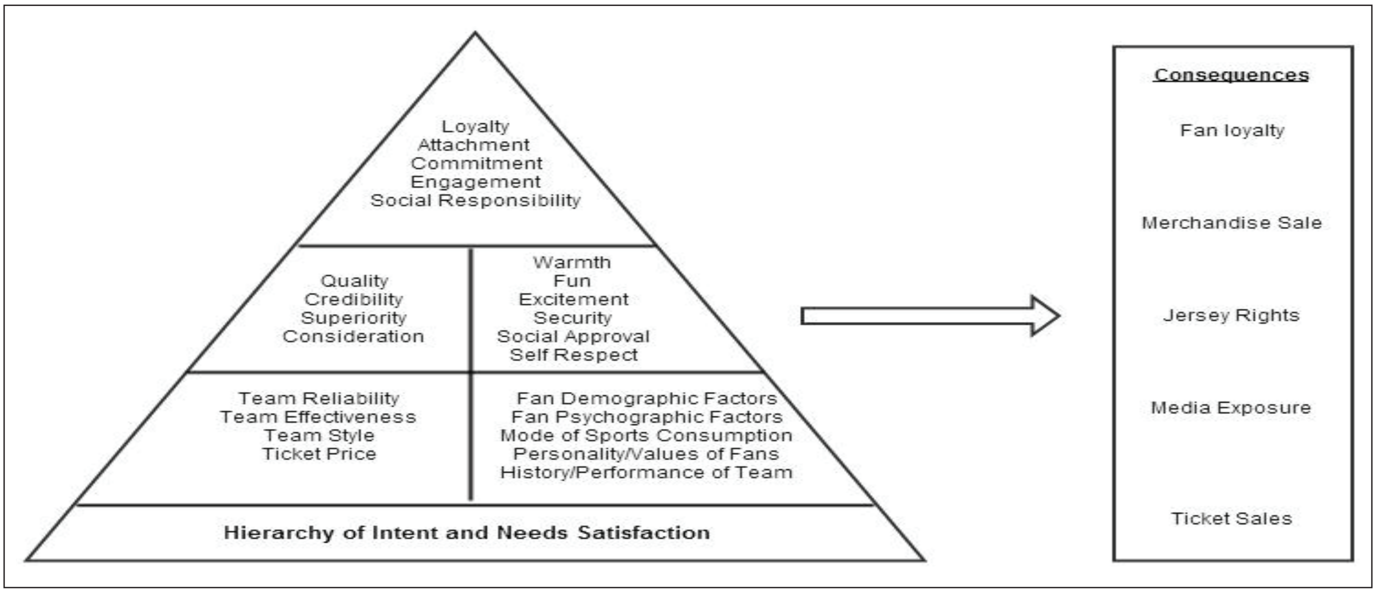
logos as well as marketing communications (Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer, 2007), competitive advantage and a strategic edge (Balmer and Gray, 2000), favourable brand awareness (Keller, 1993), successful brand extensions (Pitta and Katsanis, 1995), and enhanced firm performances (Craig, Dibrell and Davis, 2008; Harris and Chernatony, 2001). Sports marketing researchers had also agreed to the importance of identification in team sports literature but their focus was more on fans identification with teams (Gladden and Funk, 2002; Ross, Russell and Bang, 2008) whereas Keller (2001) focused on defining the identity of the teams rather than that of team fans. He argued that brand identity creates brand awareness which gives rise to brand salience with customers having more detailed information about the brand like the product category in which the brand competes and which need of the customer the brand is going to satisfy.

While using 'team salience', we argue that executives from team management should have a clear understanding of the reason for their existence, thus, defining teams 'hierarchy of intent' as well as fans are also well aware of teams product category, its logo, symbol, brand name and the team forms a dominant name in the fans consideration set even if they are not involved with the sports. It was suggested that team salience can be understood on the basis of two key terms: breadth and depth. Brand salience depth simply connotes the meaning of brand awareness i.e. how easy fans recall or identify the team whereas brand salience breadth provides a more complex scenario of fans mind including fans top-of-mind, mind share, purchase, and consumption related behaviour. It is, thus, argued that sports teams desirous of building a strong foundation for the next building block of their fan based brand-equity pyramid should focus strongly on 'depth' and 'breadth' that finally contributes to teams' salience.

Team Meaning

As discussed above, team salience gives a reason to the fans to understand, an official reason from the management side, why and in which product/service category a team exists. Importantly, for some fans this is not the only sufficient reason to get attracted/ associated to a team. Other parameters like teams meaning and teams image do play their important role in creating a favourable and respectable image of the team in their minds. Like Keller (2001), we categorize team meaning into two broad categories: team performance and team imagery. Both these categories represent different ways in which a fan is associated with the team e.g. team performance includes the functional and performance related fans associations whereas team imagery represents the abstract and imaginations related associations. Both team image and brand associations had been studied previously in the

Figure 2: Sub-dimensions of Fan Based Brand-Equity Building Blocks along with Consequences



*Source: Developed by Authors

sports marketing literature and researchers had argued that both are important contributor of brand loyalty, enhanced brand-equity, merchandise sales and sales of tickets (Wann and Schrader, 1997; Gladden and Funk, 2002; Ross, James and Vargas, 2006; Ross, Russell and Bang, 2008; Bauer et al., 2008).

Previous frameworks had included team performance as a separate dimension, other than brand associations, whereas Keller (2001) includes it under brand meaning. We are also of the similar view that high team performance during the tournament/league matches matters for fans who attach a particular meaning to the team meeting their functional needs. Interestingly, fans can rate/compare team performance on the basis of associated attributes and/or benefits such as teams reliability (consistency of performance), team effectiveness (how effective a team satisfy the fans entertainment needs), design and style (intangibles like color, logo and other dimensions impacting fans sensory aspects), and price of the tickets.

On the other end of the team meaning continuum are the abstract or imagination related intangible associations with which a fan derive meanings based on his imaginations. It does not take into account the true meaning like what a team does or what it can do but depicts the abstract thinking of the fans and are supposed to fulfill fans psychological and social needs. Intangible and abstract meanings can be broadly classified into categories dependent upon fan demographic factors (fans gender, race, ethnicity, income, marital status), fans psychographic factors (attitude towards sports/life, social issues, possessions, careers or political interest), mode of consumption of sports (stadiums, television, online, mood of the fans, time or day of the interaction with the team), fans personalities and their values, and finally the past history or performance of the team under consideration.

Importantly, whichever is the type of brand meaning fans are generating for the team professional executives should always assess the strength (How strong is a team identified?), uniqueness (How different is the team identified via generated meaning?) and favourability (How valuable is the association/ meaning for the fans?) of those associations. They should be more interested in producing these different associations and then assessing these questions in a sequential order for creating a strong fan based brand-equity, thus, generating a larger pool of loyal fans.

Fan Responses

Whereas the previous stages talk about how team management can garner strong and favourable brand associations, this block puts more focus on exploring what the fans think of the team and emphasize on evaluating the fans responses towards previously undertaken marketing activities from fans perspectives so as to have an understanding of fans feelings or judgments towards the team, thus, exploring whether the team lives in the 'heart' or 'head' of the fans. Responses towards the team can be broadly categorized into two categories as fans judgments and fan feelings. Fan judgments reflect rational and personal thoughts of fans towards the team created as a result of different functional/performance or imagery related team performances. In simple term, fan judgments simply reflect the feelings or responses originating directly from the head and do not take into consideration the heartily decisions. A fan can make different types of fan judgments like team quality (celebrity players, non-personnel players, current performance of team), team credibility (perceived expertise/professionalism, trust on team, entertaining, and worth spending the time for watching the matches), team consideration (extent to which fans considers the team into the set of teams they would love to watch), and team superiority (extent to which a team is viewed as superior and better than the other teams).

On the other hand, team feelings refer to responses originating from the heart and are basically taken on the basis of emotional reactions towards the teams. Sometimes, social acceptance and relationships with others also induce a sort of feelings within the fans. Team feelings can be categorized into types such as:

1) *Warmth*: feelings making the fan to feel a sort of calm or sentimental or affectionate about the team.
2) *Fun:* fans may feel amused, cheerful, joyful, playful or even lighthearted after viewing the matches of the teams or any activity of the team.
3) *Excitement:* feelings making fans feel more energetic and may feel cool or excited.
4) *Security:* fans may feel as if negative feelings like sadness, worries are being eliminated and occurs when the team produces a sense of security for the fans.
5) *Social Approval:* occurs when fans feel that supporting a team is viewed as socially acceptable and most of his peer-group, friends, and family members support the same team.
6) *Self-respect:* occurs when fans feel a sense of pride and respect by supporting a team.
7) *Patriotism:* occurs when fans feel a sense of respect by associating the team with their country or place. The feeling of patriotism occurs mostly in sporting events involving international countries and is a very crucial factor for attracting and retaining fans for the teams.

Recent researches on consumers feelings and their judgments had also contributed in favour of the argument that both plays an important role in consumers evaluation of products/services and enhanced fan loyalty and firms revenues (Laros and Steenkamp, 2005; Iyer and Kuksov, 2010). We, thus, argue that managers of the sport teams should also leverage and take into consideration these two dimensions by not worrying about their place of origin, head or heart, but should be more evaluative about how positive these feelings are and efforts should be made to convert negatively formed feelings about the teams into favourable positive feelings.

Fans-Team Relationships

The final building block in the fan based brand-equity pyramid is named as 'team resonance' and takes into consideration leveraging the relationship between the fans and the team. Team resonance gives a clear indication to the fans that the team is in synchronization with them and is committed for their welfare by developing a strong psychological bond. As per Keller (2001), various dimensions of team resonance can be broken down into different categories as:

1) *Behavioural loyalty*: degree to which fans repeatedly watch the matches of their favourite teams on television or online sources, buys teams merchandise or not as well as purchase of tickets of teams matches. Behavioural loyalty directly impact teams' revenues.
2) *Attitudinal attachment*: degree to which the fans love or describe the team as an important part of their life. This construct has been studied previously by Ross, Russell and Bang (2008) as team internalization where they measure the spectator-based brand-equity of NBA teams using his SBBE framework consisting of fans attitudinal attachment towards the teams as one of the component in the awareness construct.
3) *Sense of community*: Keller (2001) argues that by associating with communities brands can leverage the association for transferring meaning to them. However, the application of this practice in sports

context is also feasible where the team can associate with a community or generate their own global communities and generates broader meaning and fan base who, thus, feels associated with the team.

4) *Active engagement*: This step is considered to be the litmus-test for assessing the effectiveness of all the previous building blocks. It is argued that fans would be willing to invest their time, money, energy, and other resources in teams' activities when they are highly loyal and view the team as reliable and worth the investment made. Fans will only be interested in participating only when all the previous blocks had been placed at their respective positions and teams had worked hard by making sufficient investment on them. An active engaged fan would resemble club memberships, communicate about the team via word-of-mouth, interactions, and exchange of information with other loyal fans, acting as a brand ambassador for the teams and hence strengthening the ties with other (non-loyal) fans.
5) *Team social responsibility*: Keller (2001) stops at active engagement when explaining the various categories of brand resonance and does not take into account the important role played by 'corporate social responsibility' in sports marketing. Previous literature had argued that corporate social responsibility has a positive impact on brand strength, brand value, brand credibility, competitive positioning, and hence global brand-equity (Du, Bhattacharya and Sen, 2007; Munilla and Miles, 2005). In the light of the above studies it is, thus, argued that getting engaged in any socially responsible cause helps the teams to generate higher fan based brand-equity in long-run when compared to teams without any social cause.

The best example could be taken from Indian Premier League, a global Indian based T-20 cricket tournament, where teams like Mumbai Indians (Education for All campaign), Royal Challengers Bangalore (Go Green Initiative), Rajasthan Royals (supporting not-for-profit organization 'Operation Smile'), and Delhi Daredevils (education and protection of girl Childs under project 'Dare to Care') have associated themselves with a socially accepted cause. One important thing is that by endorsing such not-for-profit activities in highly profitable sports business, fans view the teams as reliable and holds the notion that the teams are contributing something back to the society and develop a psychological bonding which enhances fan loyalty and hence fan based brand-equity in the long run.

Consequences of Teams Fan Based Brand-Equity

Some of the previous brand-equity frameworks (Ross, James and Vargas, 2006; Ross, Russell and Bang, 2008) also suffer a major limitation by not looking at the consequences of building high/low brand-equity. In this framework we had discussed some important consequences (Figure 2) indicating why team management should be interested in building high fan based brand-equity of their teams. Some of the important outcomes were suggested as below:

Fan Loyalty

Brand-equity and fan loyalty are closely associated and literature had argued that positive and favourable fan associations contributes to teams brand-equity which in turn significantly impact their loyalty (Emari, Jafari and Mogaddam, 2012; Bauer et al., 2005; Gladden and Funk, 2002). Erdener et al. (2008) studied the positive relationship between brand association and fans loyalty and argued that brand-equity of sport teams' impacts loyalty of fans towards a team.

Merchandise Sales

Another important outcome of high fan based brand-equity is its positive impact on the sales of merchandise consisting the sale of apparels and related items bearing the logo or name of the team (Gladden, Milne, and Sutton, 1998). Merchandise of a team has been viewed in sports marketing literature as something that reflects the image of the team, thus, providing a reason to the fans to show their loyalty and attachment towards the team by buying them. It is argued that a team with high reputation, good image or brand-equity influences the sale of merchandise.

Jersey Rights

Naik and Gupta (2012) argued that selling Jersey rights is new in the field of sports marketing supposed to be originated in USA in 2006 when Major League Soccer allowed advertising on their teams' jerseys. For example, Los Angeles Galaxy sold its Jersey rights for $4.0 million - $5.0 million to Herbalife. Following the concept, some of the major Jersey rights contracts sealed were: National Football League ($230.9 million), Major League Baseball ($101.1 million) and National Basketball Associations ($31.2 million). This practice is also visible among global football clubs like Manchester United ($32 million) as well as in Indian Premier League teams who had sold their Jersey rights for huge amount. We, thus, argue that teams with high fan based brand-equity attract prominent and International brands for buying the Jerseys rights of the teams.

Media Exposure

High brand-equity of a team makes it a centre piece of attraction among the fans who are willing to spend their resources for watching the matches of the same. Mass media and print media firms are, thus, interested in signing multibillionaire contracts with the teams for becoming the official broadcaster of the teams' matches (Villarejo-Ramos and Martin-Velicia, 2007). These broadcasting firms are aware of the fact that teams with high fan base brand-equity will enjoy high fan viewership on their channel earning billions as advertising dollars for broadcasters.

Ticket Sales

There exists a strong correlation between a team winning the matches and fans attending its matches (Cialdini et al., 1976). It has also been argued that there does not exist any substitute for winning and tickets for the matches of the teams with high brand-equity could be sold very easily. Importantly, the support and enthusiasm of the fans will also provide a psychological benefit to players enhancing their performances.

Conclusion and Future Research

Previous frameworks of brand-equity measurement in team sports had focused only on the brand awareness and brand association dimensions highlighting only how to build teams' brand-equity but fails to explain how to develop strong psychological commitment and retain fans engagement in the teams activities. Importantly, we argue that sport management should focus on *sustainable development* of teams' brand-equity and should view them as a part of sports industry satisfying the needs of their fans. The fan based brand-equity pyramid is the very first kind of framework which is using Keller (2001) for explaining brand-equity formation of the sport teams. In addition, in order to give a clear understanding of the reasons for building strong brands, the consequences are also explained, thus, legitimizing the reasons for sport managers to indulge in developing brand-equity of their teams. The very first step of the fan based brand-equity pyramid start with defining the team salience, thus, providing a reason to sport managers why they are into the business and gives them a direction for future decisions followed by defining the team meaning, team responses and finally the team relationships with its fans.

The current framework not only gives a deep understanding of how to build the brand-equity of the teams but also on how to develop strong, emotional bonds with the fans and hence sustaining the brand-equity. In addition, the pyramid also talks about adopting a social cause to give something back to the society focusing on 'doing something by doing something good'. Importantly, this concept has not been mentioned by any previous brand-equity framework. This is a recent concept in the sports industry where many teams had adopted a social cause and are working selflessly with the aim of benefitting the needy peoples and can be subjected to future researches for assessing if indulging in a socially responsible cause helps to enhance the brand-equity of the sports team. Current research is an attempt towards explaining conceptually the fan based brand-equity pyramid in the context of team sports. Future researchers are welcomed to empirically assess the validity and reliability of the conceptual framework.

References

Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity*. San Francisco: Free Press.

Balmer, J. M. T. & Gray, E. R. (2000). Corporate identity and corporate communications: Creating a competitive advantage. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 32(7), 256-262.

Bauer, H., Sauer, N. & Schmitt, P. (2005), Customer-based brand equity in the team sport industry operationalization and impact on the economic success of sport teams. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39(5/6), 496-513.

Stockburger-Sauer, N. E. & Exler, S. (2008). Brand image and fan loyalty in professional team sport: A refined model and empirical assessment. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22(2), 205-226.

Berry, L. (2000). Cultivating Service Brand Equity. *Journal of Service Research*, 2(1), 128-138.

Cialdini, R. B., Richard, J. B., Borden, T. A., Randall, M. W., Stephen, F. & Reynolds, L. S. (1976). Basking in reflected glory: Three (football) field studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34(3), 366-375.

Cobb-Walgren, C., Beal, J. C. & Donthu, N. (1995). Brand-equity, brand preferences, and purchase intention. *Journal of Advertising*, 24(3), 25-40.

Cornelissen, J. P., Haslam, S. A. & Balmer, J. M. T. (2007), Social identity, organizational identity and corporate identity: Towards an integrated understanding of processes, patterning and products. *British Journal of Management*, 18(1), 1-16.

Craig, J., Dibbrell, C. & Davis, P. S. (2008). Leveraging family based brand identity to enhance firm competitiveness and performance in family businesses. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 46(3), 351-371.

Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B. & Sen, S. (2007). Reaping relational rewards from corporate social responsibility: The role of competitive positioning. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 24(3), 224-41.

Emari, H., Jafari, A. & Mogaddam, M. (2012). The mediatory impact of brand loyalty and brand image on brand equity. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6(17), 5692-5701.

Erdener K., Gultekin, S. G. & Ekrem, T. (2008). An integrative framework linking brand associations and brand loyalty in professional sports. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(5), 336-357.

Gladden, J. M. & Funk, D. C. (2002). Developing an understanding of brand associations in team sport: Empirical evidence from consumers of professional sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 16(2), 54-81.

Milne, G. R. & Sutton, W. A. (1998). A conceptual framework for assessing brand equity in division-I college athletics. *Journal of Sport Management*, 12(1), 1-19.

Harris, F. & Chernatony, L. D. (2001). Corporate branding and corporate brand performance. *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(3/4), 441-456.

Iyer, G. & Kuksov, D. (2010). Consumer feelings and equilibrium product quality. *Journal of Economics and Management Strategy*, 19(1), 137-168.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.

Keller, K. L. (2001). Building customer-based brand equity: A blueprint for creating strong brands. *Marketing Management*, July/August, 10(2-3), 15-19.

Klayman, B. (2009). Global Sports Market to Hit $141 Billion in 2012, Reuters. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSN1738075220080618.

Laros, F. J. M. & Steenkamp, J. B. (2005). Emotions in consumer behavior: A hierarchical approach. *Journal of Business Research*, October, 58(10), 1437-1445.

Lombardo, J. (2003). NBDL ready with individual logos. *Sports Business*. December, 1-7.

Munilla, L. & Miles, M. P. (2005). The corporate social responsibility continuum as a component of stakeholder theory. *Business and Society Review*, 110(4), 371-87.

Naik, A. Y. & Gupta, A. (2012). Indian premier league and team brand building: Validating the spectator-based brand equity model in context of television viewers. *Metamorphosis: A Journal of Management Research*, 11(1), 115-118.

Netemeyer, R. G., Krishnan, B., Pullig, C., Wang, G., Yaci, M., Dean, D., Ricks, J. & Ferdinand, W. (2004). Developing and validating measures of facets of customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(2), 209-224.

Park, C. W. & Srinivasan, V. (1994). A survey-based method for measuring and understanding brand equity and its extendibility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, May, 31(5), 271-88.

Ferguson, R. J., Paulin, M. & Leiriao, E. (2006). Loyalty and positive word-of-mouth: Patients and hospital personnel as advocates of a customer-centric health care organization. *Health Marketing Quarterly*, 23(3), 59-78.

Pitta, D. A. & Katsanis, L. P. (1995). Understanding brand equity for successful brand extension. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 12(4), 51-64.

Ratten, V. & Ratten, H. (2011). International Sports marketing: Practical and future research implications. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 26(8), 614-620.

Ross, S. D. (2006). A conceptual framework for understanding spectator-based brand equity. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(1), 22-38.

James, J. D. & Vargas, P. (2006). Development of a scale to measure team brand associations in professional sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(2), 260-279.

Russell, K. C. & Bang, H. (2008). An empirical assessment of spectator-based brand equity. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22(3), 322-337.

Taylor, S. A., Hunter, G. L. & Lindberg, D. L. (2007). Understanding customer-based brand equity in financial services. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 21(4), 241-252.

Tolba, A. H. & Hassan, S. S. (2009). Linking customer based brand equity with brand market performance: A managerial approach. *Journal of Production and Brand Management*, 18(5), 356-366.

Tong, X. & Hawley, J. X. (2009). Creating brand equity in Chinese clothing market - The effect of selected marketing activities on brand equity dimensions. *Journal of Fashion Marketing Management*, 13(4), 566-581.

Villarejo-Ramos, Á. F. & Martín-Velicia, F. A. (2007). A proposed model for measuring the brand equity in sports organizations. *EsicMarket*, 123, 63-83.

Voss, C., Roth, A. & Chase, R. B. (2008). Experience, destination services and service operations strategy: Foundations and exploratory investigation. *Production and Operations Management Journal*, 17(3), 247-266.

Wann, D. L. (1997). The Psychology of Sport Fans and Sport Spectators. In D. L. Wann (Ed.), *Sport Psychology* (pp. 325-347). Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA: Prentice Hall.

Wheeler, A. R., Richey, R. G., Tokkman, M. & Sablynski, C. J. (2006). Retaining employees for service competency: The role of corporate brand identity. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(1), 96-113.

Yoo, B. & Donthu, N. (2001). Developing and validating multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. *Journal of Business Research*, 52(1), 1-14.