

A SPORT CELEBRITY BRAND IMAGE: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Anne-Marie Sassenberg
Martie-Louise Verreyne
Melissa Johnson Morgan

ABSTRACT

This article argues that the brand image, which is studied widely in marketing, can also be applied to the individual sport celebrity. A model to guide such investigation is presented; the sport celebrity brand image model. This conceptual model shows that sponsor organisations should be aware of the brand effects of the sport celebrity brand image in that the sport celebrity brand image can impact on the attitudes of sport consumers.

Keywords: celebrity sponsorship, sports marketing, sport celebrity brand image, sport celebrity brand attributes, sport celebrity brand benefits, sport consumer, sponsorship effectiveness; brand effects

INTRODUCTION

Sponsorship has become one of the most important promotional considerations for organisations (Seguin 2009), with worldwide sponsorship spending reaching \$44 billion (IEG 2010). The exponential growth of sponsorship can be attributed to factors such as increased amounts of communication clutter (Meenaghan 1991; Quester & Thompson 2001). By using celebrities, sponsor organisations create awareness and attention (Meenaghan 2001). The celebrity brings their already popular image to the sponsorship process (McCracken 1989), and their popularity makes them effective as endorsers for sponsor organisations (Boyle & Magnusson 2007). Although sport celebrities are described as brand identities in their own right (Charbonneau & Garland 2005; Hughes & Shank 2005; Pornpitakpan 2003; Till 2001; Till & Shimp 1998), attempts to investigate the sport celebrity brand image remains elusive.

This research builds on a developing investigation into celebrity image and focuses on identifying brand attributes (Magnini, Garcia & Honeycut 2010; Van der Veen & Song 2010; Ohanian 1990), brand matching (Erdogan, Baker & Tagg 2001; Gurel-Atay & Kahle 2010), and endorser's persuasiveness (Friedman & Friedman 1979; Sternthal, Dholakia & Leavitt 1978). While these studies do not focus on sport celebrities, they are nevertheless valuable. Authors such as Magnini, Garcia and Honeycut (2010) investigate the attributes of the effective restaurant endorser; Van der Veen and Song (2010) focuses on the effectiveness of the celebrity attributes in the tourism industry, and Ohanian (1990) identifies valuable celebrity attributes. Ohanian's (1990) study includes celebrities from other industries as well. This paper builds on these works and aims to explain the most valuable brand attributes of the sport celebrity and their consequent brand effects.

The importance of the sport celebrity is evident in studies that show team brand image to be important to sport consumer attitudes (Bauer et al. 2008). One of the important attributes

Anne-Marie Sassenberg (anne-marie.sassenberg@usq.edu.au) is an Associate Lecturer (Marketing) in the Faculty of Business and Law, University of Southern Queensland, Australia; Melissa Johnson Morgan (Melissa.Morgan@usq.edu.au) is a Senior Lecturer (Marketing), Faculty of Business and Law, University of Southern Queensland, Australia; Martie-Louise Verreyne (Verreyne@business.uq.edu.au) is a Senior Lecturer in Strategy, University of Queensland, Australia.

identified as contributing to positive consumer attitudes in team sport is the existence of the individual celebrity (sport star) in the team (Gladden & Funk 2002). This article suggests that the sport celebrity is a multi-dimensional construct consisting of a wider set of brand associations, such as brand attributes, benefits and attitudes. The increasing popularity of celebrity endorsements (White, Goddard & Wilbur 2007) and the consequent brand effects of the sport celebrity brand image emphasise the importance of this line of enquiry.

More specifically, brand image is important because it has important brand effects. Two brand effects are found in previous literature studies. First, it affects the sport consumer brand benefits (Keller 1993). The Brand Image Model (Keller 1993) argues that consumers experience brand benefits when they find brand attributes to be valuable. Further studies in sports marketing investigate the effect of team attributes, such as the team, head coach and success on the resulting brand benefits, such as identification and socialising (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler 2009; Ross, James & Vargas 2006). It is, therefore, possible for the sport consumer to find the sport celebrity brand attributes valuable—and also within sports marketing—and, consequently, experience brand benefits. However, these studies (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler 2009; Ross, James & Vargas 2006) fail to identify which sport celebrity brand attributes are valuable to the consumer. This is explained by a third model which, in turn, illustrates that the sport celebrity brand image is important as it affects the sponsors associated with the celebrity through celebrity sponsorship. The Brand Image Transfer Model (McCracken 1989) shows that the sport celebrity brand image transfers onto the sponsors during celebrity sponsorship. While these models provide a basic understanding, the type of sport celebrity brand attributes that are important for the consumer during celebrity sponsorship still needs to be addressed.

This paper identifies the most important brand attributes and benefits of the sport celebrity brand image, as well as their consequent brand effects. It theorises that the celebrity brand image consists of brand attributes such as product-related and non-product-related attributes, where product-related attributes refer to ingredients that are needed for the performance of the brand, while non-product-related attributes include external aspects of the brand that relate to its consumption (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler 2009). These attributes lead to experiential and symbolic brand benefits. Experiential benefits experienced in sports marketing are mostly emotional responses such as joy, pride and anger; and symbolic benefits experienced are benefits such as pride in place, fan identification, and peer-group acceptance (Gladden & Funk 2002; Trail, Robinson, Dick & Gillentine 2003; Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler 2008; Kim & Kim 2009). This, in turn, impacts positively on affective and behavioural attitudes. This is done by drawing on literature on branding (Aaker 1996; del Rio et al. 2001; Keller 2008), sports marketing (Bauer et al. 2008; Fink et al. 2002; Gladden, & Funk, 2002; Ross 2006; Ross et al. 2008), and celebrity sponsorship (Gurel-Atay & Kahle 2010; Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010; Magnini et al. 2010; Ruihley et al. 2010). These literatures are used to develop a model, which is the sport celebrity brand image (SCBI) model. Its main contributions are to the celebrity sponsorship and branding literature, where it provides an understanding of the direct impact of an estimation of the value of the celebrity brand on the effectiveness of a sponsorship program.

A SPORT CELEBRITY BRAND IMAGE

The SCBI model is understood in the context of sport celebrity sponsorship and the perceptions of the sport consumer. Meenaghan (1983) defines sponsorship as the ‘provision of assistance, either financial or in-kind, to an activity by a commercial organisation for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives’ (p. 9). A similar definition has also been offered

by Quester and Thompson (2001) who describe sponsorship as ‘an investment, in cash in or kind, in an activity, person or event, in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity, person or event by the investor’ (p. 31). Sponsorship has further been described as the ‘orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship’ (Cornwell 1995, p. 15). Together, these definitions acknowledge the mutually beneficial arrangement between the sponsor and sponsee or celebrity. They also highlight the importance of association, where the sponsor relies on the association with the sponsee or celebrity (Cornwell 1995; Gwinner 1997), or when the sponsor brand becomes linked in memory with the sponsee brand (Keller 1993). However, these associations and commercial benefits rely on consumers’ perceptions of the sponsored celebrity brand, which is the focus of this research.

The increase in the use of celebrities as sponsorship properties can be attributed to the commercial potential of the celebrity, which is defined by their popular image drawn from previous achievements (McCracken 1989). A celebrity endorser is any individual who savours public acknowledgement and who uses this acknowledgement on behalf of a product by appearing with the product in an advertisement (McCracken 1989). McCracken further explains that the image from the celebrity transfers to the sponsor when the two are paired during sponsorship. As such, the role of the celebrity endorser is to create credibility and aid in brand recognition and brand image to generate greater customer choice for the specific sponsored product (Kamins 1990; Madrigal 2000). To illustrate, Nike, a sportswear and equipment supplier, sponsors sport celebrities such as Tiger Woods, Roger Federer and LeBron James. Nike Golf, introduced as a separate business in 1998, has been using Tiger Woods as its flagship spokesperson with great success. For example, Tiger Woods used the Tour Accuracy golf ball and a set of high-performance Nike clubs when he won Grand Slam majors. Nike’s marketing communication strategy to sign Tiger Woods to a sponsorship deal has proven successful and is widely viewed as contributing to making Nike Golf one of the fast growing brands in the golf industry (Fullerton 2010). With an annual sales figure of \$600 million, Nike Golf continues to grow, lately opening 75 stores in China and entering new developing markets (Belch & Belch 2009). Nike and Tiger Woods both profited from the success of Nike’s Golf Division, Nike Golf, when it reached record sales of \$725 million in 2008 (www.forbes.com).

Cases such as this are well known, yet an understanding of how the brand image of the celebrity impacts on sport consumers’ attitudes remains elusive. The question arises as to why specific sport celebrity brand attributes and benefits are important to the sport consumer. This article takes a different approach from previous research on celebrities’ images, which focuses on celebrities in general by including the perceptions of the sport consumer, who may often be emotional (Erdogan 1999; Kamins et al. 1989). Loyal sport consumers are characterised as passionate, emotional, and committed (Branscombe & Wann 1991; Mahony et al. 2000; Robinson et al. 2005; Trail et al. 2005; Trail et al. 2003). It is, therefore, essential that sport managers are aware of how the SCBI impacts on the sport consumer’s attitude. The theoretical underpinnings of our model are explained next.

Brand Image

Brand equity can be considered from a financial approach where brand valuation is based on financial terms and a consumer based approach where brand valuation is based on consumers’ perception of the behavioural values of a brand name (Cobb-Walgreen et al. 1995). In order for a brand to attain positive brand equity, consumers must be able to identify

the brand but, more importantly, must have a favourable and strong brand image in their minds (Keller 1993). This study based the sport celebrity brand image on Keller's (1993) brand image model. Keller's model has been used in several sports marketing studies. Bauer, Stockburger-Sauer and Exler (2009), Gladden and Funk (2002), Ross (2006) and Ross, James and Vargas (2006) use the Keller (1993) brand image model to determine the brand image of the sport team. These authors define brand image as the 'categories of product attributes, product benefits and attitudes toward a product that may exist in consumers' minds and impact their evaluation' (Gladden & Funk 2002, p. 56). According to Keller (1993), brand benefits represent the personal value that consumers attach to the brand attributes, and attitudes symbolise the overall evaluations of a brand (Keller 1993). The Brand Image Model by Keller (1993) is adapted for this article in suggesting that the celebrity brand image is exhibited in terms of brand attributes, benefits and attitudes, as explained next.

Brand attributes. Brand attributes consist of product-related attributes and non-product-related attributes (del Rio et al. 2001). Product-related attributes refer to the 'ingredients necessary for performing the product or service' (Keller 1998, p. 3). In sport studies, product-related attributes relate to those factors that contribute to the performance of the sport object such as head coach, team success and star player (Bauer et al. 2008; Gladden & Funk 2002). Therefore, it is possible that the sport celebrity's product-related attributes may consist of those attributes that contribute to the expertise and performance of the sport celebrity. The current article refers to the product-related brand attributes of the sport celebrity as the sport related brand attributes. The sport related attributes may be identified as the celebrity's level of expertise, such as performance, experience, knowledge and athletic ability.

Non-product-related attributes refers to the 'external aspects of the product that relate to its purchase consumption' (Keller 1998, p. 4). In sports marketing, product-related attributes are factors that contribute to the performance of the sport object (Bauer 2008, Gladden & Funk 2002). It is, thus, possible that the sport celebrity's non-product-related attributes may relate to those factors external of the consumption process. The current article refers to the non-product-related attributes of the celebrity as personal related brand attributes.

Studies undertaken in a marketing communication context serve as an important starting point for investigating important brand attributes of celebrities (Erdogan 1999; Kamins 1990; Ohanian 1990). The source credibility model identified valuable celebrity attributes as perceived expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness (Ohanian 1990). This approach is ideal for the current study because it identifies certain celebrity images important in endorsement. The Ohanian (1990; 1991) studies were successfully replicated by other researchers (Pornpitakpan 2003, Till & Busler 1998). Results indicate that consumers evaluate the credibility of celebrities in terms of trust, attractiveness, expertise (Erdogan 1999; Kamins 1998). In an attempt to investigate the celebrity from a brand image perspective, this article contemplates expertise to be a sport-related attribute and shows trust and attractiveness to be personal related brand attributes. According to the Means-End Model, when consumers associate with the valuable sport and personal celebrity brand attributes, they experience brand benefits (Gutman 1982).

Brand benefits. Brand benefits are the 'personal values consumers attach to the product attributes' (Keller 1993, p. 4), and manifest as functional, symbolic and experiential benefits (Park et al. 1986). Functional benefits focus on the function of the product, symbolic benefits that relate to self-enhancement and experiential benefits refer to emotional responses (Gladden & Funk 2002; Park et al. 1986). Sport consumers supporting their favourite sport

celebrity typically seek to meet their symbolic and experiential needs rather than their functional needs, because sports spectatorship is not related to consumption-related needs (Bauer et al 2008). Prior research shows that symbolic and experiential benefits lead the sport consumer to experience positive affective attitudes (Funk & James 2001).

AFFECTIVE ATTITUDES

The affective dimension of attitude consists of the feelings a consumer has about a brand (Clow & Baack 2010). These feelings or emotional responses may move through different stages before the consumer becomes a loyal supporter. Funk and James (2001) developed the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) in sports marketing and group sport customers according to their affective attitudes into awareness, attraction, attachment and allegiance. The steps in the PCM model are sequential and the process starts with the consumer being aware of the specific brand. However, before consumers can develop an attraction towards the brand, they must first gain knowledge about the brand or get acquaintance. After the consumer attains knowledge and develops liking, preference and attachment follows—which eventually results in loyalty towards the brand (Funk & James 2001; Funk & Pastore 2000). The current article suggests including ‘knowledge’ or ‘acquaintance’ as a stage before attraction. Consumers have to become acquainted with the brand before they are attracted to the brand. It is, therefore, likely that the sport consumer moves through five stages before they become loyal fans, namely, awareness, acquaintance, attraction, attachment and allegiance. Each affective attitude stage is directly related to a specific behavioural attitude (Clow & Baack 2010).

BEHAVIOURAL ATTITUDES

The behavioural component of attitude is the ‘tendency of the attitude holder to respond in a certain manner towards an object or activity’ (Neal, Quester & Hawkins 2006, p. 336). These responses are the consumers’ behavioural intentions and may indicate actions such as a decision to purchase a product or to recommend the brand to somebody else (Neal, Quester & Hawkins 2006). Studies regarding behavioural attitude in sports marketing (Bauer et al. 2008; Funk & Pastore 2000; Madrigal 2000; Mahony et al. 2000) indicate the importance of the affective attitude on consumers’ behavioural intentions. Madrigal (2000) finds that favourable actions are more likely to occur when the consumer’s feelings or identification towards the sport team increases. Important favourable actions as a result of the affective attitude of the consumer to the sport team may include actions such as attending games, watching/listening to games, consuming club-related media, purchase of club licensed merchandise, and trying to convince others that the club should be supported (Bauer et al. 2008; Funk & Pastore 2000). It is, therefore, evident that the consumer’s affective attitude impacts on their tendency to some behavioural responses such as attending a game.

This article aims to determine a relationship between the celebrity’s attributes, benefits and their specific behavioural response.

PROPOSED SPORT CELEBRITY BRAND IMAGE MODEL

As shown earlier, the understanding of the SCBI is derived from multiple roots, including branding (Aaker 1996; Keller 1993), consumer behaviour (Solomon et al. 2010; Neal, Quester & Hawkins 2006) sports marketing (Bauer et al. 2008; Ross et al. 2007; Ross et al. 2006), marketing communication (McCracken 1989; Ohanian 1991) and general marketing (Gutman 1982). These theories identify dimensions such as brand attributes, benefits and attitudes as important to brand image (Bauer et al. 2008; Keller 1993; Ross 2006; Ross et al. 2007).

The research identified above provides hints at the formation of the sport consumer's attitude towards the SCBI. The model presented in Figure 1 utilises these theories, but focuses on the impact of a celebrity in a sport context to limit the impact of exogenous variables in the constructs. The sport consumer is considered important to the sport industry and our model can be used to refine the practices used to manage the sport brand image.

Figure 1 Proposed Sport Celebrity Brand Image (SCBI) Model

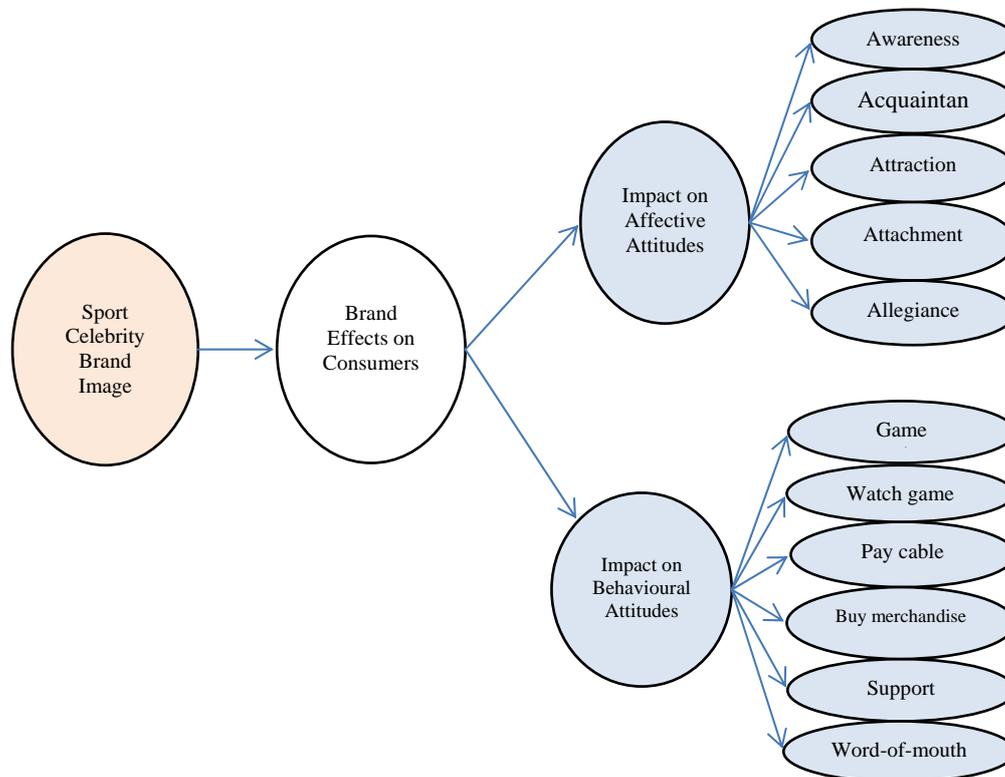


Figure 1 illustrates the sport consumer's formation of attitudes towards the SCBI, where the SCBI consists of the celebrity brand attributes and benefits (Keller 1993). The celebrity brand attributes may consist of sport and personal related brand attributes. When sport consumers associate with the sport objects, it causes consumers to experience symbolic and experiential benefits (Gladden, Milne & Sutton 1998; Trail, Anderson & Fink 2005), resulting in the affective dimension of consumers' attitudes. The sport consumers' affective attitudes are grouped in terms of awareness, acquaintance, attraction, attachment and allegiance (Gladden & Funk 2002; Clow & Baack 2010). Furthermore, the consumer's affective attitude relates positively to the behaviour of the consumer (Clow & Baack 2010). These arguments are explained in more detail next.

SCBI and Brand Attributes

Drawing from models such as the Team Association Model (Gladden & Funk 2002) and the Team Brand Associations Scale (Ross et al. 2006) which view product-related brand attributes in the sports team context, this article argues that the sport related brand attributes of the celebrity are defined as performance, experience, knowledge, athletic ability, and expertise of the celebrity (Bauer et al. 2008). These attributes contribute to the performance of the celebrity on the field of play and may be important to the sport consumer.

To illustrate, Accenture, a global consultancy firm recognised the value of Tiger Woods. Since 2003 Accenture regarded Woods as the ‘world’s ultimate symbol of high-performance’; Woods served as a metaphor for its commitment to helping companies become high-performance businesses by using the slogan ‘Go on Be a Tiger’ in their 2006 campaign (Belch & Belch 2009, p. 176). Accenture was, therefore, using the sport related attribute ‘performance’ of Tiger Woods to deliver a message of how to become a high-performance organization by using the theme ‘We know what it takes to be a Tiger’ (Belch & Belch 2009, p. 176). The sponsor organisation effectively links with the sport related attributes of the SCBI, thereby improving its marketing communication strategy. Consequently, the question arises what is the impact of these sport related brand attributes of the sport celebrity on the brand benefits experienced by the sport consumer. Therefore, it is argued that:

P1: The stronger and more positive a sport consumer’s association with the celebrity’s sport related attributes, the more positive the perceived brand benefits.

A recent study on the tourism industry identifies celebrity attributes as celebrity power, genuine support, exclusivity and match of image and values (Magnini et al. 2010). Celebrity power is the indication of the persuasive level of the celebrity, while genuine support is an indication of the celebrity’s genuine affection for the sponsored item (Magnini et al. 2010). Exclusivity is the selected representation during sponsorship by the endorsed celebrity (Magnini et al. 2010). A match of image and values occurs when there is a high degree of perceived fit between the endorsed brand image and the celebrity image (Erdogan 1999; Misra & Beatty 1990).

Trust can be defined as the expectation of ‘ethically justifiable behaviour—that is, morally correct decisions and actions based upon ethical principles of analysis’ (Hosmer 1995, p. 399). In the sports marketing context trust may, therefore, include the expectation of the sport fan, which is that the sport celebrity’s actions should be ethically justifiable and not detrimental to the sport fan’s own image. . When the celebrity is perceived to have a high level of trust it leads to a positive consumer attitude (Friedman & Friedman 1979). Therefore, it is possible to suggest that trust should be included as an important sport celebrity attribute. Attractiveness is based on the physical attractiveness of the celebrity (Amos et al. 2008, Magnini et al. 2010; Ohanian 1990). These studies find physical attractiveness as a significant catalyst of celebrity sponsorship effectiveness. Further research finds attractiveness to relate to construct such as similarity, familiarity and liking of the celebrity (Kahle & Homer 1985, Kamins et al. 1989, Maddux & Rogers 1980). In an attempt to base the SCBI on the brand image model, (Keller 1993) this article suggests grouping the sport celebrity’s personal related brand attributes as indicators of the celebrity’s trust, attractiveness, celebrity power, genuine support, exclusivity, and the match of image and values. However, the question arises what is the effect of the sport celebrity’s personal related brand attributes on the sport consumers’ experience of brand benefits. Therefore:

P2: The stronger and more positive a sport consumer’s association with the celebrity’s personal related attributes, the more positive the perceived brand benefits.

SCBI and Brand Benefits

The SCBI may represent two types of symbolic benefits when the sport fan associates with the positive SCBI, namely, fan identification (Maddux & Rogers 1980) and fan internalisation (Kamins et al. 1989). Identification is the ‘orientation of the self in regard to other celebrities that result in feelings or sentiments of close attachment’ (Trail et al. 2000,

p. 164), or, in this context, sport consumers' close attachment to the celebrity. Building on previous research, this article defines identification as being impacted by the sport consumer's level of commitment (Madrigal 2000; Wann & Branscombe 1990) and argues that commitment leads to positive attitudes towards the sport celebrity. Internalisation takes place when an individual embraces the attitudes and behaviours of other individuals because of conformity in the values of the individuals (Premeaux 2005). This study treats the internalisation with the celebrity as when the sport consumer's values conform to the values of the celebrity. Thus, it modifies the Premeaux (2005) study and argues that internalisation represents the conformity of consumer values with the celebrity values. Our argument is strengthened by previous studies that indicate highly internalised consumers internalise the attitudes of the sport celebrity because they conform to the values of the sport celebrity that ultimately lead to positive attitudes towards the celebrity (Kahle & Homer 1985; Trail et al. 2005).

Several experiential benefits are relevant in the team sport setting, including nostalgia, escape, socialising, emotions and entertainment (Bauer et al. 2008; Gladden et al. 1998; Ross et al. 2006; Ross et al. 2008). These constructs may represent the emotional response the sport consumer experiences when associating with the celebrity brand attributes. Experiential benefits explain what it feels like to associate with the SCBI, and include 'nostalgia', 'escape', 'socialising', 'emotions', 'entertainment' and 'excitement' as experiential benefits obtained when associating with the sport celebrity. The current study's arguments are further strengthened by the studies of Ohanian (1991) and Friedman and Friedman (1979). These studies indicate that celebrity credibility consists of a 'celebrity expertise', 'celebrity trustworthiness' and 'celebrity attractiveness' and lead to positive attitudes through the process of identification and internalisation towards the celebrity (Friedman & Friedman 1979). It is, thus, possible that both symbolic and experiential benefits impact on the attitudes of the sport consumer. However, the question arises as to whether or not the brand benefits experienced by the sport consumer directly affect their affective attitude towards the sport celebrity brand image. It is, therefore, proposed that:

P3: The sport consumer's perceived brand benefits are positively related to their affective attitudes.

SCBI and Affective Attitudes. The PCM framework includes a description of the structural relations among various attitude properties such as attitude strength and importance (Funk et al. 2000), which is useful for assessing affective attitude formation among loyal sport consumers. The steps in the PCM framework represent different stages of association with the SCBI and, therefore, may impact on the behavioural dimension accordingly. For example, the sport consumers in the awareness stage may respond differently towards the SCBI than the sport consumers in the allegiance stage. Several studies find that brand benefits such as identification has a direct impact on behavioural responses such as purchase intentions (Madrigal 2000), and even the familiarity of the celebrity brand impacts on behavioural responses such as word-of-mouth communication (Sundaram & Webster 1999). Here, it is suggested that the affective attitude towards the SCBI is a good predictor of sports-related behaviours such as watching sports on TV, magazine and newspaper readership, sports event attendance, and sport participation (Shank & Beasley 1998). Therefore it follows that:

P4: Sport consumer's affective attitudes are positively related to their behavioural attitudes.

SCBI and Behavioural Attitudes. Previous research indicates that the following behavioural outcomes express consumer attitude towards a sport team, namely, the purchase of season tickets, watching or listening to games, purchasing of sport publications and licensed merchandise (Funk & Pastore 2000) and word of mouth communication (Mahony & Moorman 2000). Although these behavioural dimensions are a good indication of a sport consumer's attitude towards a team, it ignores the sport consumer's attitude towards the individual sport celebrity brand. Therefore, this article suggests describing the behavioural attitude towards the SCBI in terms of 'game attendance', 'watching sport on TV', 'paying for cable to watch sport', 'buying merchandise', 'supporting sponsor products' (Trail et al. 2003) and 'word-of mouth-communication' (Mahony et al. 2000). It is, therefore, proposed that:

P5: Behavioural attitude towards the SCBI are positively related to sport consumer behaviour such as 'attending games', 'watching sport on TV or listening to radio', 'paying for cable to watch sport', 'buying merchandise', 'supporting sponsor products and services' and 'positive word-of mouth-communications'.

THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS

The SCBI model proposed here provides a conceptual paradigm for a deeper understanding of the impact of the celebrity brand image. This model departs from the traditional brand image conceptualisation (Keller 1993) that relies primarily on a consumer goods perspective by stressing the importance of the SCBI in the sport industry (Gladden & Funk 2002). In describing the brand associations of the sport celebrity brand image, this model can play a key role in investigating the impact of celebrity transgressions in the sport industry. This model emphasizes the importance of the brand effects of the sport celebrity brand image, which provides a novel lens to investigate such brand effects of the sport celebrity brand image when the celebrity transgresses. The possible brand effects of the transgression can include an impact on the consumers' experience of brand benefits and it may further impact on the celebrity's sponsors. The components of the model could, thus, contribute to the managing of a long-term positive sport celebrity brand image that may further lead to increased effective marketing communication applications.

MANAGERIAL APPLICATIONS

The major managerial contribution of this article is the potential benefits that may accrue to sport managers, marketers and sponsors. Investigating the importance of the SCBI on consumer attitudes provides insights into managing long term relationships with sport consumers. In the same context, it may offer sport managers guidelines on how to manage sport celebrities' brands. The more specific division of consumers according to their brand attitudes proposed in this article has interesting managerial implications. Brand and sponsor managers can use this to effectively develop marketing strategies aimed at a specific group. The model can especially assist in fostering relationship marketing strategies with loyal sport consumers. It further informs the sport manager in better understanding the behaviour of sport consumers, and their reaction to different sport celebrity brand attributes. Additionally, identification of desired sport celebrity brand attributes would provide the sport manager with a tool to cultivate certain brand attributes such as trust in their sport celebrities. Additional developmental work will be required within the sponsorship domain to review whether there are any unique constructs outside the already established celebrity image and behavioural attitude loyalty literatures. The current study believes the management of a positive SCBI is important to ensure positive behavioural outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

This article recognises a need for a theoretical framework to serve as the foundation for the development of better research methods to assess the complexity of the SCBI. A systematic study of a sport consumer's perceptions of the SCBI should incorporate aggregate measures such as brand attributes, benefits and attitudes towards the sport celebrity. This article has identified factors from the academic literature that may have managerial importance in managing the SCBI. Notably, SCBI is found to be influenced by several factors in the literature: sport celebrity's level of expertise, credibility, trustworthiness, attractiveness and other personality attributes. Besides these attributes, the benefits gained from associating with a SCBI, such as identification, internalisation and the sport consumers' emotional experience of the sport product must also be simultaneously considered.

The SCBI can be an effective marketing communication medium; it cuts through communication clutter and increases brand awareness among endorsed products and services. These benefits are experienced as long as the sport celebrity experiences a desired SCBI. Findings in the literature are mixed and inconsistent regarding a positive SCBI. Is the positive SCBI belonging to someone who is an expert, credible, trustworthy and attractive? Or is it a combination of all these components? And what will the effect of these components be on the attitudes of the sport consumer? In light of increasing use of the sport celebrity image in sponsorship and the large amount of money spent on celebrity endorsement, answers are needed to determine which components contribute to a positive SCBI.

REFERENCES

Aaker, DA 1996, *Building strong brands*, The Free Press, New York.

Aaker, DA 1991, *Managing brand equity: Capitalising on the value of the brand name*. The Free Press, New York.

Amos, C, Holmes, G & Stratton, D 2008, 'Exploring the relationship between celebrity endorser effects and advertising effects', *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 209-34.

Anderson, JC 1995, 'Relationships in business markets: Exchange episodes, value creation, and their empirical assessment', *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 346-349.

Assael, PN, Brenannan, L & Voges, K 2004, *Consumer Behaviour: First Asia-Pacific Edition*, John Wiley & Sons, Sydney.

Bauer, HH, Stokburger-Sauer, NE & Exler, S 2008, 'Brand Image and Fan Loyalty in Professional Team Sport: A Refined Model and Empirical Assessment', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 205-26.

Belch, G & Belch, M, *Advertising and promotion: An integrated Marketing Communications Perspective*, McGraw-Hill Irwin, Boston.

Boyle, BA & Magnusson, P 2007, 'Social Identity and Brand Equity Formation: A Comparative Study of Collegiate Sports Fans', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 497-520.

Branscombe, N & Wann, D 1991, 'The positive social and self-concept consequences of sport team identification', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 15, pp. 115-27.

-
- Byrne, A, Whitehead, M & Breen, S, 2003, 'The naked truth of celebrity endorsement', *British Food Journal*, vol. 105, no. 4/5, p. 288.
- Charbonneau, J & Garland, R 2005, 'Talent, Looks or Brains, New Zealand Advertising Practitioners' Views on Celebrity and Athlete Endorsers', *Marketing Bulletin*, vol. 16, pp. 1-10.
- Clow, KE & Baack, D 2010, *Integrated Advertising, Promotion, and marketing communications*, 4th edition, vol. Global edition, Pearson, Boston.
- Cobb-Walgren, CJ, Ruble, CA & Donthu, N 1995, 'Brand Equity, Brand Preference, and Purchase Intent', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 25-40.
- Cornwell, TB 1995, 'Sponsorship-linked marketing development', *Sports Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 13-24.
- Cornwell, TB, Roy, DP & Steinard, EA 2001, 'Exploring managers' perceptions of the impact of sponsorship on brand equity', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. Volume XXX, no. 2 Summer, pp. 41-51.
- del Rio, AB, Vázquez, R & Iglesias, V 2001, 'The effects of brand associations on consumer response', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 4/5, pp. 410-25.
- Erdogan, BZ 1999, 'Celebrity Endorsement: A Literature Review', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 291-314.
- Erdogan, BZ, Baker, MJ & Tagg, S 2001, 'Selecting Celebrity Endorsers: The Practitioner's Perspective', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 39-48.
- Fink, JS, Trail, G & Anderson, DF 2002, 'An examination of team identification: Which motives are most salient to its existence', *International Sports Journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 195-207.
- Friedman, HH & Friedman, L 1979, 'Endorser Effectiveness by Product Type', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 19, no. 5, pp. 63-71.
- Fullerton, S 2010, *Sports marketing*, 2nd Edition, McGraw-Hill Irwin, Boston.
- Funk, DC & Pastore, DL 2000, 'Equating Attitudes to Allegiance: The Usefulness of Selected Attitudinal Information in Segmenting Loyalty to Professional Sports Teams', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 175-84.
- Funk, DC & James, J 2001, 'The Psychological Continuum Model: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding an Individual's Psychological Connection to Sport', *Sport Management Review*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 119-50.
- Funk, DC, Haugtvedt, CP & Howard, DR 2000, 'Contemporary attitude theory in sport: Theoretical considerations and implications', *Sport Management Review*, vol. 3, pp. 125-44.
- Gladden, JM & Funk, DC 2002, 'Developing an understanding of brand associations in team sport: empirical evidence from consumers of professional sport', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 54-81.
-

Gladden, JM, Milne, GR & Sutton, WA 1998, 'A conceptual framework for assessing brand equity in Division I college athletics', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-19.

Gurel-Atay, E & Kahle, L 2010, 'Celebrity Endorsements and Advertising Effectiveness: The Importance of Value Congruence', *Advances in Consumer Research—North American Conference Proceedings*, vol. 37, pp. 807-9.

Gutman, J 1982, 'A Means-End Chain Model Based on Consumer Categorization Processes', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 60-72.

Gwinner, K 1997, 'A model of image creation and image transfer in event sponsorship', *International Marketing Review*, vol. 14, no. 2/3, p. 145.

Halonen-Knight, E & Hurmerinta, L 2010, 'Who endorses whom? Meanings transfer in celebrity endorsement', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 19, no. 6, pp. 452-60.

Hughes, S & Shank, M 2005, 'Defining Scandal in Sports: Media and Corporate Sponsor Perspectives', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 207-16.

IEG 2010, '*Sponsorship spending recedes for first time; better days seen ahead*', vol. 30 August, Chicago.

Kahle, LR & Homer, PM 1985, 'Physical Attractiveness of the Celebrity Endorser: A Social Adaptation Perspective', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 954-61.

Kamins, MA 1990, 'An Investigation into the "Match-Up" Hypothesis in Celebrity Advertising: When Beauty May be Only Skin Deep', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 4-13.

Kamins, MA, Brand, MJ, Hoeke, SA & Moe, JC 1989, 'Two-Sided Versus One-Sided Celebrity Endorsements: The Impact on Advertising Effectiveness and Credibility', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 4-10.

Keller, KL 1993, 'Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity', *Journal of Marketing* vol. 57, no Jan, pp. 1-22.

Keller, LK 2008, *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*, 3rd edition, Pearson Education International, New Jersey.

Maddux, JE & Rogers, RW 1980, 'Effects of source expertness, physical attractiveness, and supporting arguments on persuasion: A case of brains over beauty', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 235-44.

Madrigal, R 2000, 'The influence of social alliances with sports teams on intentions to purchase corporate sponsors' products', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 29, no. 4.

Magnini, VP, Garcia, C & Honeycutt Jnr, ED 2010, 'Identifying the Attributes of an Effective Restaurant Chain Endorser', *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 238-50.

-
- Mahony, DF & Moorman, AM 2000, 'The Relationship Between the Attitudes of Professional Sport Fans and Their Intentions to Watch Televised Games', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 131-9.
- Mahony, DF, Madrigal, R & Howard, D 2000, 'Using the Psychological Commitment to Team (PCT) Scale to Segment Sport Consumers Based on Loyalty', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 15.
- McCracken, G 1989, 'Who is the celebrity endorser? Cultural foundations of the endorsement process', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 16, December.
- Meenaghan, T 1983, 'Commercial sponsorship', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 7, no. 7, pp. 5-71.
- Meenaghan, T 1991, 'The Role of Sponsorship in the Marketing Communications Mix', *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 35-47.
- Meenaghan, T 2001, 'Sponsorship and advertising: A comparison of consumer perceptions'. *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 191-215.
- Ohanian, R 1990, 'Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 39-52.
- Ohanian, R 1991, 'The impact of celebrity spokespersons' perceived image on consumers' intention to purchase.', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 46-54.
- Pappu, R, Quester, PG & Cooksey, RW 2005, 'Consumer-based brand equity: improving the measurement - empirical evidence', *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 143-54.
- Park, CW, Jaworski, BJ & MacInnis, DJ 1986, 'Strategic Brand Concept-Image Management', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 50, no. 4, pp. 135-45.
- Pornpitakpan, C 2003, 'Validation of the Celebrity Endorsers' Credibility Scale: Evidence from Asians', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 19, no. 1/2, pp. 179-95.
- Premeaux, SR 2005, 'The Attitudes of Middle Class Male and Female Consumers Regarding the Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsers', *Journal of Promotion Management*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 33-48.
- Quester, PG & Thompson, B 2001, 'Advertising and Promotion Leverage on Arts Sponsorship Effectiveness', *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 33-47.
- Robinson, SL 1996, 'Trust and breach of the psychological contract', *Admin Science Quarterly*, 41, 574-99.
- Robinson, MJ, Trail, GT, Dick, RJ & Gillentine, AJ 2005, 'Fans vs. Spectators: An analysis of those who attend intercollegiate football games', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 1.
-

-
- Ross, S 2006, 'A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Spectator-Based Brand Equity', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 20, no. 1, p. 22.
- Ross, SD, James, JD & Vargas, P 2006, 'Development of a Scale to Measure Team Brand Associations in Professional Sport', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 260-79.
- Ross, SD, Hyejin, B & Seungum, L 2007, 'Assessing Brand Associations for Intercollegiate Ice Hockey', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 106-14.
- Ross, SD, Russell, KC & Bang, H 2008, 'An Empirical Assessment of Spectator-Based Brand Equity', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 322-37.
- Ruihley, BJ, Runyan, RC & Lear, KE 2010, 'The Use of Sport Celebrities in Advertising: A Replication and Extension', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 132-42
EBSCOhost.
- Seguin, B 2009, 'Sponsorship in the trenches', *The Sport Journal*, vol. 12, no. 4.
- Shank, MD & Beasley, FM 1998, 'Fan or fanatic: Refining a measure of sports involvement', *Journal of Sport Behaviour*, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 435.
- Thompson, CJ, Rindfleisch, A & Arsel, Z 2006, 'Emotional Branding and the Strategic Value of the Doppelgänger Brand Image', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 70, no. 1, pp. 50-64.
- Till, BD 2001, 'Managing Athlete Endorser Image: The Effect of Endorsed Product', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 35-42.
- Till, BD & Busler, M 1998, 'Matching products with endorsers: attractiveness versus expertise', *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 6, pp. 576-86.
- Till, BD & Shimp, TA 1998, 'Endorsers in Advertising: The Case of Negative Celebrity Information', *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 67-82.
- Trail, GT, Fink, JS & Anderson, DF 2003, 'Sport Spectator Consumption Behavior', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 1, p. 8.
- Trail, GT, Anderson, DF & Fink, JS 2005, 'Consumer satisfaction and identify theory: A model of sport spectator conative loyalty', *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 98-111.
- Treacy, M & Wiersema, F 1993, 'Customer intimacy and other value disciplines', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 71, no Jan/Feb, pp. 84-93.
- Wann, DL & Branscombe, N 1990, 'Die-hard and fair-weather fans: Effects of identification on BIRGing and CORFing tendencies', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 14, pp. 103-17.
-