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Master's Degree Programme in International Marketing Management (MIMM)

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Sports sponsorship as a channel for brand engagement on social media

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this Master's Thesis was to examine how sports sponsorship can be used as a channel for brand engagement on social media. All these three concepts have been researched previously, however, up until now they have been studied separately. Therefore, the aim was also to investigate the interrelations between these three concepts, as there is a lack of academic base on the matter.

The theory of the research was based on existing academic researches of social media, brand engagement and sports sponsorship. The empirical part of the research was conducted by utilizing quantitative research method. An online questionnaire was published on Facebook pages of two Liiga ice hockey teams. In the end the total sample consisted of 322 viable respondents. The collected data was analyzed by using statistical analysis software, SPSS.

The findings of the empirical research reveal that information, enjoyment, personal identity, social interaction and compensation motivate consumers to engage with brands on social media. However, the behavior of consumers is more passive than active brand engagement. Personal identity and compensation serve as motivational reasons for brand engagement on both active and passive level, while the rest are only passive brand engagement. Besides motivation there are other variables that affect consumers.

Support for the team reflects to brand engagement, which is passive brand engagement. The visibility of the brand during the event is linked to both active and passive brand engagement. Prior information of sports team and event and frequency of attendance can be linked only to active brand engagement. On the other hand, congruence between the team and brand reflects only to passive brand engagement.

TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tämän pro gradu –tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tutkia, miten urheilusponsorointia voidaan hyödyntää brändisitouttamisen kanavana sosiaalisessa mediassa. Näitä kolmea konseptia on tutkittu akateemisessa kirjallisuudessa jonkin verran, mutta ei niinkään yhdessä. Tästä syystä tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on myös selvittää näiden konseptien keskinäisiä riippuvuuksia, joita tämän hetkisessä kirjallisuudessa ei ole kyetty juuri selittämään.

Tutkimuksen teoria koostuu sosiaalisen median, brändisitouttamisen ja urheilusponsoroinnin olemassa olevista akateemisista tutkimuksista. Työn empiirinen osa saatiin käyttämällä kvantitatiivista tutkimusmenetelmää. Kahden jääkiekko Liiga –joukkueen Facebook sivuilla julkaistiin kysely, johon otti osaa 322 hyväksyttävää vastaajaa. Kerätty data analysoitiin tilastollisen analyysin ohjelman SPSS:n avulla.

Empiirisen tutkimuksen tulokset paljastivat, että informaatio, nautinto, henkilökohtainen identiteetti, sosiaalinen kanssakäynti sekä korvaukset motivoivat kuluttajia sitoutumaan brändien kanssa sosiaalisessa mediassa. Kuitenkin, kuluttajien käyttäytyminen on enemmän passiivista kuin aktiivista brändisitouttamisen kannalta. Henkilökohtainen identiteetti ja korvaukset toimivat sekä aktiivisina että passiivisina käyttäytymisinä kun taas muut ovat passiivista.

Tuki joukkueelle heijastuu brändisitouttamiseen, joka on passiivista. Brändin näkyvyys tapahtuman aikana voidaan yhdistää sekä aktiiviseen että passiiviseen brändisitouttamiseen. Aikaisempi tieto urheilujoukkueesta urheilutapahtumasta ja osallistumisaktiivisuus tapahtumaan heijastuu vain aktiiviseen brändisitouttamiseen. Toistaalta joukkueen ja brändin yhteneväisyys heijastuu vain passiiviseen brändisitouttamiseen.

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Milestone refers to a significant event in your life and I have to say this moment is definitely a milestone – I can finally say, “done”. I started to write my thesis already in September 2014 and while this has been definitely a longer journey than expected, I am incredible proud of myself to finally reach the finish line.

Since this has been quite a voyage, there are some people that I have to thank for being with me during this time. First of all, I would like to thank my thesis instructor, Olli Kuivalainen, whose support and valuable advices have been extremely appreciated throughout my thesis journey – I can’t thank enough.

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I am done.

Nuremberg, Germany, 08.08.2016

Elli Karppinen

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ABBREVIATIONS

BE	Brand engagement
CE	Consumer engagement
SES	Sports event sponsorship
SNS	Social networking sites

1. Introduction

Did you know that it took less than two years for Facebook to reach a market audience of 50 million people? (Fisch, 2010) Or that if Facebook was a country it would be the second largest country measured by population in the world right now? (Penn, 2014)

The growth of social media has been phenomenal during the past few years. Facebook is one of the reasons why social media has become a marketing tool that almost every company tries to integrate into their marketing strategy. Social media especially fascinates brands that are involved with consumers. That's why, the recent studies of social media are mostly brand related. Moreover, consumers are extremely interested in brands; therefore, it is crucial to understand the congruence of social media and brand management. (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins Wiertz, 2013)

Besides social media, sports is another concept that is in the center of attention of consumers and brands. Because of this the marketing activities around sports have been growing. (Wise, Miles, 1997) Especially sports sponsorship is seen one of the most effective sports marketing methods (Dolphin, 2003). The popularity of sports and the sports events have gained media's attention as well. Especially the development of technology has affected people's interest in sports because technology enables an easier way to follow sports. (Kambitsis, Harahousou, Theodorakis, Chatzibeis, 2002)

Even though social media and sports sponsorship have been researched a lot during the past few years, there is still a significant gap between these two concepts. These two marketing communications tools have not yet been studied together, which is why these concepts are studied in this research. Furthermore, since both social media and sports marketing are popular among consumers and brands, brand engagement has been included in this research as well. Brand engagement is an engagement form that has been gaining a lot of attention

recently as well. However, because of the complexity of the concept, the studies are still trying to find a common language.

In this chapter a short introduction to the research was presented. In the background of the study, the purpose of the research is identified and why it has been conducted. After explaining the purpose of the research, the research question is presented with supporting questions. Delimitations are also stated with the reasons why some concepts have been delimited from the research. Furthermore, key definitions are also identified and defined. After this some of the essential researchers for this study have been identified in the literature review part; which previous studies are most essential ones for this research. The method for collecting data is explained as well and the reasons why that research method has been chosen. Lastly, theoretical framework and structure of the thesis are proposed.

1.1 Background of the research

The power of social media has been growing year by year. The effects of social media can be seen all around the world. People are using more and more social media platforms and applications in their regular activities today. Consequently, companies are utilizing social media platforms into their marketing strategies. (Burson-Marsteller, 2012) Today social media is regarded as a rising relationship-building platform between companies and consumers (Li, Li, 2014).

The popularity of social media can be examined through user numbers of social networking sites. For instance, Facebook has over 1 billion active users all over the world right now (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström, Freundt, 2014). Google+ has over 540 million monthly active users. Twitter has over 250 million active users and over 1 billion users total. Furthermore, nearly 500 million Tweets are sent per day. (Digital Insights, 2014) The newcomer Instagram has over 400 million users total now (Instagram, 2015).

The smartphone phenomenon has also reinforced the popularity of social media. The easy access to social media applications has enabled the growth of social media. According to a survey by IDC (2013) 79% of smartphone users have their phone nearby for at least 2 hours of their day and 25% state that they do not remember the last time their smartphone was not next to them. What is significant is that 84% of smartphone users use their phones either to text or to log into social networks. (IDC, 2013)

The social media user numbers and the growing smartphone phenomenon prove that it has come to stay and is not going anywhere. Social media has become a crucial part of people's everyday life, which is why it is essential for companies to create and utilize the right social media platforms into their marketing strategies. For example, Coca-Cola rules Facebook with 90 million fans but on Twitter it is placed 30th with "only" roughly 2,7 million followers. The sporting goods rivals Nike and Adidas have almost the same amount of fans on Facebook but on Twitter and YouTube Nike have an upper hand on Adidas with clearly more followers than the other company. (Socialbakers.com, 2014)

The growth of social media is due to many reasons. The traditional marketing channels such as online marketing, TV and radio are not reaching consumers effectively enough anymore (Bolton, Saxena-Iyer, 2009). The traditional marketing is decreasing effectively (Sethuraman, Tellis, Briesch, 2011). For example, how many times have you ignored banners and e-mail advertisements? The development of technology has always been quite fast but especially during past 10 or 20 years it has developed tremendously. It could be stated that the technology development is the main reason of the increasing number of online users. Hence, adding attractiveness to social media. As for the companies, social media marketing campaigns can be produced at a much lower cost than the traditional marketing campaigns, which is why social media marketing is an attractive marketing option for companies. Most importantly social media marketing can engage more customers than the traditional marketing campaigns. (Bolton, Saxena-Iyer, 2009, Gillin, 2007)

According to Williamson (2011) over half of social media users follow brands and other companies on social media. The users of social media tend to promote their favorite brands as well, which is why companies should invest in social media (Nielsen, 2013). Still, many companies do not understand social media marketing even if they have included it into their marketing activities. The common mistake is that companies are only present in the social media but do not communicate or engage with consumers. In today's world the presence is simply not enough. Companies have to engage with the consumers because consumers are gaining more and more power on the Internet. Hence, brand managers are losing control over their brands. (Gensler et al., 2013)

Therefore, marketing professionals should pay more attention to brand engagement. The popularity of the concept has been growing recently because consumers are more involved in marketing activities than before. The studies of brand engagement have recognized the central role of consumers in brand marketing. Today, consumers have an active role in decision making rather than a passive role in receiving marketing information. (Wong, Merrilees, 2015) The purpose of brand engagement is to investigate the ways of encompassing consumers to brand in deeper ways rather than utilizing it as a promotion tool to just sell the products to consumers (Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Schultz, 2007).

Nevertheless, well-performed brand engagement drives sales, increases profitability and brand loyalty, creates positive word-of-mouth and enhances consumer brand retention (Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Goldsmith, Flynn, Clark, 2011, Hollebeek, Glynn, Brodie, 2014, Voyles, 2007, Neff, 2007). Now, the engagement is more important than ever because successful consumer brand engagement enhances brand's performance (Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Kumar, Aksoy, Donkers, Venkatesa, Wiesel, Tillmanns, 2010, Malthouse, Hofacker, 2010).

Still, there are not enough researches of how brands engage with consumers. There seems to be uncertainty of the actual activities that occur between consumers and brands on social media. (Wong, Merrilees, 2015) Moreover, it has been reported that only small portion of consumers interact actively with brands on

social media. Consumers tend to be more passive than active on social media, meaning that they prefer consuming the brands' content to creating it. Brands' pages on social media are seen more as an information source than a creating place as in terms of for example "liking" or commenting activities. (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, Pihlström, 2012)

In this research the consumers' motives for engagement are studied. Moreover, the engagement behaviour of consumers is also researched. These two matters are studied on social media platform; what drives consumers to engage with brands on social media and how do they act on social media. However, many researchers have stated that marketing communications channels or tools are more effective when they are combined with each other (Rowley, 1998, Parker, 1991, Meenaghan, 1991), which is why another marketing communications tool has been taken into this research as well.

Sports sponsorship is an effective marketing communications tool and therefore it is a popular marketing method among companies (Dolphin, 2003). Furthermore, sports sponsorship can also break cultural borders that also increase its attractiveness for marketing professionals (Meenaghan, 1996). Sponsoring in sports events is an excellent platform for companies to promote their products, enhance the image of the brand and create a buzz (Ngan, Prendergast, Tsang, 2011). The reason why sports events sponsorship is popular is due to the fact that it is seen as an effective way to communicate with target markets and consumers (Choi, Tsuji, Hutchinson, Bouchet, 2011). Even though, sports sponsorship is a popular marketing method, it could be argued that the researches of sports sponsorship are rather out dated at the moment because almost no studies can be found of sports sponsorship and social media together.

The reason why it can be argued that the studies of sports sponsorship are out dated is because social media a new, popular and powerful marketing concept but still sports sponsorship has not been combined with social media studies. Therefore this research focuses on this specific matter. The purpose of this research is to find out if sports sponsorship can be used as a channel for brand

engagement in a social media context. This means whether sports sponsorship can be used as a navigational marketing channel for consumers to log into their social networking sites if a brand is acting as a sponsor in a sports event. Consequently, the purpose is also to investigate whether sports sponsorship trigger consumers to engage with brands on social media.

The purpose of this research also suggests that sponsorship could be seen as a two-way communication channel. So far sponsorship has been perceived as a one-way communication channel (Gordon, 2014). However, in this research it has the potentiality to be seen as a two-way communication channel as well. This is due to the fact that social media is a two-way communication channel. If consumers log into their social media to interact with the brand because of them being a sponsor, then sponsorship can be seen as an indirect two-way communication tool.

1.2 Literature review

As it has been mentioned before, social media marketing, sports sponsorship and brand engagement have been in a great interest of many researchers. Sports sponsorship has been studied the most because of the popularity of sports and all the marketing activities related to it. Moreover, sports sponsorship has been so to speak in the world the longest time of these three marketing concepts. However, social media marketing has been gaining a lot of attention in the past few years because of the extremely rapid technological development. Brand engagement has been among researches a while now was well. However, the term was only established recently because of its complexity.

In the current research these three concepts have been handled separately in the theoretical base of the research. This is due to the fact that the concepts have not been studied together therefore they have to be explained in their own separate chapters. This also establishes a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the concepts. The theoretical base of the research has been built mostly through

academic articles. However, sports sponsorship has been explained with few sponsorship books as well because some of the sponsorship topics have already been established well enough for them to be a common knowledge. Moreover, these books are written by Finnish authors while the academic articles are published by international authors. Overall, the chosen academic articles and books enable a comprehensive theoretical review of the concepts in order to the relevant research questions to be proposed and answered. In addition the objective is to construct a theoretical base that will connect with the empirical part of the study in order to answer the research question.

Social media marketing has been trending a lot recently. That's why, there are many researches and studies about the matter that have been published in recent years. Social media is also constantly evolving and changing therefore only recent researches of the topic have been included in this research. In this research, social media is approached through Kotler's (1989) marketing communications because it is important to understand its role in the channel. The relevance of social media is explained through the growth of social commerce. Hajli (2013) argues strongly for significance of social commerce. This is due to the fact that social commerce should be acknowledged as its own stream in e-commerce because social commerce is growing year by year.

Social media as a concept is approached with social media triangle that was introduced by Ahlqvist, Bäck, Halonen, Heinonen in 2008. They state that social media is a three dimensional triangle, which consists of content, web 2.0, and community and networks. In order to social media to be social media it need all these three dimensions. Social media is narrowed to social networking sites (SNSs) because they are widely utilized by companies. Social networking sites are mostly explained with online studies meaning that not actual academic articles have been included in these parts. The reason for this is that not many academic studies of SNSs can be found because there is probably no need for academic research for example for user numbers of SNSs.

Brand engagement builds the second part of the theory. As it has been mentioned before, brand engagement has been studied a lot recently, however, the common problem is that due to the complexity of the term, not many researchers seem willing to touch the subject thoroughly. Brand engagement has been called in many different terms for example as consumer and/or customer engagement or just an engagement. Therefore it is essential to make a clear definition of this term. Higgins and Scholar (2009) have defined the term engagement that is widely used utilized in many other researches. Their definition is used as a base for other engagement forms such as consumer engagement.

Many researchers add their own aspect to consumer engagement. Bowden (2008), and Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric and Ilic (2011) take a psychological approach to consumer engagement while Mollen and Wilson (2010) highlight interaction and communication between an object and consumer. Van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirner and Verhoef (2010), however, emphasize consumers' motivational drivers for engagement. The common point between all these definitions is that all of them have the term brand included. Therefore, the term brand engagement is utilized in this research.

Brand engagement as a term is introduced by Hollebeek (2011). The term is multi-dimensional, which consists of three dimensions that are emotional, cognitive and behavioral dimensions. Hollebeek's approach to brand engagement has been globally approved and the rest of brand engagement researches are based on her definition. For instance, some recent studies by Dwivedi (2015), and Wong and Merrilees (2015) support Hollebeek's multi-dimensional approach for brand engagement.

Sponsorship is an extremely popular research object in North America. However, in Finland the studies are still rather limited. In Finland the studies regarding sponsorship have been conducted mainly by Mainostajien Liitto. They publish a sponsorship barometer every year, which states yearly sponsorship expenses in Finland. Sponsorship is approached through marketing communications in this research because it is seen important to understand its role in it. Many researches

argue for sponsorship to be accepted as its own channel in marketing communications because it is seen as one of the most popular marketing communications tools if not the most popular one at times. Now it is still seen as a supporting tool. (Tripoldi, 2001, Lardinoit, Quester, 2001, Rowley, 1998, Kitchen, 1995, Javalgi, Taylor, Gross, Lampman, 1994). The most common sponsorship researcher is Tony Meenaghan whose definition of sponsorship has been accepted as the common definition. Sleight's definition has been widely recognized as well and it specifies Meenaghan's definition of sponsorship.

Even though it has been said that sponsorship is extremely popular marketing communications tool; it could be argued that it is all due to the popularity of sports sponsorship. Most sponsorship expenses are allocated to sports (Crompton, 2004), which makes it the most popular sponsorship form. In this research the focus is on sports sponsorship and especially in sports event sponsorship because it is the interest of this study. Since only one clear sports (event) sponsorship researcher cannot be identified, the term is approached and studied through many different researches.

1.3 Research questions and objectives

The main purpose of this research is to examine how sports event sponsorship works as a channel for brand engagement on social media. In the current research the channel means whether sports event sponsorship can navigate consumers to a sponsor's, in this case brand's, social networking sites and hence, enable engagement. The research question will be answered through different social media marketing, brand engagement and sports sponsorship literature as introduced in the subchapter above. In addition, the result will be supported with conducted empirical research, which will be presented in the chapter 1.6.

In order to achieve the objective, the following research problem is presented:

How does sports event sponsorship work as channel for brand engagement on social media?

In order to answer the main question, six supportive questions were formed. The purpose of the supportive questions is usually to support the main research question in order to build a comprehensive answer for the main question. In the current research the supportive questions also build the complete answer to the main question step by step.

First, it is important to examine if consumers engage with brands on social media when the brands are sponsors in sports events. Therefore the following supportive question is formed:

Do consumers engage with brands on social media when brands are sponsors in sports events?

Second, it is also vital to understand the motives for brand engagement. That's why the purpose is also to recognize the motives for engagement on social media, why consumers log into their social media accounts. Therefore the following supportive question is identified:

How are consumers motivated to engage with brands on social media in sports event?

Third, brand engagement can be divided into active and passive brand engagement. That's why, it is also essential to investigate, how active consumers are in terms of communication with the brand on social media. That's why the following supportive question is proposed:

How active are consumers in brand engagement on social media?

Fourth, it is also crucial to understand if sports team itself has an effect on consumers to engage with a brand. The sports team and sports event are connected therefore, it should be studied how the team motivates consumers to engage and how consumers would act. Therefore the following supportive question is introduced:

How does sports team motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

Fifth, besides understanding if sports team has an effect on consumers to engage with a brand, the effect of sports event on consumers should be studied as well. As mentioned earlier, sports team and event are connected which is why it should be examined how the event motivates consumer to engage with the brand on social media. Therefore, the following supporting question is proposed:

How does sports event motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

Lastly, the congruence between the brand and sports event is studied as well because it is seen essential to understand if congruence has an influence on consumers' engagement motivation and behavior. Consequently, the following supportive question is built:

How does congruence between sports event and team and brand affect consumers to engage with brand on social media?

1.4 Delimitations

Marketing communications is part of marketing mix. Since marketing communications is a large topic, it has been narrowed down to two marketing communications tools: social media marketing and sponsorship. Both social media marketing and sponsorship contain lots of other marketing forms related to them, therefore, social media marketing is narrowed to social networking sites and sponsorship is limited to sports sponsorship limiting for example cultural sponsorship. Only three social networking sites have been included into this research: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram because they are seen the most relevant ones for this research. These three SNSs serve as a touch point between social media, brand engagement and sports sponsorship, and will not be dealt with a deeply manner.

Sports sponsorship is addressed through sports event sponsorship because it is seen as the most applicable sponsorship method for this research. Therefore, a sponsorship method such as person sponsorship is not addressed in this research. Moreover, broadcast and television sponsorship have not been included either. Sports event sponsorship is limited to a specific sport, which is ice hockey in this case. According to Mainostajien Liitto (2012b) ice hockey is the most popular sponsorship target, which is why it has been chosen to this research. Other sports events are delimited from this research.

Brand management covers many brand related marketing channels as well. This research studies brand management from engagement marketing perspective. Since engagement marketing is a very broad term as well, in this research the focus is especially on brand engagement. This limits all other engagement-marketing aspects. Since brand engagement is a complex term that has different dimensions (emotional, cognitive and behavioral), the dimensions covered in this research are cognitive and behavioral. This is due to the fact that the objective is to recognize the motivation for the engagement and the engagement behavior. In other words, in this research cognitive aspect represents the motivational state of

mind of consumer and behavioral side symbolizes the actual activities of consumers.

Moreover, the research is conducted from consumers' perspective limiting companies and/or brand and other institutional actors. The purpose of this is to identify consumers' actions and motivations in order to get a result for the research problem. This research is conducted in Finland therefore limiting all other countries. This means that the results of this research may not be applicable to other countries.

1.5 Definitions of the key concepts

Marketing communications

Means increasing company, its products and services awareness and sales with different marketing communications channels, which are personal selling, sales promotion, advertising and public relations. (Kotler, 1988, 510-511) Moreover, marketing communications have different supporting tools as well and the relevant ones identified for this research are social media and sponsorship.

Social media

It is a marketing method via social media sites (Constantinides, 2014). The marketing method is a two-way communication channel, which means that consumers are also an active part of the marketing indicating the interactive aspect (Ahlqvist et al., 2008). Social media marketing can be done for instance through social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, or blogs and other online platforms.

Social networking sites

Social networking sites are social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Instagram. SNSs enable their users to create a profile that is either public or semi-public in the respective platform and form relationships with other SNSs users. SNSs are not restricted to only kind of a platform but they can be

either in forms of video, photo, and instant messaging or similar. (Trusov, Bucklin, Pauwels, 2009)

Brand engagement

In all simplicity brand engagement is seen as a two-way communication between a consumer and brand. However, in this research the definition of brand engagement is based on Hollebeek's (2011b) definition as "a level of customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions." Moreover, to specify, brand engagement is narrowed to cognitive and behaviour dimensions in this research. Cognitive dimension is seen as a motivational aspect and behaviour dimension represents the actions consumer has in interactions with a brand. Therefore based on these, brand engagement means a level of consumer's motivational and behavioural investment in certain brand interactions.

Sports sponsorship

Is part of marketing communications channel. In this research Alaja's (2000, 105) definition of sports sponsorship is applied. Sports sponsorship means transmitting an image to a target group by using a sports target that can be an athlete, sports event or something similar. Sports sponsorship especially is collaboration between a sponsor and a sponsored organisation/person that is beneficial for both sides.

Sports event sponsorship

Is part of sports sponsorship and can be defined in a similar manner. Sports event sponsorship is defined as an image-transmitting tool for companies to transfer their image to target consumers in a sports event they are present in. (Fullerton, Merz, 2008, 95) In this research sports event sponsorship can be seen as a channel that guides consumers to engage with brands on social media.

1.6 Methodology and data collection

The theoretical base of this research consists of a comprehensive literature review that consists of mainly academic articles. However, some books are used as well if the information is seen as generally accepted knowledge. The research question is formed based on the theoretical part of the research and the previous researches of the relevant topics.

The research questions are analyzed by using a quantitative research method. Moreover, hypotheses are formed and tested with factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. A questionnaire is seen the most relevant way to get the results for the research questions because questionnaire enables the wanted amount of data that other research methods cannot provide. The questionnaire is built based on the main research problem and other questions covering the key concepts: sports event sponsorship, brand engagement and social media. The questions are mainly multiple choice and Likert -scale questions. The multiple choice questions are used in the descriptive part of the questionnaire while Likert -scale questions are formed to cover the key topics in more depth. The data is analyzed with IBM SPSS version 23 software and the questionnaire is built with Qualtrics program.

The data is collected on social media site from 2 different sports teams. The chosen social networking site is Facebook because it enables wide audience reachability. The sports teams chosen for this research are Finnish ice hockey teams because ice hockey is the most popular sports in Finland and one of the most popular sponsorship targets as well (Mainostajien Liitto, 2014). In addition, both of the hockey teams play in the main ice hockey league, Liiga.

The sponsors, in this case the brands, are chosen due to their popularity, conspicuousness among consumers and social media activity. The chosen brands have to be active on all Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as consumers prefer different social media channels (Hochman, Schwartz, 2012). These brands are also the main sponsors for the chosen ice hockey events and teams and the data

has been collected from the teams' Facebook pages. Both brand are from different industry, however, both of them are consumer brands. The brands are purposefully chosen from a different industry because it is seen essential to know if the level of congruence between the brand and sports affect engagement on social media.

1.7 Theoretical framework

In the current research the theoretical base consists of three different separate theoretical concepts, which are social media, brand engagement and sports sponsorship. These three concepts are addressed in their own chapters, making the theoretical base of the research to consist of three different theory chapters. The purpose of the theoretical base is to create and build a relevant and solid academic and scientific base for the empirical part of the research.

The first chapter of the theory discusses social media's role in marketing communications, which is addressed only briefly. The role of social media in marketing communications is essential to identify because the popularity of this marketing communications tool has only been growing. In order to understand social media it is also important to know, how it has been growing and due to what reasons. After this the focus is on social media marketing and social networking sites that are relevant for this research.

The second chapter of the theory addresses brand engagement, which has been thoroughly defined in order to have a solid understanding of the complex topic. Moreover, brand engagement is discussed on a social media context because of the nature of this research. Brand engagement consists of three different dimensions: motivational (known as cognitive as well), behavioral and emotional dimensions (Dwivedi, 2015, Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Keller, 2013, Brodie et al., 2011, Hollebeek, 2011a, Hollebeek, 2011b), however, in this research only motivational (known as cognitive as well) and behavioral dimensions of the brand engagement are covered leaving out the emotional dimension. These two

dimensions help to understand the reasons why consumers are motivated to engage and once motivated how do they act when engaged; is it more active or passive behavior (Gummerus et al, 2012, Vivek, Beatty, Morgan, 2012, Muntinga, Moorman, Smit, 2011, Shang et al., 2006). That's why the chosen brand engagement are seen the most relevant dimensions for this research.

The motivational dimension includes the reasons why consumers choose to engage with the brand. In this research the recognized motivational reasons for brand engagement are information and enjoyment (Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Goncalves Pereira, de Fatima Salgueiro, Mateus, 2014, Yimaz, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011, Angela Hausman, Kabadayi, Price, 2014), personal identity (Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011), social interaction (Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011, Angela Hausmann et al., 2014, Labrecque, 2014) and compensation (Labrecque, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011) (Muntinga et al., 2011).

The third and final chapter of the theory covers sports sponsorship. The role of sports sponsorship in marketing communications is explained comprehensively because of the enormous popularity of the concept. Since the purpose is to identify in what way sports event sponsorship works a channel, the focus is more on the target of sports sponsorship, which is sports, and the method of sponsorship, which is event sponsorship. The thorough explanation of the concept also helps to understand the environment and nature in which the sponsor, event and team are operating. The theory also talks about consumer's perception towards the team and event with the roles of prior information of the event & team (Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, Maroco, 2013, Maroco, 2013, Olson, 2010, Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003) and support for the team (Biscaia et al., 2013, Ko, et al., 2008, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000). Furthermore, event behavior is also covered with the intensity level of the event (Carrillat, d'Astous, Bellavance, Eid, 2015, Cummins, Keene, Nutting, 2012). Consequently, consumer's frequency of attendance to the event is also a topic that is covered (Lee et al., 2011, Wakefield, Bennet, 2010, Cornwell, 2008). Importance of the visibility of sponsor is recognized (Cornwell, 2008, Lardinoit, Quester, 2001) and

lastly the theory part also identifies the connection between the sponsor, event and team (Thomas, 2014, Biscaia et al., 2013, Lee et al., 2011, Olson, 2010, Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Gwinner, Bennett, 2008, Koo et al., 2006, Flynn, 2006, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000, Gwinner, 1997). Due to these topics, the following theoretical framework is proposed:

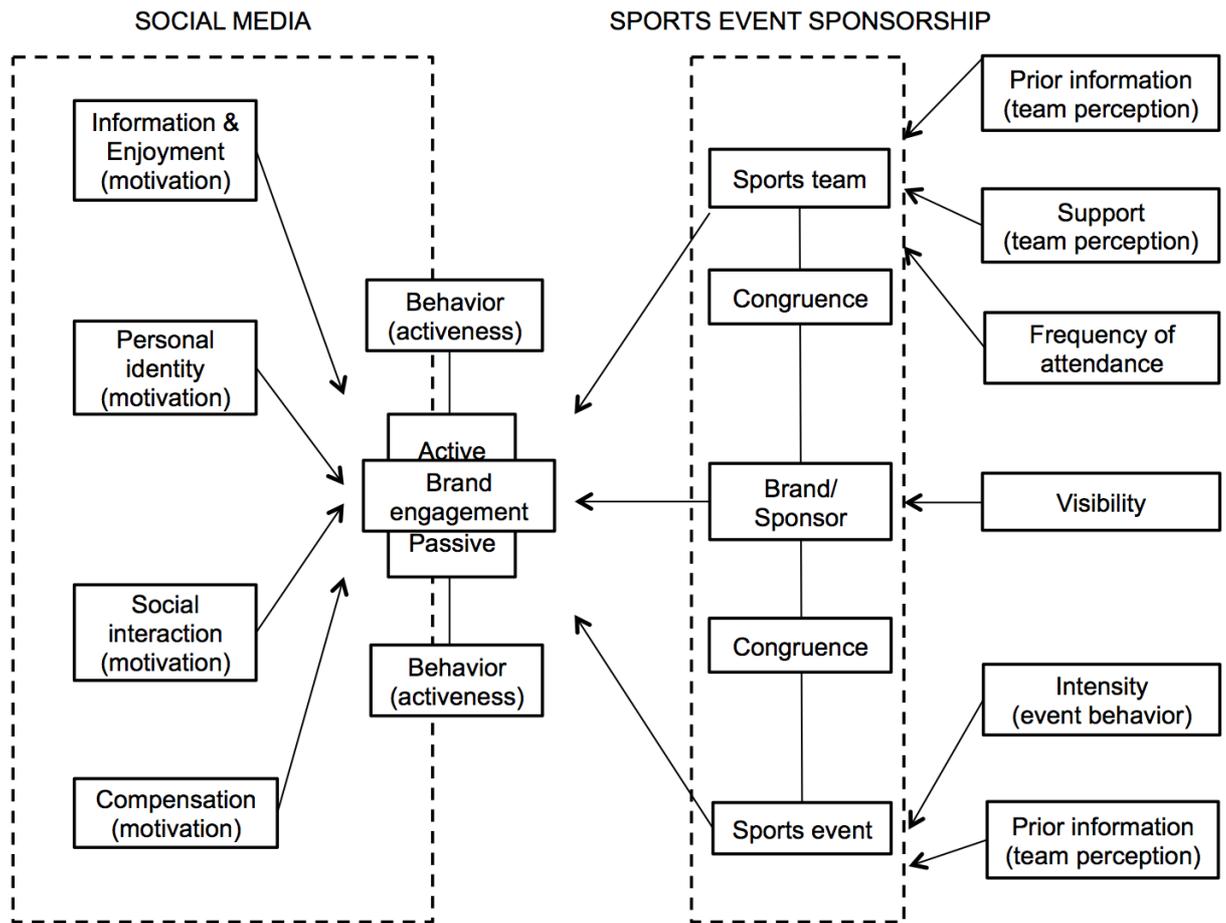


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the research

1.8 Structure of the research

The structure of this research is divided into seven (7) main chapters. First chapter was the introduction chapter, which objective was to explain the motivations and reasons for conducting this research. The introduction chapter provided a short explanation of the theory, which was presented in the literature review and theoretical framework part. Moreover, delimitations, key definitions, research methods and now the structure of the thesis are also presented.

Second, third and fourth chapter present the theoretical background of this research. The theory consists of three different parts. The first part covers social media marketing's role in marketing communications while second part focuses on brand engagement and the third part on sports sponsorship. All the main topics are explained in depth covering the definitions of key concepts and explaining the relevance of the key concepts. Social media concepts are approached through a short explanation of the history of social commerce – how the concept became a worldwide phenomenon and after this a more in depth clarification of the concept is explained. Furthermore, social media enables the environment for the current research while brand engagement and sports sponsorship hold the true interest. Hence, these two topics are the most relevant ones for this research.

After explaining the theoretical background of the study, the methodology of the research is presented, which can be found on chapter 5. Methodology chapter discusses the way the research has been conducted and the reasons why the method is chosen. Moreover, the questionnaire questions are also introduced in this part of the research.

Chapter 6 covers the analysis and findings part. First the descriptive statistics are presented covering the information of respondents. After this, factors analysis is conducted with reliability and validity values. Finally, regression analysis is presented with the tested hypotheses based on the results from the factor analysis.

The final chapter addresses the discussions and conclusions part of the research. This chapter presents the most important findings with theoretical contributions and managerial implications. The research is concluded with limitations and proposals for the future researches.

2. The role of social media in marketing communications

This chapter explains social media's role in marketing communications. Social media marketing is part of marketing communications, however, it is not a marketing communications channel yet, which is why its role is identified in marketing communications. It is also important to understand the reasons for social media's growth. That's why, the history of social commerce is explained. Moreover, social media marketing is explained, and it is narrowed to social networking sites that are studied in this research. The included social networking sites in this research are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Their popularity is explained and their usability is clarified as well.

2.1 Social media's role in marketing communications

Social media is a rather new marketing tool in marketing communications, which is part of marketing mix model. Marketing mix is a common business tool, which has been a very popular tool among marketing professionals. The model consists of 4Ps, which stand for product, price, placement and promotion. (Grönroos, 1997, 322) Marketing communications represents promotion in the marketing mix model. Promotion ensures that consumers have the information of the products, in other words increase the products visibility. The goals are also to increase sales, keep or gain market share, increase brand recognition, inform and educate the market and lastly create a competitive advantage. Marketing communications, known also as promotion mix consists of many different promotional channels. (Rowley, 1998) According to Kotler (1988, 510-511) marketing communications consists of four different factors:

- Advertising
- Sales promotion
- Public relations
- Personal selling

There are many other marketing tools that are part of the promotion mix as well. However, they have not yet been accepted as separate channels for different reasons. One of these marketing communications tools is sponsorship (Rowley, 1998, Javalgi et al., 1994), which is discussed later in 4.1. Furthermore, companies usually tend to combine the marketing channels/tools or use one channel to support another one in order to accomplish the company's objectives and goals (Rowley, 1998).

Social media is another marketing communications tool that has not established its role as a separate channel. The main reason for this is that the marketing managers still do not fully understand how to integrate the method into the marketing strategy. However, this trend is slowly changing because social media has forced companies to change their tools and strategies to be more communicative with consumers. (Tiago, Verissimo, 2014, Mangold, Faulds, 2009). Moreover, social media's popularity has been growing rapidly since its birth. The popularity of social media can be seen all across the world and it has established itself as the most popular media (Don-Hun, 2010). The reason for this is quite simple: Social media has changed the digital marketing because it has enabled a more fluent way for people to communicate with each other. Social media has empowered consumers by allowing consumers to share their positive and negative experiences of the brands. (Cox, McLeod, Bryant, 2014) Therefore, social media should be considered as its own channel in marketing communications.

Nowadays, social media marketing is considered as a powerful marketing tool. The traditional marketing channels such as television commercials and print ads are not reaching consumers effectively enough anymore (Bolton, Saxena-Iyer, 2009). The traditional marketing is decreasing effectively (Sethuraman et al., 2011). Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that social media should be a hybrid element in the promotion mix. One reason for this is that consumers do not trust the message that the traditional marketing channels are sending (Constantinides, 2014, Hajli, 2013), which is why social media is replacing traditional marketing (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, Schäfer, 2012, Bolton-Saxena-Iyer, 2009). In addition,

consumers have more trust on each other, which is why social media is an ideal place to share experiences of products and companies (Habibi, Laroche, Richard, 2014, Nielsen, 2013, Park, Lee, Han, 2007, Foux, 2006). Social media at its best can even engage more customers than a traditional marketing channel (Bolton-Saxena-Iyer, 2009, Gillin, 2007). The interactivity is the basis for social media while traditional marketing is about companies pushing the information for consumers (social media is pull marketing while traditional marketing is seen as push). It could be said that social media is a two-way communication tool while traditional marketing channels are mostly one-way communication tools. Figure 2 presents the differences between traditional marketing and social media marketing. (Kohli et al., 2014)

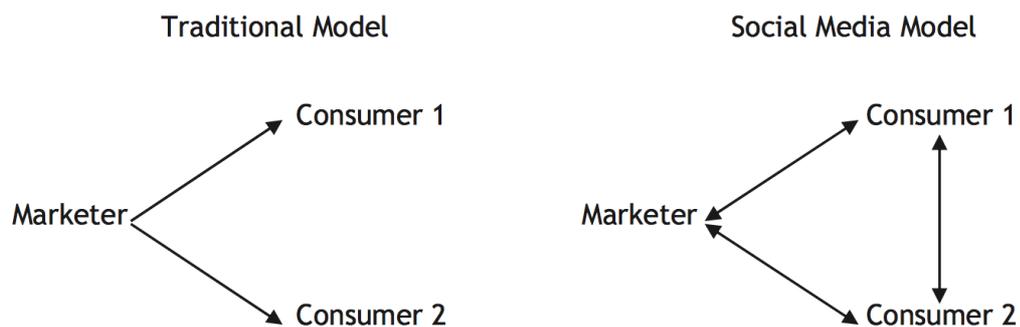


Figure 2. Communication Models (modified) (Kohli et al., 2014)

By adding social media marketing into the promotion mix, it would give the tool “a home” in marketing. This means that the marketing tool would have more credibility and it would enhance its reliability in the eyes of marketing professionals. Accepting social media as part of marketing communications would provide managers a better and more comprehensive understanding of the concept of social media. In addition, it would be easier to incorporate social media into company’s marketing strategy when the marketing tool is understood fully. Companies would also more likely be more effective in communicating with their target audience. (Mangold, Faulds, 2009) Due to these reasons promotion mix should be updated by adding social media marketing as one of its key channels.

2.2 The growth of social commerce

Technology developments have affected today's marketing. Consumers and companies use Internet more and more to exchange goods and services thus making Internet one of the most central marketplaces in the world (Leeflang et al, 2013). According to Mulhern (2009) communication is changing because of the opportunities that media's digitization is offering.

The 1990s is known as the decade of the e-commerce. However, now the situation is different. (Fader, Winer, 2012) People are spending more and more time on the Internet to network and interact with each other (Hajli, 2013). Web 2.0 is the reason, why social commerce is happening. The Web 2.0 has changed the Internet towards more social and has created platforms that enable people to provide and distribute information. (Lai, Turban, 2008) The online communicating is taking place in different social networking sites like on Facebook and Twitter. This recent phenomenon has forced e-commerce to change, hence a new stream had to be created, social commerce. (Hajli, 2013, Liang, Turban, 2011, Zwass, 2010) Now social commerce has taken over the 21st century from e-commerce (Fader, Winer, 2012, van Zyl, 2009).

Social commerce does not have a clear definition but according to Liang and Turban (2011) it means "the delivery of e-commerce activities and transactions via the social media environment, mostly in social networks and by using Web 2.0 software". Naturally, social commerce has an effect on consumers as well. Now, the consumers are able to participate more in the business process. The social interactions on the networking sites have enabled an easier way for consumers to have and maintain their personal social relationships and business relationships. In other words the social networking sites enable consumers to connect and communicate more proactively with each other. Internet and social networking sites have also enabled the consumers to express their opinions more freely. This means for example the possibility to share their positive or negative experience about product and services. (Hajli, 2013)

Because consumers are gaining more power on the Internet, companies are forced to change their marketing strategies towards more communicating. Companies' objective is to engage consumers to their brands. In other words, social media marketing has affected and is constantly affecting companies' marketing activities, which is why companies are involved in social media today. (Kim, Ko, 2012) Moreover, as it was mentioned before, traditional marketing is losing its effect on consumers, who tend to have more trust on the information promoted on the social media. According to Hajli (2013) social commerce can enhance and improve the trustworthiness of a company and products therefore it is vital to companies to be in social media.

2.3 Social media marketing

Web 2.0 takes communication to the next level. Web 1.0 is the original concept for the communication online. However, the main difference between Web 2.0 and Web 1.0 is that the latter allowed only one-way communication while Web 2.0 expands it to two-way communication. Web 2.0 enables consumer participation in communication for instance users can share information, collaborate and communicate with each other on the Internet. Two-way communication can lead to consumers' collective intelligence. The information is exchanged mostly through social media applications on Web 2.0. (Gamboa, Goncalves, 2014, Thackeray, Neiger, Hanson, McKenzie, 2008) Web 2.0 technologies, known as social media technologies as well, mean social networking sites, podcasts, wikis, blogs, virtual worlds, video and photo sharing sites (Luo, Wang, Han, 2013, Bicen, Cavus, 2011) To clarify, social media is an aspect of Web 2.0, not a Web 2.0 (Gamboa, Goncalves, 2014). Web 2.0 provides a platform for consumers that is a place for consumers to produce and distribute information through social media applications (Thackery et al. 2008).

In all simplicity, social media marketing is defined as marketing via social media sites (Constantinides, 2014). The term, social media, has been defined in many different ways. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 61) define social media as "a group of

Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content." Constantinides (2014) explains that online tools, applications and networking opportunities are usually referred as social media. Berger (2008) defines social media as a new electronic communication channel that enables people to communicate in a virtual environment. He continues that the communication occurs for instance through blogs, podcasts, chat and discussion rooms, social networks and RSS feeds.

According to Ahlqvist et al. (2008) social media is consists of three different main elements, which are content, communities and networks, and Web 2.0. Figure 3 represents the social media triangle. Content element means the part when social media users create content, which may be videos or pictures. Furthermore, it may refer to something people create and publish on the Internet for example tags and reviews.

Communities and networks element present the social part of the pyramid. Roughly, a community consists of a group of people that have and share same ideas and values. Communities can be specialized to a certain company, brand etc. For example, a brand community is not limited to geographic borders and its members are dedicated to the brand and their admiration connect them to other brand community members (Muniz Jr, O'Guinn, 2001). The communities usually use social media platforms to communicate either straight or through media objects. The technology development has enabled new ways to communicate for example smart phones and iPads are such technology developments. (Ahlqvist et al., 2008)

The last element of the pyramid is Web 2.0, which has enabled the possibility to produce and distribute information online. As it has been explained earlier, Web 2.0 is the platform that allows the content sharing and creation with other users. The technology development has created a new kind of opportunity for people to communicate. Usually researchers mean by Web 2.0, the whole social media

phenomenon but Berthon, Pitt, Plangger and Shapiro (2012) and Ahlqvist et al. (2008) use it as a technical aspect of social media. (Ahlqvist et al., 2008)

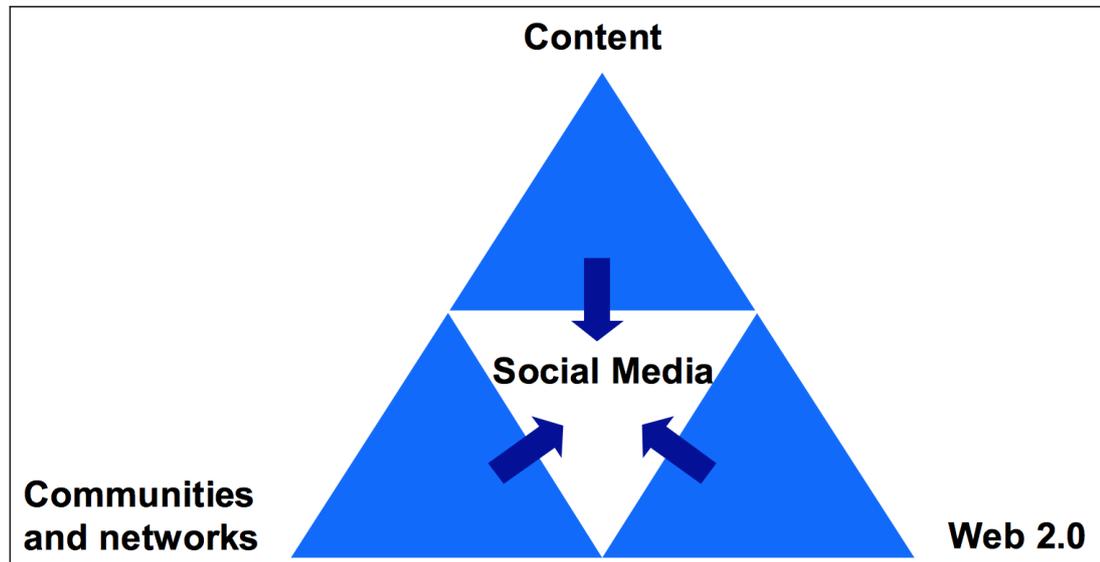


Figure 3. Social media triangle (Ahlqvist et al., 2008)

2.4 Social networking sites

Social networking sites are social media platforms that allow consumers to express themselves, share their information, knowledge and feelings and establish or maintain connections with others. Social networking sites are seen as one-to-many interaction. (Ellison, Steinfield, Lampe, 2007) Social networking sites allow users to build personal or professional profiles to socialize with new or current connections and networks. The profiles are personalized, which means that each user has their own profile. This includes images, information, interest, and links to other profiles and connections to other friends. Profile holders usually add, follow or subscribe new connections depending on which social networking site they are using. Moreover, the users can be either companies (or brands) or consumers. (Trusov et al., 2009)

The most common and popular social media networks are Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and MySpace. Facebook is the most known and

preferred social networking site. Youtube, MySpace and Twitter follow Facebook. Social networking sites have introduced a new way for consumers and brands to communicate and engage with each other (Angela Hausman et al., 2014). Moreover, consumers usually use social networking sites in parallel for instance, an Instagram user can share a photo on Facebook as well (Hochman, Schwartz, 2012). Different social networking sites have their own privacy policy meaning that some sites may reveal more information to the people who do not have a profile on social networking sites while other sites do not reveal any information. Social networking users can also modify their privacy settings. (Trusov et al., 2009)

Consumers can log into their social networking sites through different platforms. The popularity of the platform depends on the age of consumer. PC or laptop was the most popular platform for consumers in age of 35 to 54. It has been reported that 60% of them prefer PC and laptop to smartphones and tablets. Moreover, consumers that are over 55 years old use mainly PC or laptop to log into their social media. Nearly 90% of this consumer group prefers this platform to others. Smartphones are the most popular among consumers that are 18 to 34 years old, over 50% prefer this platform. The most popular one is a computer or laptop. The surprising element is that tablets are not seen that popular yet, only 8% of younger consumer group says they prefer this platform. However, what is surprising is that tablets are more popular among consumer group that are 35 to 54 years old. (eMarketer, 2015) Another relevant factor is gender. Overall, it has been reported that women are more present and active on social media than men. (Duggan, Smith, 2014)

Each social media site has a different purpose from marketing perspective. Smith, Fischer and Yongjian (2012) explain that each social network has its own exceptional culture, norms and architecture. Because of their unique characters users visit these sites because they have different goals and objectives for the networking sites. Moreover, users have different intentions to interact due to the different possibilities of interacting in social networking sites. Users also want to create different kind of contents, which is possible by using the different social networking sites. (Smith et al., 2012)

Consumers have the control over the social networking sites they are involved in. This means that consumers have the power to choose which brands to follow and not to follow. Therefore it is essential for brands to find the effective ways to draw the consumer's attention. If the brand manages to raise an interest in a consumer then it is most likely that they will pass the information on to other consumers. (Kohli et al., 2014) Companies have also a profile for their brand in more than one social media platform. It is common to have an account on many social platforms because consumers prefer different social media channels. (Hochman, Schwartz, 2012).

As mentioned before, social media technologies can be in many different forms. In this research the focus is on social networking sites, which is why other applications are excluded. The social networking sites included in this research are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram because they are most popular social networking sites in the world and in Finland at the moment. Moreover, Facebook and Twitter are the most effective social media channels in communicating with consumers. Youtube was not seen as an effective engagement tool for brands (Smith et al., 2012), which is why it is excluded from this research. Instagram is included because of its phenomenal rapid growth (Instagram, 2015).

2.4.1 Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social network in the world. Both companies and consumers use Facebook. (Gamboa, Concalves, 2014) Today, Facebook has over 1 billion users worldwide. In June 2014, the application had nearly 830 million active users using it on daily basis while mobile users make over 650 million. Moreover, Facebook has around 1,3 billion monthly active users and nearly 1,1 billion active mobile users every month as of June 30, 2014. Over 80% of the daily users are outside of the North America. (Newsroom.fb.com, 2014)

Facebook is usually used in business-to-consumer relationships. The SNS is especially appealing for companies because it embraces users regardless of age and gender if compared with the others. (Gamboa, Goncalves, 2014) People use Facebook to present themselves by creating an online profile. With the created profile the users can interact with other users by commenting each other's pages and viewing each other's profiles. The profiles in Facebook express more about the user, for instance interests, music and movie tastes. Facebook was created to enhance the communication channel with the people users want. Users can also like different pages on Facebook. The pages can be for example, companies, entertainers, athletes or movies. The pages are companies' way to communicate with the consumers. The pages allow consumers to post comments, check the latest information considering the brand and learn more about the brand. (Ellison et al., 2007)

The most popular social networking site in Finland is Facebook (CaratFinland, 2014). According to a research by BuzzFeed more than 8 of 10 uses Facebook, which is approximately 82% of Finns (eMarketer, 2014b). Consumers tend to log into Facebook more lightly if they have a smartphone. It has been reported that smartphone users check their Facebook's newsfeed regularly; over 80% of smartphone users check their Facebook newsfeed every day. (IDC, 2013)

However, it seems that the popularity of Facebook is decreasing. The teens in the US are starting to prefer other social networking sites to Facebook. The usage of Facebook usage has been declining recently. In 2012 only over 40% of the US teens preferred Facebook to other social networking sites. Moreover, the rate now is only 23%. (eMarketer, 2014a)

2.4.2 Twitter

Twitter is another popular social networking site that specializes in micro blogging (Twitter, 2014). This social medium is specialized in "following" meaning that users follow other users on Twitter (Bae, Lee, 2011). The application has over 270

million active users each month and over 500 million tweets are sent daily. Nearly 80% of the active Twitter users are on mobile and nearly 80% of accounts are outside the US. (Twitter, 2014)

Each Twitter user has a Twitter page, which contains information about them for instance education, interests and other information. Twitter account can be either public or private. Users can follow other users, which can be individuals or companies, and be followed by other users. (Aladawani, 2014) Following does not require permission from the followed user. When user follows another users it means that they are subscribing their tweets, which appear on the site real-time. (Bae, Lee, 2011) Twitter is a communication tool, which idea is to send short plain text messages, tweets. The messages are limited to 140 characters (Zimmer, Proferes, 2014). Twitter also enables people to answer to tweets and forward posts, which can be also hyperlinks to articles, pictures, blogs etc. and show up in the stream of those following the poster. Furthermore, tweets are also public, which means that all the tweets are shown to your followers. (Smith et al., 2012) Twitter is an optimal promotion tool for announcing products, special events, creating word-of-mouth and replying to consumer complaints. (Busby, Field, Forth, Harsaae, Rose, Salha, 2010)

To be specific, tweeting can be done by using three different symbols, which are “@”, “RT” and “#”. The symbol “@” is used when the users want to mention another user in their tweet or answer their tweet. “RT” stands for retweeting, which means that a user reposts someone’s message. The last symbol is “#”, which means hashtag and it is used when a user wants to create a meaning for the tweet (categorizing the message) by hashtagging a word or phrase. (Aldawani, 2014, Bae, Lee, 2011) Moreover, hashtag becomes a hyperlink, which means that other users are able to search content with that specific hashtag. The particular hashtag has also an opportunity to become a trending hashtag if enough users post a tweet that has the same hashtag in short amount of time. The trending hashtag is visible to all the users. (Scott, 2015)

According to Burton and Soboleva (2011) Twitter can be classified as *inter alia* meaning that it depending how it is used it can reach one or many consumers. They state that tweets by company are usually one-to-many because tweets are usually public. However, tweets can also be one-to-one, which means that a company can reply with a tweet to a tweet. This mechanism can either reach large audience, since the reply is often public, or it can reach only one consumer. Private messaging on Twitter is possible only when the user is following another user or company. In other words, companies cannot send private messages to consumers that are not following the company. (Burton, Soboleva, 2011)

According to a survey by CaratFinland (2014) of Finns in social media, Twitter has grown a lot within a year. In 2013 there was 252 000 Finnish Twitter users while in 2014 it was 388 000. In other words, the popularity of Twitter has grown by 20%. (CaratFinland, 2014) However, according to Buzzfeed's results only 5% of the Finnish Internet users actually visited Twitter in 2014 (eMarketer, 2014).

2.4.3 Instagram

Instagram is mainly photo sharing application mostly used on mobile phones. However, the application also allows video sharing as well. As of October 2014, Instagram has 200 million monthly active users (Instagram, 2014) and over 400 million users total (Instagram, 2015). Nearly 75% of the users are outside the U.S. (Instagram, 2015) and over 20 billion photos have been shared today (Instagram, 2014). Moreover, nearly 1,6 billion photos are liked daily (Instagram.com, 2014). People share over 80 million photos on average per day (Instagram, 2015)

As said, Instagram is mostly a mobile social networking platform, which allows users to upload pictures and videos to their Instagram profile. The pictures and videos can be modified with filters, which transform the appearance of the picture or video. Besides Twitter and now Facebook, Instagram also utilized hashtags to link the uploaded pictures to some certain themes. (Instagram, 2014) The

uploaded images can be effortlessly shared on other social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook (Guidry, Messner, Jin, Medina-Messner, 2015).

Instagram is extremely popular among young adults. The biggest customer base of Instagram consists of 18 to 34 year old people. (eMarketer, 2014c) In addition, it is the most preferred social network among teens. The popularity of Instagram has been growing since its launching. In 2012 12% of the US teen preferred Instagram while Facebook covered 42% and Twitter 27%. Today, Instagram covers 30% of the US teen market while Facebook only 23% and Twitter still 27%. (eMarketer, 2014a) According to eMarketer's survey (2014d) Instagram captures higher interaction rates than Facebook. The newcomer may even have 15 times higher interaction rate than Facebook. (eMarketer, 2014d).

Even though the SNS has gained a lot of popularity among teens, the application is still behind Facebook and Twitter in terms of users in Finland. However, Instagram's popularity in Finland has grown rapidly within a year. According to a survey by CaratFinland (2014) Instagram's user base has grown 538% from 2013. (CaratFinland, 2014) Furthermore, 15% of Finnish Internet users visit Instagram. The number may seem little but it is the second biggest after Facebook. (eMarketer, 2014)

3. Brand engagement

In this chapter the term brand engagement is introduced and defined. The term is a complex concept therefore a comprehensive explanation of engagement is presented. Moreover, the distinction between engagement, involvement and participation is made because these terms are similar to each other. In this research brand engagement is studied through its behavioral and cognitive contexts on social media environment. Moreover, the brand engagement activities are discussed from a social media perspective. Lastly, motives for brand engagement are presented – what are the motivational drivers for consumers to engage with brands on social media.

3.1 Definition of brand engagement

Before explaining what is brand engagement, a term brand should be described in order to have a clear understanding of the concept. Brand can be defined in many ways but the idea behind all of the definitions is practically the same. The most known and accepted definition of brand is introduced by Kotler (1991, 442) who defines brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”. Keller (1993) clarifies that the individual brand components are brand identities while all of them together form the brand.

The terms “customer engagement”, “consumer engagement” and “brand engagement” have been around in the marketing world for the past few years. However, the terms have not yet reached that many empirical researches until recently. The growing interest in customer behavior has pushed marketing professionals and researchers to study more the concept of engagement. (Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Brodie et al., 2011) Engagement is a complex concept that includes a lot of other engagement forms: consumer engagement, customer engagement, brand engagement and customer brand engagement. Therefore it is

essential to explain these concepts in order to have a better understanding of engagement and especially of brand engagement.

Higgins and Scholer (2009) define engagement as a state in which consumer is fully involved and/or invested in something that has grabbed their attention. This definition of engagement has been used in many different research papers for example by Hollebeek (2011ab), Mollen and Wilson (2010) and Brodie et al. (2011). Therefore this definition is applied in this research as well and works as a base for other engagement form definitions.

Customer (or consumer) engagement has been defined as the relationship between a service organization and customer and how present they are in terms of physical, cognitive and/ emotional aspects (Patterson, Yu, De Ruyter, 2006). Bowden (2008) and Brodie et al. (2011) take a psychological approach for defining CE. Bowden (2008) says that CE is “a psychological process that models the underlying mechanisms by which customer loyalty forms for the new customers of a service brand, as well as the mechanisms by which loyalty may be maintained for repeat purchase customers of a service brand”. Brodie et al. (2011) describe CE as a consumer’s psychological state that occurs when they have a meaningful and collaborating relationship with an important object (e.g. brand). Mollen and Wilson’s (2010) definition highlights the relationship between an object and consumer as well; saying that CE is “a cognitive and effective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website”. Van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirner and Verhoef (2010) emphasize that engagement comes from consumer’s motivational reasons and define it as “customers’ behavioral manifestation towards a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers”.

Even though these terms are described differently, they still have the same meaning. To simplify the definition of consumer engagement, it can be seen as an engagement sub-form in which consumer and a firm/brand/organization have formed a relationship from deep motivational reasons. As it can be seen Bowden (2008), Mollen and Wilson (2010), Van Doorn et al. (2010) and Brodie et al. (2011)

have included the term brand in their definitions of CE. However, brand is unspecified in these definitions therefore brand engagement should be understood as well.

Since the researches of customer engagement is still quite recent in marketing literature, its sub-forms like brand engagement is not studied in-depth yet. That's why the definition "brand engagement" should be explained in order to understand it completely. A simple definition of brand engagement (sometimes consumer/customer brand engagement) is that it is a two-way communication between a consumer and a brand. Brands should be as involved in the communication as consumers are. Therefore it has been suggested that brands have to ignite emotions in consumers, get them excited and inspired about the brand and show consumers the relevance of the brand in order to consumers to engage with the brand. (Dwivedi, 2015, Wong, Merrilees, 2015) However, BE is more than this explanation; it is rather a multi-dimensional term, which consists of three different dimensions. The three dimensions might be named differently depending on the researcher but all of the dimensions carry the same meaning: cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects (Dwivedi, 2015, Wong, Merrilees, 2015, Keller, 2013, Brodie et al., 2011, Hollebeek, 2011a, Hollebeek, 2011b).

One of the very first well defined definitions of brand engagement is by Hollebeek (2011a) who explained that brand engagement is "the level of a customer's motivational, brand-related, and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity in brand interactions" (Hollebeek, 2011a). The same year she simplified the definition by stating that brand engagement is "the level of customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioral investment in specific brand interactions" (Hollebeek, 2011b), which Dwivedi (2015) and Wong and Merrilees (2015) have also pointed out.

Hollebeek (2011b) also explained the three dimensions of brand engagement: immersion, passion and activation. Immersion stands for cognitive part of BE, which implies the cognitive presence in the interaction between consumer and brand and the extent of individuals' cognitive interactions with specific brands, for

example how engrossed and focused is the contact. Emotional component is associated with passion and it is more intense than immersion. Passion indicates the attraction consumer has towards the brand and the emotional investment the consumer puts into the communication with the brand. Activation represents behavior and it stands for the invested effort, energy and time that are consumed in the interaction with the preferred brand. (Hollebeek, 2011b) Dwivedi (2015) has also found these three dimensions but he prefers the terms “vigor”, “dedication” and “absorption” to the ones Hollebeek has suggested.

All the definitions of BE have the same idea even though it is a complex concept. BE consists of three different dimensions, which all are related to a specific brand. In this research brand engagement is approached through its behavioral and cognitive dimensions leaving out the emotional dimension. This is due to the fact that it seen more important to study how consumers act on social media, what do they actually do there and what are their motivational reasons for the interactions rather than the emotions related to this behavior.

3.2 The differences between engagement, involvement and participation

Even though the term “engagement” has been a popular concept recently; the distinction between engagement, involvement and participation is still rather limited (Brodie et al., 2011). These two terms are very similar to each other, which is why it is crucial to distinct them in order to have a better and more comprehend understanding of engagement.

Park and Mittal (1985) have defined involvement as “a state of mental readiness that typically influences the allocation of cognitive resources to a consumption object, decision, or action” (Thomson, MacInnis, Whan Park, 2005). Zaichkowsky (1985) has described that involvement is an object (e.g. product), which is relevant for consumers in terms of needs, values and interests.

Mollen and Wilson (2010) have suggested that engagement and involvement can be distinguished by three factors. First, the consumption object is usually defined as a product category, for example mobile phones, while engagement is linked to more with brand and the objective of engagement is a specific brand, for example Nokia (Dwivedi, 2015, Brodie et al., 2011, Hollebeek, 2011, Mollen, Wilson, 2010). Second, involvement is more passive than engagement when it comes to associating with a brand. This means that engagement is an active act of encompassing with brand. Third, engagement “requires the satisfying of experiential values as well as that of instrumental value”.

Brodie et al. (2011) separate engagement from involvement and participation by two themes: 1) “engagement reflects a customer’s particular psychological state induced by the individual’s specific interactive experiences with a focal engagement object (e.g., a brand) 2) engagement states to occur within broader, dynamic processes typified by the co-creation of value (participation and involvement fail to reflect the notion of interactive, co-creative experiences as comprehensively as does engagement).”

3.3 Motives for engagement on social media

As it has been stated before, brand engagement means attracting consumers to a certain brand by creating a connection between a brand and consumer. This connection can be emotional, cognitive and/or behavioral. In this research cognitive state is seen as a motivational driver.

There are various reasons for consumers to explore content that is related to brand social media. One major reason is to look for information of the brand. Social media allows consumers to get more information of the brand before purchasing it, get inspired by it and observe what the brand does. Another reason for people to explore brands on social media is to entertain and enjoy themselves. This covers for example the following motivations: amusement, relaxation and pastime. Lastly, compensation is also mentioned as one of the reasons for

consumers to use social media. This means that consumers are motivated by rewards, money or other types of benefits. (Muntinga et al., 2011)

3.3.1 Information

Lack of information of the brand is the main reason for the consumers to go on to the brand's social media sites. Social media usually provides reliable information about the brands therefore consumers seek information from there (Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014). Usually consumers tend to increase their knowledge about the brand because they want to know more before purchasing the brand. Moreover, consumers seek to know more about brand for example, by reading what others have posted on the brand page. Sometimes, consumers want to get inspired, meaning they are looking for new ideas for something, which is why they look for information on social media. (Goncalves Pereira, et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011)

To the contrary to increasing the knowledge of the brand, consumers also upload information of the brand for other consumers to read. They share their opinion of the brand and others are able to read it. This is also a motivational driver for consumers to interact with a brand. (Angela Hausman et al., 2014)

3.3.2 Entertainment

Entertainment is another motivational form for brand engagement. It is seen as a component that reflects consumers' need to have fun on brand's page (Enginkaya, Yilmaz, 2014). Consumers usually just want to enjoy, relax and spend their free time by consuming brand page. This also means that consumers consume brand page because they want to take a break from their everyday life or they have nothing else to do. (Muntinga et al., 2011) Moreover, consumers also might want to share the enjoyment and amusement with their friends, which is why they communicate with the brand (Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014).

3.3.3 Personal identity

Identifying with a brand is an central motivation for consumers to engage with brands. Muntinga et al. (2011) have identified three different personal identity motivation drives: 1) Self-presentation in which, consumers that choose to engage with brands and they want other consumers to know that they are engaging with the brand (Enginkaya, Yilmaz, 2014). By interacting with a brand, the consumer provides an image of their personality to others. 2) Self-expression, which means that consumers communicate with a brand because they want to express themselves through the brand (Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014) 3) Self-assurance means that consumer seeks for an approval/acceptance and recognition from others. (Muntinga et al., 2011)

3.3.4 Social interaction

Social interaction is also an important motivation to interact with a brand. Consumers choose to engage with a brand because they want to meet other like-minded consumers who would like to talk with them about the specific brand (Enginkaya, Yilmaz, 2014). Moreover, a common passion, in this case the brand, is also a driver for engagement because it creates a social identity, strong link between consumers. Social brand platform also enables consumers to seek help from another, for example if someone is looking for a brand store in a specific city others are able to help them out. Consumers might be also engaging with a brand because of a social pressure. They communicate with a brand because others do it as well. (Angela Hausman et al, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011) Social interaction relates to consumer-to-brand communication as well and not only to consumer-to-consumer communication. Consumers engage with a brand if the brand is able to create a content and message that the consumers can relate to. (Labrecque, 2014)

3.3.5 Compensation

The aspect of money motivates consumers as well, for example rewards, money or benefits motivate consumers to interact with a brand. The opportunity of winning something that relates to money has a major impact on consumers, which drives them to participate in a contest that is on brand's social media page. However, Goncalves Pereira et al. (2014) argue that money related motivation affect more the younger social media users than older. (Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011) Gaining exclusive information is also a motivation driver for consumer to engage with a brand. The extra information can be seen as a reward for the consumer if they interact with the brand, which is why they choose to consume the brand page. (Labrecque, 2014)

Based on the theoretical background presented previously, four hypotheses regarding motivational drivers for brand engagement are presented:

H1: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on brand engagement

H2: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on brand engagement

H3: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on brand engagement

H4: Compensation has a positive effect on brand engagement

3.4 Engagement behavior on social media

In the current research engagement behavior means the actual actions consumer invests into interaction with brand. These actual actions can be seen as shares, likes or tags in social networking sites (Wong, Merrilees, 2015).

Behavioral aspect can be seen as one of the most significant dimensions of brand engagement (van Doorn et al., 2010) because it has been studied the most

(Brodie et al., 2011). Behavioral dimension of engagement can be explained as the actions and efforts that a consumer takes in interacting with a brand or the other way round (Dwivedi, 2015). This dimension is usually associated with participation and activity on social media (Muntinga, et al., 2011).

Engagement behaviors can be categorized by their activity level, how connected the consumer is to the company (Vivek et al., 2012), in this case to the brand. These behaviors can be either active or passive behaviors. Active behaviors indicate that the consumer is highly invested in communicating with the brand and creates content on their social networking sites. (Gummerus et al., 2012, Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang, Chen, Liao, 2006) Shang et al. (2006) state that for example posting a comment can be regarded as a high level activity. Muntinga et al. (2011) are more specified in their explanation of an active behavior. They explain that creating a content is a high level activity, meaning that for example uploading a brand related video or image, writing a product review or brand related article can be regarded as this kind of activity. They also add that rating products and/or brands, joining/following brand's profile and commenting brand related videos or pictures are qualified as active behaviors. However, these activities are not as intense as creating the content itself but still can be seen more as an active rather than passive behavior. (Muntinga et al., 2011)

Passive engagement behavior is opposite to an active engagement behavior. Shang et al. (2006) explain that information seeking is a passive engagement behavior. Muntinga et al. (2011) clarify that consuming the brand-related content on social media is the lowest brand-related activity on social media. They explain that on consuming level consumers watch brand related video, view brand related images or read comments related to the brand on social media (Muntinga et al., 2011).

Therefore based on the theoretical background presented above, the proposed hypotheses 1 – 4 are modified into their final form:

H1A: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H1B: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on active brand engagement

H2A: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H2B: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H3A: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H3B: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H4A: Compensation has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H4B: Compensation has a positive effect on active brand engagement

Moreover, an additional hypothesis is proposed to make a difference between an active and passive brand engagement:

H5: Motivational drivers have a stronger positive effect with an active brand engagement than passive brand engagement

3.4.1 Engagement behavior on social networking sites

Almost every brand that is on social media has integrated Facebook to their marketing strategy. Facebook is seen as one of the key social media and marketing channels to create engagement. (Angela Hausman et al., 2014, Malhotra, Malhotra, See, 2013) The SNSs can engage consumer in various ways; however, liking and commenting are seen as the most popular engagement behaviors. If a consumer likes or comments a brand's post on Facebook, the

activity is seen on consumer's Facebook profile and the friends of the consumer are able to see the activity as well. Moreover, anyone that has liked the brand is able to see the posted comment as well even though the consumer that has posted the comment does not know the other brand likers. (Kabadayj, Price, 2014)

Twitter is an attractive social media channel for companies and consumers because it can reach consumers globally, it is an easy communication tool and it is extremely useful. Twitter is mostly used as a promotional tool for products and as a communication tool with consumers. (Aladawani, 2014) Twitter is specialized in quick and short messages, which is why it is a preferred social medium among young people who value time (Gamboa, Goncalves, 2014). Engagement behavior on Twitter can be seen in forms of retweeting or hashtagging. The users that follow a brand are usually the ones that retweet brand's tweet to their followers (Kim, Sung, Kang, 2014). Brands can also use different hashtags to categorize their message to their followers. Consumers then use the same hashtag as the brand in order to support the brand.

Instagram has become an extremely popular SNS in just a short amount of time. It has been said that visual images are more engaging than a text (Abbott, Donaghev, Hare and Hopkins, 2013), which is why it can be suggested that consumers are starting to use more and more this SNS method. Engagement behavior on Instagram is similar to Facebook and Twitter's. The consumers that are following a brand on Instagram can like the posted photo, comment on the photo, repost the photo on their page or even add hashtags to the photos.

4. Sports sponsorship

In this chapter sports sponsorship is presented. This study only covers sports sponsorship because most of the sponsorship investments are directed in sports. Moreover, the interest of this study will be sports events. First, the role of sponsorship in marketing communications channel is addressed and after this the definition of sponsorship is described. It is also essential to make a difference between sponsorship, promotion and charity in order to have a deeper understanding of sponsorship. Second, the focus is especially on sports sponsorship and the target of it. After identifying these matters, sports event sponsorship is explained, which is the main topic of this chapter.

4.1 The role of sponsorship in marketing communications

The role of sponsorship in marketing communications is controversial because some of the researchers think that sponsorship is a supporting tool for marketing communications while others have stated that it is a separate tool, its own channel. In many ways sponsorship reflects to the situation of social media in marketing communications.

Kotler (1988) has not identified sponsorship as a separate marketing communications channel but this might be due to the reason that sponsorship was not yet a popular marketing channel in the 80's. Alaja (2000,111) and Vuokko (2003, 303) agree that sponsorship is a supporting tool in marketing communications because it is used with advertising and public relation. That's why sponsorship is not a separate marketing communications channel.

Olkkonen, Tikkanen and Alajoutsijärvi (2000) think that sponsorship is popular among companies. Therefore, Tripoldi (2001) has suggested that sponsorship has the potentiality of being a separate marketing communications tool. Lardinoit and Quester (2001) also agree on this suggestion. However, they have also studied that 75% of marketing professionals require the development of sponsorship,

which is why sponsorship still cannot be seen as a separate marketing communications tool. (Dolphin, 2003)

Some researchers argue strongly that sponsorship should be its own separate marketing communications tool. Kitchen (1995) has added sponsorship as a separate marketing communications tool (Dolphin, 2003). Rowley (1998) has also regarded sponsorship as a marketing communications channel. Javalgi, Taylor, Gross and Lampman (1994) have drawn a conclusion that sponsorship is popular due to the number of companies that are involved in sponsorship and the amount of investments made in sponsorship. That's why, sponsorship should be its own channel in marketing communications.

The role of sponsorship in marketing communications can be argued a lot. Nevertheless the fact is that it is an extremely popular marketing communications tool. Because of this it has the potentiality of being its own separate channel.

4.1.1 Definition of sponsorship

The theoretical background of sponsorship researches has usually been shallow and narrow because the studies have been conducted empirically (Meenaghan, 1991; Meerabeau et al., 1991; Farrelly, Quester, Burton, 1997, Thwaites et al., 1998) (Olkkonen, 2001). Because of this the definition of sponsorship mostly depends on researchers and their researches that caused many different explanations of sponsorship. McDonald (1991) has stated that due to this fact, people do not fully understand what the concept sponsorship means and what does it entail. Sponsorship's role in the marketing communications might have been questioned exactly because of these unclear definitions. Therefore it is important to define the different definitions of sponsorship.

Some commonly accepted definitions of sponsorship are presented by Meenaghan (Cobbs, 2011) and Sleight (Renard, Sitz, 2011). According to Meenaghan (1983, 9) sponsorship is company's investment in a specific object in forms of money or other exchange tangible. He continues that this is how a

company achieves their objectives (Meenaghan, 1983, 9) Sleight (1989) has specified Meenaghan's definition by adding that sponsorship is especially about the relationship between a sponsor and sponsored in which the sponsor can use the sponsored in their business and in return the sponsored has an access to sponsor's resources and services (Renard, Sitz, 2001).

Roos and Alogtsson, and Clark also emphasize the collaboration aspect in sponsorship. However they add benefit aspect to Sleight's definition of sponsorship. According to Roos and Alogtsson (1996) sponsorship is about improving the sales of products/services in a long and short term. The purpose of sponsorship is also to ensure that all the counterparts get the benefits and that it supports the objectives of the company. Clark (1995) defines sponsorship in the following way: "Sponsorship can be defined as partners' equal and active voluntary collaboration. Selling side allows the buyer to use their goodwill value, which is being used in marketing communications in order to gain commercial, public relational and publicity objectives". (Alaja, 2004, 22)

Sponsorship is also associated with company and product awareness. According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) companies try to link their brand to the sponsorship target because this would help in achieving the commercial values of company. According to this definition brand awareness is also linked to sponsorship besides already mentioned investments and collaboration. Renard and Sitz (2011) add that sponsorship might enhance the positive attitudes towards company's brand because sports is associated with positive qualities such as comradery and winning.

Sponsorship is a very complex concept as it can be seen from all of the definitions above. However, in every definition there are repetitive traits. All of the definitions have a sponsors and a sponsored. The most important conjunctive factor in these definitions is however the benefit for both parties. In other words, the purpose of this relationship is collaboration in which both counterparts get the equal benefits. Because of these definitions it could be said that sponsorship is part of marketing communications. However, its role in marketing communications is challenging to

define because it depends on company's way to understand the concept of sponsorship.

4.2 The difference between sponsorship, promotion and charity

Sponsorship is usually mixed with promotion and charity. Therefore it is encouraged to make a distinction between these three concepts in order to understand sponsorship fully. Companies invest because they want to reach a certain target group (Meenaghan, Shipley, 1999, 329). Because of investments companies think that sponsorship and promotion are the same thing. This is why companies associate sponsorship with failed promotion because the costs of promotion have grown (Meenaghan, 2001, 191). Cornwell and Maignan (1998) have concluded that sponsorship as a marketing communications tool have been studied less than advertising (Meenaghan, 2001, 193).

Sponsorship and promotion differ in their marketing ways. Sponsorship is an indirect marketing tool, meaning that company's brand or name is seen through the sponsor's target (Bennett, 1999, 291; McDonald, 1991). Promotion however is used as a direct marketing tool meaning that companies for example pay for their name being announced in some specific event. (Tuori, 1995, 7) According to Hastings (1984) sponsorship and promotion differ in terms of sponsor's target and the performance measurement of sponsorship. Hastings (1984) further adds that in order to execute promotion, promoter does not have the need to understand it while sponsorship has characteristics that are unique. These characteristics should be understood more deeply in order to sponsorship could be utilized successfully. (Farrelly et al., 1997)

Sponsorship and charity are different in terms of collaboration. In sponsorship the collaboration benefits both parties while charity only benefits one side. Sponsor expects from the target a return service while in charity the benefactor does not expect any benefits or returns from their donation. (Dolphin, 2003, Dolphin, 1999)

4.3 Sports sponsorship

Sponsorship can be practiced in many different businesses such as art, society activities and charities. Crompton (2004) has studied that because of media's interest even two thirds of all sponsorship expenses is directed to sports events, team, leagues and athletes. This makes sports the most popular business of sponsorship.

Sports sponsorship is defined the same way as sponsorship but the term sports is added to the definition. Sports sponsorship means transmitting an image to a target group by using a sports target that can be an athlete, sports event or something similar. Sports sponsorship especially is collaboration between a sponsor and a sponsored that is beneficial for both sides. (Alaja, 2000, 105)

4.3.1 The target of sports sponsorship

Sports marketing is utilized a lot with athletes that are celebrities or that they are in public (Wise, Miles, 1997) because they have an attractive appeal to consumers and companies (Kambitsis et al., 2002). It has been said that especially younger consumers are interested in sports because they can identify themselves with athletes and look up to them (Stone, Joseph, Jones, 2003). Because of this, it has been estimated that over 20% of all TV advertisements include celebrity figures (Belch, Belch, 1999) (Kambitsis et al., 2002).

Due to media's interest, big mass markets, smaller markets and some in between these markets can be reached with sports sponsorship (Olson, 2010). Companies sponsor those targets that they think will help and support them in achieving the objects. The target of sports sponsorship is naturally something related to sports and sports sponsorship is popular because of its attractiveness to media. Fullerton and Merz (2008) emphasize that sponsorship relationship has a sponsor and sponsored, which can be according to Tsiotsou and Alexanders (2009) a sports association, team, athlete, institute, event, league and competition. The sports

sponsor target can be a company's stakeholder, which can be a person or organization.

Mainostajien Liitto (2012) has conducted a study about the most popular sponsor target in Finland. The study results indicate that approximately 88% of respondents sponsor sports in some way. The study revealed that sports is the most popular target of sponsorship. The most popular sports sponsor targets were youth/local sports, ice hockey and winter sports. Sponsors were asked their opinion on interesting sponsorship targets and most of the respondents said that Finnish men national ice hockey team and biathlete Kaisa Mäkäräinen intrigue them. (Mainostajien Liitto (2012) These results might explain the popularity of ice hockey and winter sports as the targets of sponsorship.

In this research the focus is on sports event sponsorship because the purpose of this research is to find out whether event sponsorship can be used as a channel to involve consumers to engage with brands on social media. In this research the chosen platform is sports event sponsorship.

4.3.2 Sports event sponsorship

As the name says, event sponsorship occurs when a sponsored (in this case the event) has been paid for sponsor's name being associated with the event. Sports event sponsorship means that the brands have paid for a sports event for its name being associated with the sports event. For instance, NHL team Edmonton Oilers has paid for Skyreach Center hall their name to be linked with the hall. (Fullerton, Merz, 2008, 95)

Companies practice event sponsorship because they seek to link their brand or logo to the event. Furthermore companies sponsor the events they can be associated to. The objective usually is to connect the event's image to company's brand because it has the potentiality to affect the consumer's opinion and perception of the brand. (Papadimitriou, Apostolopoulou, Dounis, 2008, Gwinner,

Eaton, 1999, Gwinner, 1997). Another reason for event sponsorship is to get the target audience the company is seeking for its brand (Roy and Cornwell, 2003).

During the events, the sponsor is usually visually present. The message in the event sponsorship is almost without exception limited to brand or logo. (Pham, Vanhuele, 1997) These company's elements are placed in the event itself, for instance, in the field where it does not interfere with the event itself (Lardinoit, Quester, 2001). Moreover, sponsor can also be mentioned by the announcer. The visibility and audibility of sponsors work as a constant reminder of the presence of sponsor in the event. (Cornwell, 2008) Because of these ways, consumers are constantly under sponsor's influence.

Even though sponsor can influence on consumers in the events, the impact of the influence can vary between consumers. Consumer's respond to sponsorship depends on the prior information they have about the sponsored event. The more knowledge the consumers have about the events, the more effort they put into understanding the sponsor's message. (Roy, Cornwell, 2004) This may be due to the fact that they want to have a full understanding of the content of sponsor's message and not only assume it. Because the less knowledge the consumer has about the event, the more likely they are to assume the message and more likely they are to link the sponsor with the event (Roy, Cornwell, 2004).

Relatedness of a sponsor to the event and the sponsor's importance to the event affect the way consumers perceive the sponsor (Wakefield, Bennett, 2010). Some sponsors seem more natural to be linked with the event than some others. The congruence of sponsor and event is stronger if the brand is already associated with the event. If the sponsor can be highly associated with the event, then the easier it is for consumers to process the sponsor's message in the event. (Thomas, 2014, Olson, 2010, Gwinner, Bennett, 2008, Koo, Quarterman, Flynn, 2006, Speed, Thompson, 2000, Gwinner, 1997) The effect of sponsorship on consumers is stronger when the sponsor is well perceived among consumers. Additionally, the effect is more noticeable when consumers have more knowledge of the sports being sponsored. (Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003) Speed

and Thompson (2000) add that if consumers like the event, they are more likely to respond positively to the sponsor's message.

Consumer's attitude towards sponsor also affects the way consumer perceives the brand. If the attitude is positive towards the brand then consumer is more agreeable to purchase the product of the brand. (Biscaia et al., 2013, Olson, 2010) In the current research this could indicate that the more favourable view of the brand consumer has, the more likely they are to engage with the brand on social media.

Besides information knowledge, the intensity of the sports event may also affect consumers. The drama effect of the game may either impact sponsor in a negative or positive way. The more dramatic the event is, the more invested and aroused the consumers are. This strong emotional state of mind impact consumers in a way that they are less invested in sponsor. In other words, the more aroused consumer is, the less they see the sponsor. For example, if a sports game is tight between the opponents, the more invested in the game the consumers are and therefore the less time they have to pay attention to the sponsor. On the other hand, the lack of intensity in the game results in idle time of consumers, which means that sponsor is again more visible to consumers. (Carrillat et al., 2015, Cummins et al., 2012)

Based on the researches of sports event sponsorship, 3 hypotheses (H6AB – H8AB) regarding this topic are presented:

H6A: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H6B: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H7A: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H7B: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H8A: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect passive brand engagement

H8B: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect on active passive brand engagement

4.3.3 The connection between the sports event and team

It is also important to remember sports team's link to the event because the team has a vital role in consumer's perception towards the sponsor. Consumers that support the sports team are more willing to see the sponsor in positive light than negative. The more sponsor is present in the sports event the more likely consumers recall a brand as a team sponsor, which is why consumers favour the brand. (Biscaia et al., 2013) In other words the importance of the sponsor to the team and event forces consumers to support the sponsor as well (Madrigal, 2001).

As mentioned, consumer's support to the team reflects to the support for the sponsor. The more involved consumer is in the team, the more likely they are to recall the brand (Bauer, Sauer, Schmitt, 2005), and also to purchase the product of the sponsor (Ko, Kim, Claussen, Kim, 2008) In the current case this indicates that the more invested in the team the consumer is, the more likely they are to engage with the brand on social media. Moreover, consumers usually support the team by going to the event. It has been suggested that the attendance rate to the sports event has an influence on consumer's attitude towards the sponsor. If the consumer goes to the events frequently the more likely they are to purchase the product of the sponsor. (Lee, Harris, Lyberger, 2011). In this case the high attendance rate would correlate with higher social media brand engagement.

Besides the prior information consumer has of the event, the prior knowledge of the team also affects consumers. Consumers who are heavily invested in the team and support the team constantly are more aware of the event because of the prior information they have. This means that consumers are more attentive to sponsor's message. (Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Roy, Cornwell, 2004) Therefore it is important that the sponsor can be associated with the team as well and not only the event.

Based on the theoretical background of the relationship between sports event and team, 4 hypotheses (H9AB – H12B) are formed:

H9A: Supporting the team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H9B: Supporting the team has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H10A: Prior information of the event and team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H10B: Prior information of the event and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H11A: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H11B: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on active brand engagement

H12A: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement

H12B: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement

Moreover, a new theoretical framework is proposed separating brand engagement clearly into active and passive brand engagement.

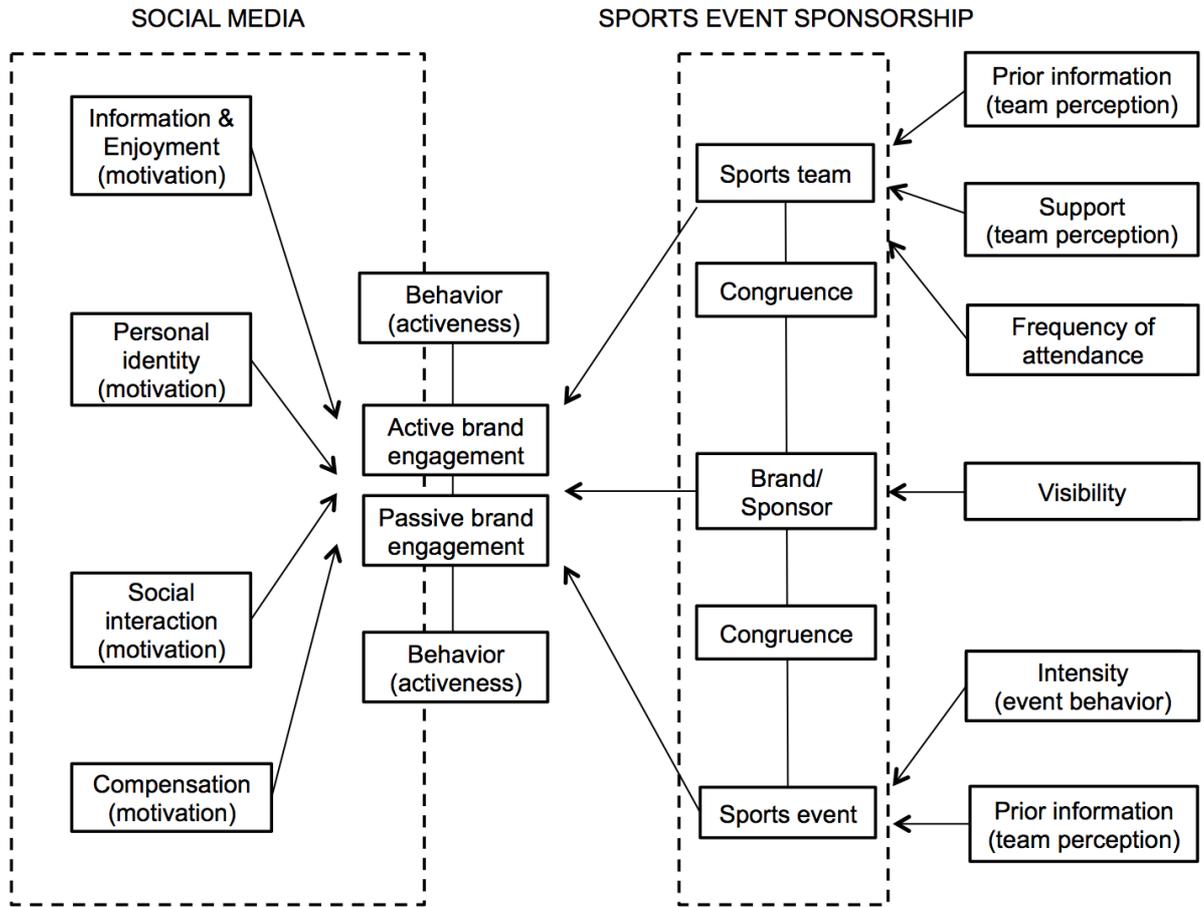


Figure 4. Updated theoretical framework

5. Methodology

Before analyzing the empirical part of the research and presenting the results, the research methodology should be explained. This chapter discusses the chosen research methodology for this study. The data is collected with a questionnaire that is published on Facebook pages of two major Finnish ice hockey Liiga teams. The purpose of this research is to find out how sports event sponsorship works as a channel for brand engagement on social media. The following subchapters explain the chosen approach to study the research question.

5.1 Quantitative research

The selected research choice for the current research is quantitative research method, which means that data collection method or data analysis procedure use or generates numerical data. The data collection method can be in forms of questionnaire and the data analysis procedure can be for example statistics or graphics. (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2007, 145) In other words quantitative research method attempts to measure something. In the researches the measuring variables are usually consumer behavior, knowledge, opinions, or attitudes. The questions related to these variables are often how much, how often, how many, when, and who. The answers for these questions are usually gained with surveys. (Cooper, Schindler, 2014,174)

Quantitative research is often used for theory testing and it also has precise hypotheses that are tested. The research methods also enables a large sample size because the data collection methods support collecting a lot of data. The responses for the research are usually coded, categorized, and reduced to numbers in order to statistical analysis to be possible. (Cooper, Schindler, 2014, 156, 174-176)

5.2 Data collection

The questionnaire questions and statements for this research were built through the existing literature that was presented in the theory sections. All the questions and statements address the key concepts of the current research, which are social media, brand engagement and sports event sponsorship. As it has been stated before, the existing literature of these key concepts have not been studied together, which is why there are no proven ways to measure the research problem. Therefore, most of the questions and statements were modified to fit into sports event sponsorship literature.

The data for this research was collected via online questionnaire, which means that all questionnaire respondents answer the same questions in a predetermined order. Questionnaire is one of the most popular data collection methods because it is an efficient, easy and fast way to collect the needed information. Consequently, online questionnaire is a cost friendly way to collect the data, which is why it was chosen to this research as well. (Saunders et al, 2007, 355, 359)

The questionnaires record three different data variables, which are opinion, behavior and attribute. This research records mainly opinion and behavior variables because they were seen as the most important variables to study. The questionnaire also included some attribute variables, which collected the information of respondents' characteristics such as age and gender. (Saunders et al., 2007, 362)

5.2.1 Questionnaire

As mentioned before the data was collected in form of an online questionnaire. The online questionnaire link was launched in two different Facebook sites. Two of major Finnish ice hockey Liiga teams published the questionnaire on their Facebook pages. The Liiga teams were contacted via email two weeks before launching the survey. The teams gave their approval and published the direct link

on their Facebook wall. The questionnaire was targeted at people who attend ice hockey games, which is why Liiga teams were contacted to publish the survey link. Moreover, the people that like teams' Facebook page indicate that these are the type of consumers that attend ice hockey games.

The surveys were almost identical; the only difference was a change in the team names and sponsor names due to the fact that different brands sponsor different teams. The sponsoring brands that are chosen to this study are active on social media because the questionnaire revolves around social media. Moreover, the sponsoring brands are well known Finnish brands in order to the respondents to be familiar with the brands.

The survey was launched in the beginning of November 2015 via online survey program, Webropol. The survey was open for a week in both cases. In case the lack of responses, the survey could have been open for a longer time and both of the teams were willing to publish it again. However, the amount of responses was seen enough for the research therefore a week time and a one-time-launch were enough.

The purpose of the questionnaire was explained in the motivation letter at the beginning of the questionnaire. The motivation letter aimed to be clear and precise in explaining why the respondent should take this survey. In the current research two different motivation letters were included. One motivation letter was on Facebook wall to encourage the consumers to participate in the survey. The purpose of the Facebook motivation letter was to grab consumers' attention to take part in the survey by stating the importance of the survey and how the team would like to support the researches related to sports. The second motivation letter was written at the beginning of the questionnaire as mentioned before. The purpose of the letter was to inform the respondents the objective of this research, explain the background of the study and the importance of the survey for both researchers and ice hockey teams. Consumers were also informed that participation in the survey is anonymous. This was done due to opportunity to increase the response rate. Researcher's contact information was also provided in

case someone had any questions, comments or feedback about the survey. The motivation letter can be found in appendixes (1 and 2) in both original language Finnish and English (translated).

The respondents were motivated to complete the survey with a lottery in which three respondents would be randomly chosen as winners. Before launching the survey, the studied sponsoring brands were contacted to ask them to participate in forms of product prizes. Both brands sent prizes for the randomly chosen winners. The significance of the lottery can be seen important because nearly 88% of respondents participated in the lottery as well at the end of the questionnaire.

The final questionnaire included total 20 questions. The essential questions were formed through six-point Likert -scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree). The Likert -scale questions addressed the core concepts and key concepts of this research.

5.2.2 Questionnaire pretesting

The questionnaire was pretested before it was launched. The pilot testing was conducted in order to make sure that the questionnaire records the data correctly and that the respondents understand the questions with easiness. Three people were randomly chosen to take the questionnaire. The testers were from different backgrounds and age groups because it would reflect to the actual respondents. All of the testers completed the survey and gave feedback of the questionnaire, the questions and the language after completing. The testers also took time of how long it took them to finish the survey. Based on the feedback the questionnaire was modified into its final form. Pretesting phase was seen essential because the questions and overall questionnaire was improved from its prior form. Moreover, pilot testing also increases the validity and reliability of the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2007, 366)

5.4 Measurement model

The data for this research was collected through online questionnaire that was posted on two different Facebook pages. The questionnaire was the same on both pages; the only difference was that the ice hockey team name and sponsoring brand names were changed. The questionnaire had in total 20 questions, which were multiple choice, Likert -scale based and open questions. 11 of the questions were multiple-choice questions while five questions were Likert-based and four were open questions. Multiple-choice questions covered mainly background information of respondents while Likert scale questions were designed to test the research questions. Open questions were added to give the respondents the opportunity to add something that the researcher had not thought. The questionnaires can be found in the appendixes (3 and 4) in both original language Finnish and English (translated).

The questionnaire started with 6 demographical questions that were designed to address respondents' background information. The questions covered age, gender, frequency to use social media, preferred social media platform, preferred social media tool and the frequency to attend the ice hockey events. The purpose of demographical questions was to identify the respondents' profiles and see how the profiles fit in the final analysis.

The respondents were also asked what do they do during the breaks between the periods. The purpose of this is to find out where the consumers go and what do they do with the free time. The question was in multiple-choice form because it was seen more fitted than Likert -scale. The following options were presented in the questionnaire:

- I buy beverages and/or food, I buy fan products, I go outside, I participate in the competitions during the breaks, I browse my social media channels, I sit in my seat

The sponsor's influence on the consumers at the event should be also measured (Lardinoit, Quester, 2001, Cornwell, 2008). The influence is measured with multiple-choice because it is seen more suitable than the Likert -scale. Furthermore, the multiple-choice options give a better view of how the consumers have seen the sponsor. The influence is measured on the visibility of the sponsor during the game with the following options:

- On the rink ads, on the ice ads, on the team's jerseys, I have heard it announced, in forms of food and/or beverage, on ice arena's wall, I have not noticed the sponsor

5.4.1 Background factors of sports event sponsorship

The questions related to sports event sponsorship were presented after demographical questions. The questions were built on a 5-point Likert -scale (strongly disagree – strongly agree) and there were total 14 claims. Sport event sponsorship was approached through perception-based questions towards the team and event. The purpose of the claims was to test how respondents perceive the event and team and how devoted they are to them (Carrillat et al., 2015, Biscaia et al., 2013, Cummins et al., 2012, Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Roy and Cornwell, 2004, Speed, Thompson, 2000). The measuring variables of team perception are the following statements:

Table 1. Connection between event, team and consumer

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
CETC1	I am fan of the team
CETC2	I am fan of ice hockey
CETC3	I know the sport well
CETC4	I know the team well
CETC5	I follow the news regarding to the team
CETC6	I like the team
CETC7	I like going to the games
CETC8	I tend to go to the game more often if the team is successful

Moreover some additional questions regarding the behavior during the game were asked. The behavioral questions focused on mobile phones and social media. The purpose of this was to find out whether the pace of the game directs consumers to use mobile phones and browse social media channels. The measuring statements are the following:

Table 2. Event behavior

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
EVB1	I think the game is interesting when it is tight
EVB2	I think the game is interesting when it is peaceful
EVB3	I think the game is not entertaining if it is not exciting
EVB4	If I am bored, I tend to use my mobile phone during the game
EVB5	I tend to use my mobile phone when there is action during the game (goal, powerplay, penalty kill, fight etc.)
EVB6	I use my mobile phone during the breaks between the periods
EVB7	When I use my mobile phone, I tend to browse my social media channels

Besides measuring the perceptions towards team, event and behavior, it is also essential to measure the knowledge that the consumers have of the sponsor. The statements regarding the sponsor addressed consumers' prior information, perception, fit and support. (Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, Maroco, 2013, Madrigal, 2011, Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Thomas, 2014, Olson, 2010, Gwinner, Bennett, 2008, Ko, Kim, Claussen, Kim, 2008, Koo et al., 2006, Bauer, Sauer, Schmitt, 2005, Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003, Speed, Thompson, 2000, Gwinner, 1997) The following statements measure these factors:

Table 3. Congruence between sponsor, event and team

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
CSET1	I know the team's XY sponsors
CSET2	I am familiar with the brand XY
CSET3	I have bought the brand XY's products
CSET4	I buy the brand XY's products on weekly basis
CSET5	I like the brand XY's products
CSET6	I think the brand XY is a good brand
CSET7	I think the brand XY and sport is a good fit
CSET8	I think the brand XY and the team XY's events are a good fit
CSET9	I think the brand XY and the team XY are good partners
CSET10	I think the brand XY benefits the team XY
CSET11	I think the brand XY is an important partner for the team XY
CSET12	I am ready to support the brand XY for the sake of the team XY and the event

5.4.2 The factors determining motivation for brand engagement

One of the most essential areas of this research is to measure the motivation for brand engagement, what drives consumers to engage with brands. This was measured as a five-point Likert -scale statements. However, before the Likert-based questions, the respondents were asked if they follow brands on social media. The answer to the question defined the further steps in the questionnaire. The answer "no" meant that the respondent was directed to the last question, which purpose was to determine which factors would motivate the consumer to engage with the brand. If the consumer answered, "yes", it meant that the questionnaire could be completed naturally. The respondents were also asked in which social networking sites do they follow the brand.

The purpose of the motivational brand engagement statement was to identify whether consumers look for information, are entertainment oriented, want to build their own identity, seek for social interaction and/or are motivated by compensation (Angela Hausman et al., 2014, Enginkaya, Yilmaz, 2014, Goncalves

Pereira et al., 2014, Labrecque, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011). The following statements cover motivation for brand engagement:

Table 4. Motivation for brand engagement

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
INF1	I want to get more information of the brand XY
INF2	I believe that I can get more trustworthy information on social media than anywhere else
INF3	I want to share my information to other social media users
INF4	I get new ideas and get inspired by brand XY's social media content
ENJ1	The brand XY's social media content is entertaining
ENJ2	I want to relax with the brand XY's social media content
ENJ3	I have nothing else to do
ENJ4	I want to share the entertaining content to my friends
PER1	I want to support the brand XY
PER2	I believe in the brand XY
SOC1	I want to belong in the brand XY's community
SOC2	I want to belong in a community that users' have the same interests
SOC3	I feel that I belong in a community when I follow the brand XY
PER3	I want other users to see that I identify myself with the brand XY
PER4	The brand XY fits my image therefore I want others to see it
PER5	I want to express myself through the brand XY
PER6	I seek for acceptance from other users
SOC4	It is popular
SOC5	My friends like the brand XY
SOC6	My friends invited me to like the brand XY's page
SOC7	I can identify myself with the brand XY's content therefore I want to engage to it
COM1	I want to be the first one to know about offers
COM2	I have the opportunity to win money
COM3	I have the opportunity to win product prizes

The respondents were also asked to answer statements that described potential reasons to follow the sponsoring brand. The purpose of the potential reasons was to examine if there was a factor that could motivate the consumer to visit the sponsoring brand's social media channels on the event. Moreover, the consumers that answered "no" to the question whether they followed any brands on social media were directed into this part of the questionnaire. The purpose was also to

find out if these kinds of consumers can be motivated into following the sponsoring brand. The respondents were given also a chance to suggest their own reasons that would motivate them to follow the sponsoring brand. The statements are not directly based on any research because as stated before there are no researched of sports event sponsorship, brand engagement and social media together. Moreover, this part of research can be included in the descriptive part of the research due to the lack of theoretical background. That's why, the statements are relatively inspired by those researches and modified to fit into the current research. The following statements cover the potential reasons to follow the sponsor on social media:

Table 5. Potential motivations for brand engagement

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
PMBE1	I would see the brand XY better during the team XY's game
PMBE2	The brand XY would be mentioned during the game
PMBE3	I would get free product samples at the team Y's game
PMBE4	I could win the brand XY's products at the game
PMBE5	The brand XY's representatives would be at the game to explain about the brand or its products
PMBE6	The brand XY would be advertised for example with #brandXY, @brandXY etc at the game
PMBE7	The announcer of the game would encourage to visit the brand X's social media channels
PMBE8	A lottery of the brand XY's products would be advertised at the game and would be on the brand XY's social media channel
PMBE9	I would buy the brand XY's products and the product itself would advertise #brandXY, @brandXY etc at the game
PMBE10	On the hall's walls or any other similar place there would be the brand XY's advertisement, which would encourage to like the brand XY on social media
PMBE11	I would get information of the brand XY and the team XY on the brand XY's social media channels

5.4.3 The factors determining brand engagement

Another essential part of this research is to identify consumers' brand engagement behavior on social media. This means the actual actions that consumers take on social media. Consequently, studying social media behavior also enables to identify whether the behavior is active or passive (Gummerus et al., 2012, Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang et al., 2006), which determines consumers' devotion to the brand on social media. Brand engagement behavior was also measured with 5-point Likert -scale. The following statements measure the brand engagement behavior on social media:

Table 6. Brand engagement

VARIABLE	STATEMENT
PAS1	I visit actively the brand XY's different social media channels
PAS2	I notice the notifications of the brand XY that I follow
PAS3	I read the notifications of the brand XY that I follow
PAS4	I browse the content of the brand XY that I follow
ACT1	I like the posts of the brand XY that I follow
ACT2	I comment on the posts of the brand XY that I follow
ACT3	I share the content to my friends of the brand XY that I follow
ACT4	I upload content to the brand XY's page that I follow
ACT5	I write reviews of the brand XY and/or its products that I follow

6. Analyses and findings

This chapter covers the results of the conducted research. The statistical analysis is discussed and the result of the survey is presented. However, first the descriptive statistics are presented. This part covers the demographics of the respondents; what is their profile. Next the factor analyses are discussed and the results of factor analysis are explained. After analyzing factor analyses, the reliability and validity of the research is examined. Lastly, the results of the regression analysis are discussed.

6.1 Descriptive statistics

Before analyzing the actual results, it is important to understand the profiles of the respondents. In this research the demographics explain respondents age, gender, preferred social media channels and tools and frequency to use social media channels and visiting the games. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to describe the background of respondents and see how it can reflect to the actual research results. The analysis has been made based on the responses to the background questions of the online questionnaire. The programs that have been utilized in this part of the study are SPSS and Excel.

A total of 382 recipients responded to the questionnaire. If divided between the teams, the result is 209 and 173. However, 64 respondents did not complete the questionnaire therefore, the final result of respondents is 322. The total number of respondents is divided between the teams in the following way: team X 178 and team Y 142. In this research only the finished questionnaires are analyzed in order to get the most valid result. The descriptive analysis is done by combining two questionnaires in order to get comprehensive results and a significant data amount. However, in the chapter 5.1.2 the major differences between the two questionnaires are presented because of the different sponsors.

6.1.1 Combined results of the teams and sponsors

Most of the respondents were men, 64% of the group while counted for 36% of the group. The result of gender difference makes sense because generally ice hockey is popular among men. However, the gap is not as big as expected, which might be due to the fact that women are considered to be more active on social media platforms (Duggan, Smith, 2014). The figure 5 reflects the gender difference.

If analyzed by age, the biggest age group is 26 to 35 year olds. They count for 29% of total group. Moreover, groups that can be seen relevant are 18 to 25 years olds (26%) and 36 to 45 years olds (20%). In total these three age groups make 75% of the total. In other words the significant amount of responders fall in ages of 18 to 45. Figure 5 demonstrates this fact.

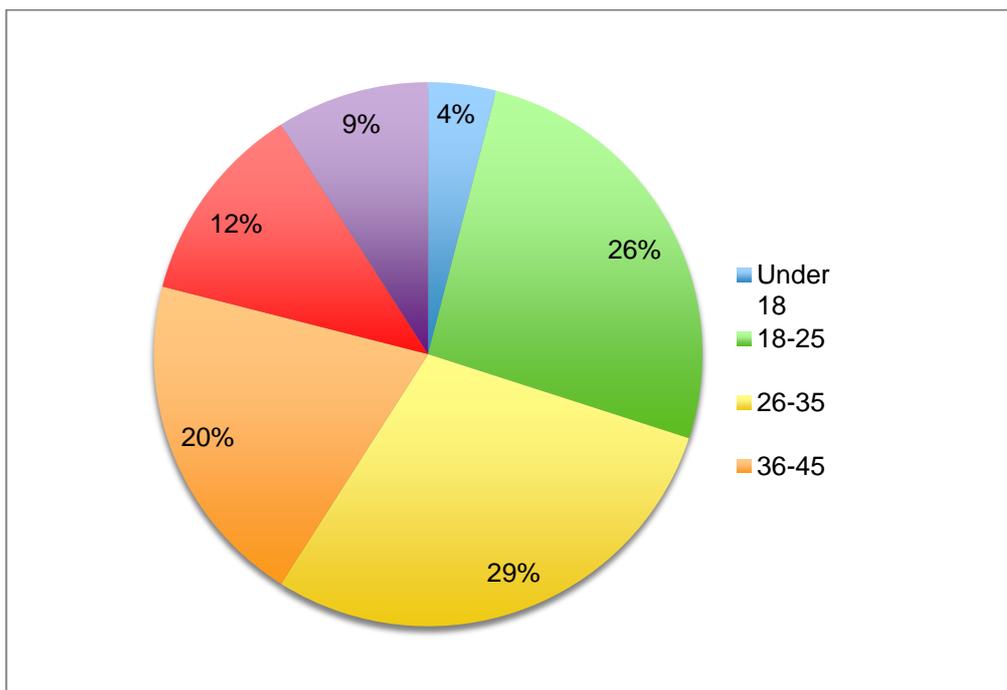


Figure 5. Age percentage of teams X and Y

All the respondents are active on social media, which is expected because the questionnaires were posted on ice hockey teams' Facebook wall. A total of 96% of respondents use social media platforms daily and 3% of respondents use it 3 to 5 times per week. Moreover, the most popular social networking site is Facebook, a

total of 97% of respondents use Facebook. The second most popular one is the newcomer Instagram, which is being used by 38% of respondents. Twitter is being used by 30% of respondents. Facebook can be seen as a primary and most common social networking site. Respondents also mentioned that they use Youtube and Snapchat on top of the three already mentioned social networking sites. Computer and mobile phones are the most popular devices to log into social networking sites. A total of 81% of respondents use computer. Surprisingly mobile phones were seen the most popular device for logging into SNSs, almost 90% of the respondents use mobile phones. In addition, as expected, tablets are used by 39% of respondents. Both of these questions were not asked in an ordinal mode because it was seen more essential to know which SNSs and devices consumers use.

Respondents mostly go to the ice hockey games in a quite frequent basis. 23% of respondents go to the games weekly while 29% go to the games 1 to 2 times per month. These frequent visitors make a total of 52% of the group. Respondents who do not go to the games monthly make 48% of the group. 39% of the respondents go to the games 1 to 3 times per year. A figure 6 below illustrates event activity level.

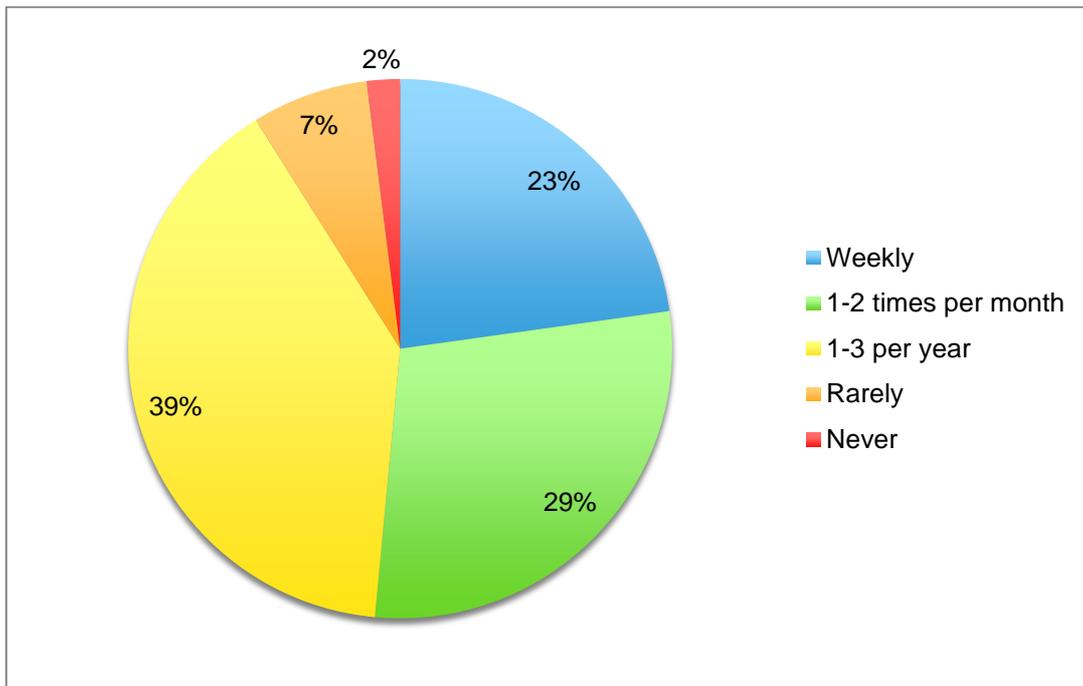


Figure 6. Frequency of visiting event of teams X and Y

The respondents were also asked about the break activity they participate in between the periods. Most of the respondents admitted buying beverages and/or food (82%) during the breaks. In addition a significant amount of respondents browse their social media channels (51%) and decide to stay in their seats (56%) during the breaks. One fourth of the respondents prefer to go outside after each period. The minority of respondents buys fan products (12%) and participates in the competitions (8%) during the breaks.

One of the most important descriptive based questions was related to the visibility of the sponsor, where have the respondents seen the sponsor. The most visible place for the sponsor was placement in the team's jerseys (60%) and in forms of food and/or beverages (59%). This supports sponsors' industries as one is working in a brewery and soft drinks industry while the other one is in confectionary industry. The rink ads seem to be visible places as well because half of the respondents acknowledge sponsors there. 36% of the respondents have seen the sponsor on the ice ads and 38% have seen it on ice arena's walls. One fourth (1/4th) admit hearing it announced. The positive result for sponsors is that only 8% of the respondents state that they have not noticed the sponsor at all

during the event. However, these results can vary a lot between the sponsors of the event because the sponsors' names are placed differently at the events. Therefore a closer look at this question and results are presented in the chapter 5.1.2.

Even though the sponsor is visible during the event, only 18% of the respondents follow the sponsor on social media. This indicates that social media, brand engagement and sports event sponsorship is not on the level it should be. Moreover, 54% of the respondents do follow brands on social media therefore consumers are willing to follow brands and want to follow them.

Consumers were also asked the potential reasons to follow the sponsors' social networking sites. Consumers are motivated to enter sponsor's SNS if they could have free product sample in the event, they had a possibility to win products in the event and there was a possibility to win product prizes on sponsor's SNS (promoted in the event). The results also indicated that sponsor's representatives would also have an effect on entering sponsor's social networking site (representatives should be in the event). Information sharing about the collaboration between the sponsor and team would also motivate consumers to enter sponsor's SNS. Surprisingly, announcements of the sponsor or visibility of sponsor would not motivate consumers to engage with the sponsor on social media. Moreover, hashtags or any other social media related tag would not either motivate consumers, for instance #sponsor etc.

As a summary of the profile of the respondents, a table below shows the background of 322 respondents.

Table 7. Summary of the profile of respondent

	NUMBER	%
GENDER		
Men	205	64 %
Women	117	36 %
AGE		
Under 18	13	4 %
18-25	84	26 %
26-35	93	29 %
36-45	64	20 %
46-55	39	12 %
55+	29	9 %
FREQUENCY OF VISITING SNS		
Daily	309	96 %
3-5 times per week	10	3 %
1-2 times per week	1	0 %
2-4 times per month	0	0 %
Rarely	3	1 %
SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE		
Facebook	312	97 %
Twitter	97	30 %
Instagram	122	38 %
USED DEVICE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA		
Computer	261	81 %
Mobile phone	287	89 %
Tablet	126	39 %
FREQUENCY OF VISITING SPORTS EVENT		
Weekly	74	23 %
1-2 times per month	93	29 %
1-3 per year	129	40 %
Rarely	23	7 %
Never	6	2 %
ACTIVITY DURING BREAKS		
I buy beverages and/or food	287	89 %
I buy fan products	39	12 %
I go outside	81	25 %
I participate in the competitions during the breaks	26	8 %
I browse my social media channels	164	51 %
I sit in my seat	180	56 %

SPONSOR'S VISIBILITY		
On the rink ads	161	50 %
On the ice ads	116	36 %
On the team's jerseys	193	60 %
I have heard it announced	77	24 %
In forms of food and/or beverage	190	59 %
On ice arena's wall	122	38 %
I have not noticed the sponsor	26	8 %
FOLLOWING BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA		
Yes	174	54 %
No	148	46 %
FOLLOWING THE SPONSOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA		
Yes	33	18 %
No	148	82 %

6.1.2 Differences between the teams and sponsors

The only major difference between the results of the questionnaires was the question regarding the visibility of sponsors. This was expected because the sponsors place themselves differently during the events. The figure 5 describes the statistics of the sponsors' visibility differences.

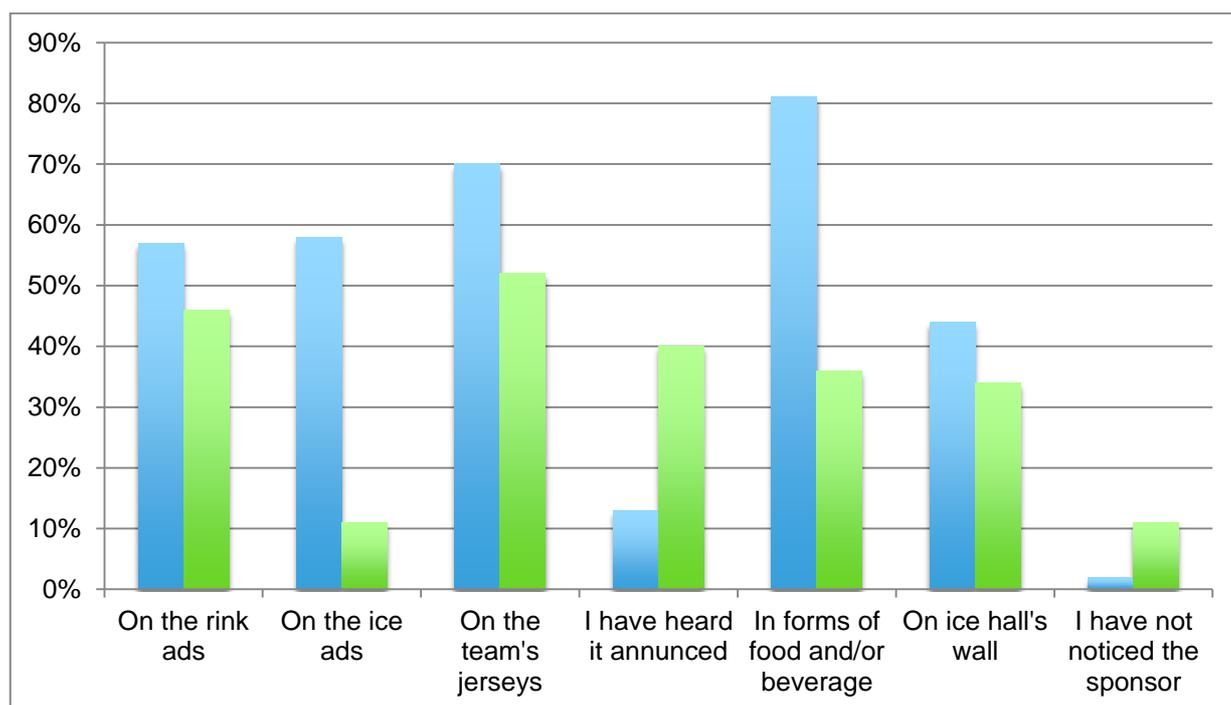


Figure 7. The differences between sponsors X and Y

As it can be seen from the figure 7 the major differences are visibility on ice, announced and in forms of food and beverages. These results correlate to the actual events because sponsor X has its name on the ice while sponsor Y does not. Moreover, sponsor X being an alcohol beverage correlates with the fact that it is more visible during the event than sponsor Y, which produces sweets. Blue pillars represent the sponsor X while green pillars represent the sponsor Y.

6.2 Data analysis

The measurement scales were conducted by utilizing exploratory factor analysis method (EFA). The data was transformed from Webropol software to IBM SPSS version 23 statistics program. The factor analyses were also conducted with the mentioned statistics program. Once satisfactory factor analyses were conducted, the reliability analyses were done. The purpose of reliability analyses was to examine different variables and their internal consistency. After reliability analyses, the summated scales were computed, which inform the factors that have a high variable loading (Coussement, Demoulin, Charry, 2011, 72). As in descriptive statistics chapter, factor analysis is conducted for teams in total and afterwards the differences are pointed out.

6.2.1 Factor analysis

Factor analysis is a statistical method, which is used mostly as a data reduction technique. The purpose is to reduce the number of variables or items in the dataset in which new dimensions or factors represent latent concepts that are unobservable. (Coussement et al. 2011, 69)

Furthermore, before any analyses can be carried out it should ensure that the data is suitable for further factor analysis. According to Pallant (2010, 182) the data is fit for factor analysis if the sample size is large enough and the relationship between the variables is strong enough. The sample size of 300 is a generally accepted

sample size (Tabachnik, Fidell, 2007, 613). In this research the sample size was 322, which indicates that further factor analyses can be carried out.

However, since in this research the data is collected from two different teams, they are analysed separately as well. This means that the sample size is smaller than 322. Team X sample size is 178 while team Y sample size is 142. The strength of the variables is tested with Bartlett and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) test. In order the data to be considered suitable for the factor analyses, the Bartlett's test result should be $p < .05$ while KMO index rate should be at least 0.6. (Tabachnik, Fidell, 2007, 621) However, Coussament et al. (2011, 79) state that KMO index rate of 0.5 is also enough for the factor analyses to be satisfactory.

Another important step in measuring whether further factor analyses can be conducted is to examine the final communality levels, which demonstrates how much of the variance in each variable is explained. If the communality levels are low, it could be an indication of an unsuitable variable to other variables in the component. (Pallant, 2010, 198) Low communality level is considered to be under 0.6 (Coussement et al., 2011, 81). The communality levels can be improved by removing the variables that have a low communality level. The unsuitable variable removal often increases the communality level and therefore the total variance. (Pallant, 2010, 198) The next step in the factor analyses process is to identify the high loading variables on the factors. The basic rule of a satisfactory factor-loading index is based on the sample size – the smaller the sample size the higher the factor loading index. In this research the satisfactory factor loading is considered to be 0.4 because the sample size is above 300. The factor loading that did not exceed the level were cut-off in this research. (Coussement et al. 2011, 83) Eigenvalues also indicate whether factor analysis can be carried out. A common rule is that factors with above 1 value are suitable. Eigenvalues tell total variance that the factor represents. (Pallant, 2010, 184)

In addition, Varimax rotation method with Kaiser Normalization was applied in order to maximize the loading variables. Varimax method was chosen because it is the most common method and the number of variables with high loading on

factors are being minimised (Pallant, 2010, 185). As an extraction method, maximum likelihood was used because the sample size exceeded over 100.

6.2.4 Sports event X and Y

The data for further factor analyses can be carried out because in all statements the KMO value was above 0.6 and Bartlett's test indicated that $p = .000$. In the following subsections further analyses are conducted to explain the factor analyses in all the key points.

The tables include the abbreviations that were presented earlier of the statements. Sports event sponsorship variables are presented CETC (connection between event, team and consumer), EVB (event behavior) and SEP (sports event sponsorship), motivational reasons are presented as INF (information), ENJ (enjoyment), PER (personal identity), SOC (social interactions) and COM (compensation), activeness level are shown as PAS (passive) and ACT (active), and finally potential motivational reasons are marked as PMBE. The tables also include eigenvalues and cumulative percentage of variance explained.

SPORTS EVENT SPONSORSHIP

In the first part of factor analysis for sports event sponsorship was divided into 3 different parts: team perception, event behavior and congruence between sponsor, event and team. Firstly, factor analysis was conducted for team perception part, which consisted of variables CETC1 to CETC8.

CETC 2 and CETC 8 did not load to any factors therefore they were removed from the factor analysis. After removing the variables, 2 different factors were computed.

Table 8. Final factor solutions for team perception

	Factor	
	1	2
CETC1	,609	
CETC3		,681
CETC4		,802
CETC5		,586
CETC6	,967	
CETC7	,450	
Eigenvalues	2,853	1,192
Cumulative percentage of explained variance	48 %	67 %
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.		

Factor 1 consists of variables that loaded onto statement that represent the positive image of the team and event. That's why, factor 1 is called as team supporters. Factor 2 is named as informed supporters because the variables load onto statements, which say that consumers know the event and team well.

Second part of sports event sponsorship factor analysis is based on event behavior variables. The factor analysis was initially done for EVB1 to EVB7. However, EVB1, EVB2, EVB3 and EVB5 did not load to any factors, which is why they were removed initially. Moreover, a reverse coding was conducted for these variables in order to get a desired outcome. The reverse coded variables were named as EVB1_REV, EVB2_REV, EVB3_REV and EVB_5REV. In the end only EVB5_REV was included in the final factor analysis because the rest of the reversed coded variables did not load into factors. Moreover, only 1 factor was computed of these variables, which means that no rotation was needed. The factor is called as an event behavior factor. The results can be seen on the table 9 below:

Table 9. Final factor solutions for event behavior

	Factor
	1
EVB4	,670
EVB5_REV	-,607
EVB6	,414
EVB7	,743
Eigenvalues	2,112
Cumulative percentage of explained variance	53 %
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.	

The third part of sports event sponsorship factor analysis consisted of the variables related to congruence between sponsor, event and team. Variables CSET1 and CSET4 did not load to any factors, which is why the variables were removed. Variable CSET9 cross loads to factors 1 and 2, which is why initially it was removed. However, the removal affected dramatically to other variable loadings therefore the variable cross loading needs to be accepted. Moreover, the statement itself fits with the statements in factors 1 and 2 hence the cross loading can be accepted. The results can be seen on the table 10 below:

Table 10. Final factor solution for congruence between sponsor, event and team

	Factor	
	1	2
CSET2	,463	
CSET3	,523	
CSET5	,650	
CSET6	,697	
CSET7	,672	
CSET8	,756	
CSET9		,488
CSET10		,875
CSET11		,823
CSET12	,520	
Eigenvalue	5,08	1,32
Cumulative percentage of variance explained	51%	64%

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Factor 1 is named as congruence between sponsor and event and factor 2 is called as congruence between sponsor and team.

MOTIVATIONAL REASONS FOR BRAND ENGAGEMENT

Factor analysis of motivational reasons for brand engagement was the hardest to compute. The variables did not load as expected because some variables did not load at all to any of the factors and some cross loadings were identified. Variables INF2, INF3, ENJ3 and ENJ4 had to be removed because they did not load to any of the factors. SOC3 had a cross loading, which is why it was removed. After removing the mentioned variables the results can be seen on the table 11 below:

Table 11. Final factor solution for motivational reasons for brand engagement

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
INF1				,436	
INF4				,653	
ENJ1				,734	
ENJ2				,478	
PER1		,708			
PER2		,803			
PER3	,739				
PER4	,935				
PER5	,827				
PER6	,515				
SOC1		,570			
SOC2		,414			
SOC4					,786
SOC5					,754
SOC7	,530				
COM1			,419		
COM2			,820		
COM3			,815		
Eigenvalues	5,61	2,52	1,96	1,46	1,02
Cumulative percentage of variance explained	30 %	43 %	53 %	61 %	66 %
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					

As it can be seen on the table 11, information and enjoyment related statements blend together. Furthermore, most of the statements associated with personal identity and social interactions are mixed. This might be due to the fact that these statements are similar. SOC3 and SOC6 cross-loaded heavily to factors 1 and 2 and initially the cross loading was accepted because the statement itself could work on both factors. However, after a test of removing the cross-loaded variables, all other variables loaded better to the factors therefore, it was decided to remove the cross-loaded variables from the final table.

The variables that belong to factor 1 represent the consumers that can identify with the brand, express themselves through the brand and seek for acceptance

from other consumers. These reasons characterize personal identity, which is why factor 1 is called motivation for personal identity. Factor 2 consumers want to belong to brand's community, meet other like-minded consumers and believe in the brand thus, the factor 2 represents social interaction. Variables in factor 3 clearly load onto reward and remuneration statements, which mean that the factor is called as motivation for compensation. Information and enjoyment based variables loaded onto factor 4 therefore it is named as motivation for information and enjoyment. Lastly, factor 5 represents the variables that loaded onto statements regarding friends and popularity. That's why, the factor 5 is called as peer pressure as motivation. However, peer pressure factor is included in the same hypothesis as factor 1, personal identity, as both factors deal with social acceptance from other consumers.

BRAND ENGAGEMENT: PASSIVE AND ACTIVE

Activeness variables were added as its own group to factor analysis. The variables loaded into two different factors as expected.

Table 12. Final factor solution for brand engagement

	Factor	
	1	2
PAS1	,519	
PAS2	,867	
PAS3	,862	
PAS4	,685	
ACT1	,565	
ACT2		,668
ACT3		,829
ACT4		,778
ACT5		,723
Eigenvalues	3,8	2,1
Cumulated percentage of variance explained	43 %	66 %
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.		

Factor 1 is named as passive brand engagement while factor 2 is called an active brand engagement. Variable ACT1 is loaded onto factor 1, because liking the brand's posts can be seen as a passive activity.

POTENTIAL MOTIVATION REASONS FOR BRAND ENGAGEMENT

The variables of potential motivational reasons for brand engagement formed 2 factors. However, PMBE5 and PMBE8 cross load for both factors, which is why the items were removed. After the removal of the items, all the rest of the items loaded onto 1 factor. The results are shown on table 13.

Table 13. Final factor solution for potential motivational reasons

	Factor
PMBE1	.832
PMBE2	.830
PMBE3	.620
PMBE4	.628
PMBE6	.747
PMBE7	.740
PMBE9	.713
PMBE10	.779
PMBE11	.680
Eigenvalues	5,307
Cumulative percentage of variance explained	70,10 %
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.	
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.	

Factor 1 is named as influenced by visibility. Moreover, in appendix 5, the Pearson Correlation matrix is presented with the conducted factors. Mean scores and standard deviation are also included in appendix 6, in which more detailed information is given.

6.2.2 Reliability and validity

The reliability and validity of the research should be measured because it is essential to find the scales that are reliable. Even though exploratory factor analysis gives an insightful look in the variables' loadings on to the factors, it is important to study if these loadings have an internal consistency in that one factor or scale. The research can be seen reliable if there is an internal consistency between the scales. There are quite few measuring values to measure reliability but Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most used one. The mentioned reliability measure is also utilized in this research. (Pallant, 2010, 97)

Cronbach alpha values are sensitive to the number of variables in the scale, for example scales that have less than 10 variables tend to have a Cronbach alpha values less than 0.7. (Pallant, 2010, 97) A satisfactory Cronbach alpha value depends on the researcher. Coussament et al. (2011, 89) states that the value must exceed 0.8. However, a generally accepted Cronbach alpha value is 0.7 (Pallant, 2010, 100), which is applied in this research. On the table XX below the reliability statistics are presented. The results indicate that all the factor-building variables are reliable because they exceed the value 0.7. This also means that the factors are internally consistent. The results of reliability values can be seen on the table 14 below:

Table 14. Reliability statistics

FACTORS	ALPHA	N OF ITEMS	N OF CASES	MEAN SCORE	STD DEV
Team supporters	0,701	3	322	13,9	1,695
Informed supporters	0,744	4	322	17,83	2,26
Event behaviour	0,702	4	322	8,9	3,319
Congruence between sponsor and event	0,844	7	322	28,99	4,594
Congruence between sponsor and team	0,848	3	322	12,64	2,207
Motivation for information and enjoyment	0,701	4	181	13,99	2,571
Motivation for social interaction	0,784	4	181	14,22	2,867
Motivation for personal identity	0,861	5	181	12,81	4,531
Peer pressure as motivation	0,865	2	181	6,03	2,2
Motivation for compensation	0,728	3	181	9,67	2,739
Passive brand engagement	0,833	5	181	17,26	4,011
Active brand engagement	0,839	4	181	8,71	3,812
Influenced by visibility	0,917	9	322	2,81	1,190

6.3 Regression analysis

In quantitative research method it is common to test the set hypotheses. Multiple regression analysis is used to test the hypotheses in researches, which is why it is utilized in the current research as well. The technique tests the relationships between the variables. To be specific multiple regression analysis analyzes the relationships between a dependent variable and a number of independent variables. Dependent variable is explained while independent variables explain the dependent ones. (Pallant, 2010, 121-122)

Multiple regression analysis has a lot of assumptions, which is why it is important to have clear steps. As said before, multiple regression assumes that there is linearity between dependent and independent variables. The relationship must be linear between these variables, which means that no multicollinearity should appear. Multicollinearity is present when the independent variables correlate with each other ($r = .9$ and above). If multicollinearity exists the regression model is not

considered good. Another issue that should be considered is outliers. Multiple regression model is sensitive to them which is why they should be taken into consideration as well. (Pallant, 2010, 150-151)

Multiple regression analysis has three different approach methods to analyze the data: standard/simultaneous regression analysis, stepwise multiple regression and hierarchical regression. In the current research a standard regression analysis has been utilized, in which all the independent variables are included to the analysis simultaneously. This multiple regression type is used when trying to investigate how much variance the independent variables are able to explain as a group in the dependent variable. Moreover, the multiple regression type also explains how much unique variance each of the independent variable describes the dependent variable. (Pallant, 2013, 269)

Based on the results of factor analysis, the dependent variables are the brand engagement variables: active and passive brand engagement. Independent variables are team supporters, informed supporters, event behavior, motivation for information and enjoyment, social interaction, personal identity, compensation, peer pressure and influenced by visibility. The regression analysis is conducted to test the set hypotheses.

Before going deeper into the results of the regression analysis, the chosen indicators are presented and explained. By describing the indicators it is easier to comprehend the outcomes of the analysis. The description also indicates the values the indicators should obtain; which value is acceptable and which are not in the current research. The indicators are presented on the table (15) below.

Table 15. A summary of valid terms for regression analysis (Pallant, 2010, 158 – 161)

R Square	The explained variance in the dependent variable.
Adj. R Square	In case of small sample size the R Square is considered too optimistic. In these cases Adjusted R Square gives a more realistic value. However, the sample size of this research was established as sufficient earlier therefore R Square value is chosen over the adjusted one.
Beta	Standardized coefficient gives a comparable value in order to independent variables being comparable. The largest beta value indicates the strongest contributing unique variable explaining the dependent variable.
B	Unstandardized coefficient used in cases of if constructing a regression equation is being in interest.
t	High t –value indicates higher significance level and vice versa.
Tolerance (Tol.)	Indicates the variability of a specified independent that is not explained by the other independent variables in the model. A value less than .10 is an indication of multicollinearity.
Variance inflation factor (VIF.)	An inverse of the tolerance value meaning that a VIF value above 10 indicates the existence of multicollinearity.
Sig.	The value indicates the significance of the variable whether the variable adds a unique contribution to the equation. A significant unique contributing value is considered to be less than .05.

Now that the terms have been explained and defined, the results of the regression analysis are presented and discussed. First, the results of the hypotheses 1AB, 2AB, 3AB and 4AB are presented on the table 16. The dependent variables are passive and active brand engagement and the independent variables represent motivational reasons. Furthermore, the passive brand engagement results are analyzed first and then active brand engagement results are discussed.

The overall significant value for passive brand engagement is less than 0.05, which means that all the independent variables are significant, adding a unique

contribution to the regression analysis. If analyzing beta and t values, it seems that motivation for social interaction is the strongest variable followed by motivation for information and enjoyment, motivation for compensation and motivation for personal identity. Pressure as motivation seems correlate negatively to passive brand engagement. This indicates that the statement has a negative effect on passive brand engagement. However, all the hypotheses A can be approved because they have a significant impact on dependent variable.

The results vary a bit if compared to an active brand engagement. Only motivation for personal identity and compensation's significance values is below 0.05, which means that they are statistically significant. The sig. value for motivation for information and enjoyment, motivation for social interaction and pressure as motivation exceed the allowed limit, which indicates that they are not statistically significant. Hypotheses 1B and 3B are rejected on active brand engagement while 2B and 4B are accepted.

Furthermore, hypothesis 5 proposed that motivation to brand engagement is stronger with active than passive brand engagement. In this case the hypothesis could be analyzed with beta values. The hypotheses that have been approved have stronger beta values with active than passive brand engagement. This means that H5 can be accepted.

Table 16. Regression results for motivational reasons

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.292	.861	4.242	.776	1.288	.000	.408	.390
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.359	.455	4.860	.673	1.486	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.165	.503	2.287	.703	1.422	.024		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.147	-.268	-1.991	.677	1.478	.048		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.180	.263	2.701	.830	1.204	.008		
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.021	-.031	-.293	.776	1.288	.770	.365	.345
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.120	.160	1.575	.673	1.486	.117		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.401	.351	5.364	.703	1.422	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.070	.122	.921	.677	1.478	.358		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.254	.354	3.696	.830	1.204	.000		

On the table 17 the brand engagement is analyzed with event behavior - the intensity level of the event has a negative effect on brand engagement. Sig. levels in both passive and active brand engagement are above .05, which means that event behavior does not offer unique contribution to the equation. However, beta values are negative which indicate a negative relationship. This means that a higher intensity level during the event affects negatively to brand engagement. However, since the sig. value exceeds the allowed level, H8AB has to be rejected, as it is not statistically significant.

Table 17. Regression results for event behaviour

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.070	-.116	-.905	1.000	1.000	.367	.005	-.001
Active Brand Engagement										
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.081	-.128	-1.050	1.000	1.000	.295	.007	.001

Hypotheses 9AB and 10AB are related to team perception – supporting the team has a positive effect on brand engagement and prior information of the event and team has a positive effect on brand engagement. If analysing sig. levels in passive brand engagement, team supporters are statistically significant while informed supporters are not. However, in active brand engagement the outcome is different: team support variable is not statistically significant while informed supporters variable is. H9A and H10B are accepted while and H9B and H10A are rejected.

Table 18. Regression results for team perception

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Team perception: team sup.	H9A	.174	.413	2.244	.979	1.021	.026	.305	.284
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10A	-.009	-.016	-.122	.979	1.021	.903		
Active Brand Engagement										
	Team perception: team sup.	H9B	-.017	-.038	-.218	.979	1.021	.827	.296	.287
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10B	.172	.269	2.212	.979	1.021	.028		

Hypothesis 7 proposed that the visibility of a sponsor has a positive relationship to brand engagement. As it can be seen on a table 19 in both passive and active brand engagement the relationship seems to be significant. Moreover, beta values are positive, which means that H7AB can be approved.

Table 19. Regression results for visibility of a sponsor

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Influenced by visibility	H7A	.232	.114	3.066	1.000	1.000	.003	.291	.272
Active Brand Engagement										
	Influenced by visibility	H7B	.400	.186	5.601	1.000	1.000	.000	.160	.155

Hypotheses 6 and 12 are related to congruence between sponsor and event/team. To be more specific, H6AB predicts that there should be congruence between sponsor and event while H12AB proposes that there should be congruence between sponsor and team. In passive brand engagement the sig. levels indicate that congruence between sponsor and event is insignificant while congruence between sponsor and team is significant. The beta values support the significance levels as well. In active brand engagement the sig. levels indicate that the neither congruence between sponsor and event or team are significant. That's why, it could be said that H6AB and H12B are rejected while H12A is approved.

Table 20. Regression results for congruence between sponsor and event/team

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6A	-.036	.041	-.407	.560	1.786	.685	.358	.336
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12A	.484	.266	2.627	.560	1.786	.0009		
Active Brand Engagement										
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6B	.079	.095	.929	.560	1.786	.354	.261	.214
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12B	.142	.082	.798	.560	1.786	.426		

Hypothesis 11AB proposed that the frequency to attend the sports event has positive relationship to brand engagement. The relationship is significant in active brand engagement while in passive brand engagement it appears to be insignificant. However, beta values are negative, which might indicate that the variables are negatively associated. H11A is rejected while H11B is approved.

Table 21. Regression results for frequency to attend the sports event

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Attendance frequency	H11A	-.077	-.019	-.243	1.000	1.000	.809	.000	-.006
Active Brand Engagement										
	Attendance frequency	H11B	-.748	-.194	-2.543	1.000	1.000	.012	.038	.032

6.3.1 The summary of the regression analysis

The results of the regression analysis are summarized on the table 22 below. All the hypotheses are presented with the results of being either approved or rejected.

Table 22. Summary of the results of the regression analysis

Hypothesis	Brand engagement
H1A: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H1B: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported
H2A: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H2B: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported
H3A: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H3B: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported
H4A: Compensation has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H4B: Compensation has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported
H5: Motivational drivers have a stronger positive effect with an active brand engagement than passive brand engagement	Supported
H6A: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported
H6B: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported
H7A: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H7B: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported
H8A: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported
H8B: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect on active brand engagement	Not supported
H9A: Supporting the team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported
H9B: Supporting the team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported

H10A: Prior information of the event and team has positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported
H10B: Prior information of the event and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported
H11A: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported
H11B: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported
H12A: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported
H12B: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported

Finally, based on the final hypotheses, the final theoretical framework is presented on the figure 8 below:

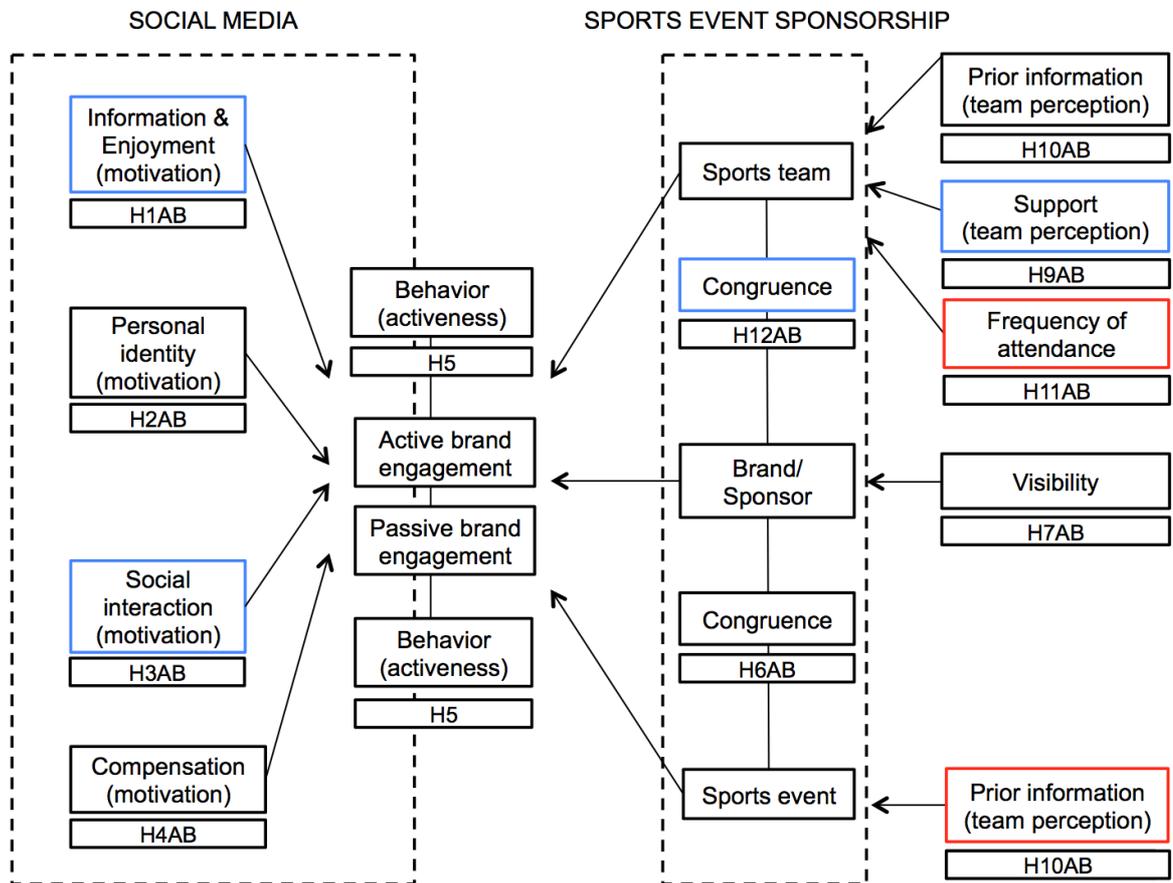


Figure 8. The final theoretical framework

Color codes for boxes:

Red = active brand engagement

Blue = passive brand engagement

Black = active and passive brand engagement

6.3.2 Additional regression analysis methods

ENTERING DATA BLOCK BY BLOCK

To have a more comprehensive outlook of the regression analysis, a block by block entering method is applied next. This means that the blocks are entered one after another in order to find out if there are any changes in the values. First, passive brand engagement as a dependent variable is analyzed. Active brand engagement is discussed after passive brand engagement. Lastly, a comparison between the first regression analysis and second is presented.

Block 1 consists of motivational reasons and event behavior. The relationship between passive brand engagement and motivational reasons is significant because the values are under .05. Pressure as motivation has a negative value, which indicates that the variable is negatively associated with the dependent value. Moreover, event behavior is not significant in block 1. Table 23 below presents the results.

Table 23. Regression analysis for passive block 1

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.289	.451	4.189	.774	1.292	.000	.411	.389
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.364	.509	4.907	.670	1.493	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.158	.146	2.172	.694	1.440	.031		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.155	-.283	-2.087	.666	1.502	.038		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.191	.279	2.815	.804	1.244	.005		
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.056	-.092	-0.894	.943	1.060	.373		

Team perception variables were added to block 2. After adding the new variables, the old results still remain. However, the results indicate that team perception variable, team supporters, is statistically significant while the other variable, informed supporters, is insignificant. Table 24 below shows the results.

Table 24. Regression analysis for passive block 2

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.287	.448	4.228	.774	1.293	.000	.436	.407
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.375	.525	5.051	.648	1.543	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.159	.147	2.218	.694	1.440	.031		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.168	-.306	-2.265	.651	1.536	.038		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.201	.294	3.002	.800	1.250	.005		
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.036	-.059	-5.69	.911	1.098	.373		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9A	.131	.311	2,092	.907	1.102	.026		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10A	-.111	-.184	-1,8	.932	1.073	.074		

Block 3 has a new variable of influenced by visibility. As in block 2, the new variable has no significant effect on the results – the previous results remain valid. Moreover, the significance levels for the new variable exceed greatly the allowed level, which indicates that this variable is statistically insignificant with the other variables. The results can be found on table 25 below.

Table 25. Regression analysis for passive block 3

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.290	.452	4.228	.765	1.308	.000	.436	.404
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.379	.530	5.027	.632	1.582	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.160	.147	2.218	.694	1.441	.028		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.164	-.299	-2.186	.637	1.569	.030		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.207	.303	2.970	.739	1.354	.003		
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.034	-.056	-.535	.903	1.107	.594		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9A	.132	.313	2,101	.905	1.105	.037		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10A	-.107	-.177	-1.698	.898	1.114	.092		
	Influenced by visibility	H7A	-.024	-.012	-.337	.697	1.434	.737		

Congruence between sponsor and event/team has been added to block 4. This variable seems to have some effect on the previous regression results because while almost all the variables stay the same, the variable of team perception: team supporters significance values increased above the allowed limit making it insignificant. Furthermore, congruence between sponsor and team is seen significant while congruence between sponsor and event is not seen important. Table 26 below presents the results for block 4.

Table 26. Regression analysis for passive block 4

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.289	.452	4.255	.764	1.309	.000	.452	.413
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.361	.505	4.650	.586	1.707	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.154	.142	2.143	.685	1.460	.034		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.172	-.313	-2.295	.631	1.585	.023		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.220	.322	3.158	.731	1.369	.002		
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.025	-.042	-.401	.898	1.113	.689		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9A	.125	.295	1.940	.857	1.166	.054		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10A	-.041	-.203	-1.249	.364	1.468	.214		
	Influenced by visibility	H7A	-.063	-.020	-.563	.681	1.468	.574		
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6A	-.063	-.055	-.514	.236	4.239	.608		
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12A	.166	.302	2.035	.531	1.883	.044		

When entering attendance frequency variable to the equation, the regression analysis outcomes do not change significantly. Motivational reasons and congruence between sponsor and team are still the essential values while the rest of the variables have little statistical significance. Attendance frequency also is not seen a significant variable. The results can be seen on table 27 below.

Table 27. Regression analysis for passive block 5

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Passive Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1A	.291	.454	4.259	.761	1.314	.000	.452	.410
	Social interaction as motivation	H3A	.363	.507	4.649	.585	1.710	.000		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2A	.154	.142	2.134	.685	1.460	.034		
	Pressure as motivation	H3A	-.173	-.315	-2.297	.631	1.586	.023		
	Compensation as motivation	H4A	.221	.323	3.163	.729	1.371	.002		
	Event behaviour	H8A	-.024	-.039	-.378	.895	1.117	.706		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9A	.119	0.281	1.797	.813	1.231	.074		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10A	-.123	-.204	-1.248	.364	2.746	.214		
	Influenced by visibility	H7A	-.042	-.021	-.582	.679	1.473	.561		
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6A	-.063	-.055	-.510	.236	4.239	.611		
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12A	.166	.301	2.025	.531	1.883	.045		
	Attendance frequency	H11A	-.024	-.095	-.378	.919	1.088	.706		

Active brand engagement as a dependent variable has different relationship to independent variables than passive brand engagement. When combining motivational reasons and event behavior only motivation for image and motivation for compensation hold significant values while the rest of the variables can be seen not that important. The results are presented on table 28 below.

Table 28. Regression analysis for active block 1

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.023	-.035	-.327	.774	1.292	.744	.367	.343
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.124	.165	1.615	.670	1.493	.108		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.395	.346	5.247	.694	1.440	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.064	.110	.827	.666	1.502	.409		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.262	.365	3.751	.804	1.244	.000		
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.043	-.068	-.671	.943	1.060	.503		

In the block 2, the team perception variables have been entered to the equation. However, the results did not change and even the new variables have no significant input to the equation. Table 29 below holds the results for the block 2.

Table 29. Regression analysis for active block 2

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.022	-.032	-.307	.774	1.293	.759	.378	.347
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.113	.151	1.461	.648	1.543	.146		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.395	.346	5.256	.694	1.440	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.070	.121	.902	.651	1.536	.368		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.256	.357	3.664	.800	1.250	.000		
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.055	-.086	-.840	.911	1.098	.402		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9B	-.080	-.180	-1.221	.907	1.102	.224		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10B	.085	.134	1.318	.932	1.073	.189		

Influenced by visibility is the next variable that was added to the equation. The variable had little input to the equation making no drastic changes. Still, the new variable can be seen significant as it stays under the allowed significance level. Therefore block 3 has so far 3 statistically relevant variables – motivation for image, motivation for compensation and influenced by visibility. Table 30 below represents the results.

Table 30. Regression analysis for active block 3

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.041	-.062	-.585	.765	1.308	.559	.403	.369
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.820	.110	1.063	.632	1.582	.290		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.391	.342	5.277	.694	1.441	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.041	.072	.535	.637	1.569	.594		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.205	.286	2.863	.739	1.354	.005		
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.070	-.110	-1.080	.903	1.107	.282		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9B	-.089	-.200	-1.372	.905	1.105	.172		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10 B	.054	.084	.824	.898	1.114	.411		
	Influenced by visibility	H7B	.189	.088	2.552	.697	1.434	.012		

The new variable that has been entered to the equation is congruence between sponsor and event/team. This addition had no noteworthy contribution to the equation because the values did not change that much. Moreover, the congruence values are insignificant in this equation. The results are shown in table 31.

Table 31. Regression analysis for block 4

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.044	-.065	-.616	.764	1.309	.539	.408	.366
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.107	.142	1.324	.568	1.707	.187		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.383	.335	5.127	.685	1.460	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.050	.087	.642	.631	1.585	.522		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.199	.277	2.749	.731	1.369	.007		
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.069	-.108	-1.055	.898	1.113	.293		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9B	-.072	-.161	-1.075	.857	1.166	.284		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10B	.141	.221	1.376	.364	2.746	.171		
	Influenced by visibility	H7B	.200	.093	2.669	.681	1.468	.008		
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6B	-.122	-.101	-.961	.236	4.239	.338		
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12B	-.005	-.009	-.061	.531	1.883	.952		

The last regression analysis is conducted by entering attendance frequency variable. No major changes can be seen, however, attendance frequency is statistically meaningful. The other statistically significant variables are the ones that have been mentioned before: motivation for image, motivation for compensation and influenced by visibility. The table 32 represents the results.

Table 32. Regression analysis for block 5

Dependent variable	Independent variable	H	Beta	B	t	Tol.	VIF	Sig.	R Square	Adj. R Square
Active Brand Engagement										
	Information and enjoyment as motivation	H1B	-.029	-.042	-.418	.761	1.314	.677	.450	.407
	Social interaction as motivation	H3B	.118	.157	1.514	.585	1.710	.132		
	Personal identity as motivation	H2B	.381	.334	5.278	.685	1.460	.000		
	Pressure as motivation	H3B	.044	.076	.583	.631	1.586	.561		
	Compensation as motivation	H4B	.210	.292	2.997	.729	1.371	.003		
	Event behaviour	H8B	-.056	-.088	-.889	.895	1.117	.375		
	Team perception: team sup.	H9B	-.124	-.278	-1.867	.813	1.231	.064		
	Team perception: informed sup.	H10 B	.139	.218	1.401	.364	2.746	.163		
	Influenced by visibility	H7B	.185	.086	2.556	.679	1.471	.012		
	Congruence between sponsor and event	H6B	-.119	-.098	-.963	.236	4.239	.337		
	Congruence between sponsor and team	H12 B	-.008	-.014	-.100	.531	1.883	.921		
	Attendance frequency	H11 B	-.214	-.827	-3.463	.919	1.088	.001		

As comparing the final results of passive brand engagement and active brand engagement, it can be seen that the results vary quite bit. The dependent variables correlate with independent variables differently, which can be expected from the previous regression analysis results. When comparing the new regression analysis results to the old one, no major changes can be seen. However, there are some worth mentioning. It seems that H7A (The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on passive brand engagement) is not statistically significant when all the variables are entered together while if analysed separately from other variables it is significant. Consequently, H9A (Supporting the team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement) and H10B (Prior information of the

event and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement) suffer the same fate. While being statistically significant when analysed separately, now it appears that they are insignificant for the research. This also means that team perception variable could be wholly rejected. The table 33 below summarizes the differences between the 2 brand engagement regression analyses.

Table 33. Summary of comparison between brand engagement regression analyses

Hypothesis	Brand engagement	Brand engagement block
H1A: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H1B: Information and entertainment experiences have a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H2A: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H2B: Personal identity related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H3A: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H3B: Social interaction related experience has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H4A: Compensation has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H4B: Compensation has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H5: Motivational drivers have a stronger positive effect with an active brand engagement than passive brand engagement	Supported	Not applicable
H6A: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H6B: The congruence between sponsor and event has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H7A: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Not supported
H7B: The visibility of sponsor has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H8A: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H8B: The higher intensity level of the event has a negative effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported

H9A: Supporting the team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Not supported
H9B: Supporting the team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H10A: Prior information of the event and team has positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H10B: Prior information of the event and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported	Not supported
H11A: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported
H11B: Frequency to attend the sports event has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H12A: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement	Supported	Supported
H12B: The congruence between sponsor and team has a positive effect on active brand engagement	Not supported	Not supported

Even though the results are a bit different between the regression analyses, the first regression analysis results will remain valid for this research. The second regression analysis was conducted in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how the relationships between dependent variable and independent variables can differ when analysed together. These results give a valuable input for the discussion and conclusions chapter 7.

COMMON METHOD VARIANCE

In order to gain even more insightful view of the regression analysis, common method variance (known as common method bias as well) tests have been conducted. (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, Podsakoff, 2003) Fiske (1982) describes that the common method variance explains “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent.” If method biases occur in the data, this can be a problem because it questions the validity of relationships between variables. (Podsakoff et al., 2003) In the current research common method variance tests are conducted due to both independent and dependent variables being collected from the same source at the same time.

One of the most popular common method variance techniques is Harman's single factor test, which has been used for controlling the effect of common method variance. The test requires all the variables to be loaded in a research into an exploratory factor analysis. The test assumes that common method variance exists if a single factor is the result of the test or a factor explains over 50% of variance among variables. However, it has been argued that the technique does not necessarily control the effects of common method variance but rather can be seen as a technique that recognizes which common method variance may cause an issue. Still, in the current research the test has been conducted in order to minimize the suspicion of existing common method variance. (Podsakoff et al., 2003)

After conducting Harman's single factor test, the results indicate that the current research does not suffer from common variance. The results reveal that there is more than one factor. Moreover, a single factor explains approximately 32% of the variance, which means that it does not cover the majority of covariance, as it is not over 50%. The results can be found in appendix 7.

7. Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this research was to investigate how sports event sponsorship works as a channel for brand engagement on social media. The subject was approached with a broad theoretical base that covered the three main topics of the research: social media, brand engagement and sports sponsorship. All these concepts are extremely popular research topics and have been studied a lot. However, there is a major gap concerning the relationships of these concepts. Almost no researches address the relationships between the concepts, which is why it was seen crucial to conduct an academic research about these relationships.

These theoretical concepts were tested with an empirical study, whether the theory can support the actual research. The empirical part of the study was conducted with quantitative research method. This method for was chosen due to the fact that it enabled a comprehensive and rather straightforward answer for the research questions. Moreover, quantitative research method allows a large data, which was seen essential for this research; the larger the data, the more reliable the results. The data was collected with an online questionnaire that was posted on Facebook pages by two major Finnish ice hockey league teams. The questionnaires addressed two different consumer brands that are the main sponsors for the teams. In the end 322 answers were viable to use in the research. The data was analyzed with a statistical program, SPSS.

This chapter is the last chapter of the research, which means that the results of the empirical part of the research are discussed in depth and analyzed as well. Both theoretical contributions and managerial implications cover the analysis of the research. After this the limitations of the study are discussed and lastly the possible future research topics are proposed. Moreover, when talking about brand engagement it includes both active and passive engagement otherwise these two will be mentioned separately.

However, before moving onto the final subchapters, the research questions are presented and briefly answered. This serves as conclusions as well. The supportive questions are answered first because the main research question is answered mainly through supportive questions. This being said the following supportive questions with answers were formed:

Do consumers engage with brands on social media when brands are sponsors in sports events?

The results of the empirical study reveal that consumers engage with brands on social media when the brands are involved in sports event sponsorship. The visibility of the brand during the event seems to be the channel to guide consumers to engage with the brand. The results suggest that if the brand is placed on a rink, ice, team's jersey, can be found from the event's restaurant and can be seen on the hall walls, consumers tend to engage with the brand on social media. In other words, a visual reminder of the brand encourages consumers to engage with the brand on social media during the event.

How active are consumers in brand engagement on social media?

Consumers can be engaged to brands in two different ways: actively and/or passively. Active brand engagement is when consumers are contributing content on social media while passive means mostly consuming the content. Passive brand engagement is more common than active; however, active brand engagement has a stronger connection with the independent variables than passive brand engagement.

How are consumers motivated to engage with brands on social media in sports event?

Now that it has been established that consumers can be stimulated to engage with brands and most importantly in the sports event, it is essential to examine what could motivate consumers to brand engagement. The most common reason is the

need to find more information about the brand and/or spend time and relax while browsing the brand's content on social media. The consumers that want to find information and enjoy it browse the content rather than contribute new information to the site. In other words the brand engagement is passive. Consumers can also be motivated to engage if they can relate to the content, build their self-image and express themselves through the content. These topics relate to personal identity, which serves as a powerful motivational reason to engage, as the brand engagement is both active and passive. Another reason to engage is social interaction, which is similar to personal identity. Consumers, who believe in the brand, feel that they are part of the brand's community and want to meet other likeminded consumers are motivated to engage with the brand on social media. Even though, there is a feeling of belonging to the community in this case the brand engagement is passive instead of active. Finally, compensations for example, lotteries, product and money prizes motivate consumers to engage with brands on social media. The chance of winning drives consumers to look and participate, which means that this motivational reason is both active and passive brand engagement.

How does sports team motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

Sports team is strongly connected to the sports event. Consumers attend the sports event because they support the sports team. The more the consumers support the team, the more frequently they visit the event. The support for the team and attendance frequency to the event have an impact on consumers in terms of engagement. If the consumer supports the team, the more likely they are to visit the event and as well to engage with the brand. The brand engagement in the former is passive while in latter active. Furthermore, the more information the consumer has about the team and event, the more motivated they are to engage with the brand thus, active brand engagement.

How does sports event motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

Besides examining sports team effect on consumers, the sports event itself has an impact on consumers. The prior information the consumers has about the event motivates consumer to engage with the brand. The brand engagement in this case is active over passive brand engagement. The intensity of the event has a slight impact on consumers. The more intense the event is, the less likely consumers are to engage with the brand. However, this claim could be argued as the hypothesis was just slightly rejected.

How does congruence between sports event and team and brand affect consumers to engage with brand on social media?

The congruence between the brand and team has a positive effect on passive brand engagement. This means that consumers engage passively on social media if there is congruence between the brand and team. However, when it comes to congruence between the event and brand, it does not have any impact on consumers.

As the supportive questions and the answers to them build the complete answer to the main research question, the final answer to the main research problem serves as a conclusion to the current research. The following research question was presented:

How does sports event sponsorship work as a channel for brand engagement on social media?

Sports event sponsorship can be seen as an intriguing and powerful marketing channel for brand engagement on social media. There are lots of matters that should be taken into account if making this kind of channel to work. The visibility of the brand during the event (either when the game is on or during the game breaks) is the trigger for consumers to notice the presence of the brand. This also

stimulates the consumers to brand engagement. The stimulation can be either passive or active – how consumer is going to behave with the brand on social media. However, the behavior depends on the motivational reasons the consumer has towards the brand. If the consumer is only looking for information, entertainment and/or any topics that are related to social interactions, the behavior can be regarded as passive brand engagement. On the other hand if the consumer is looking for topics related to personal identity and/or compensation, the behavior can be either or both passive and active brand engagement.

Since the research studies sports event sponsorship, sports team is naturally an essential part of the marketing method. Consumers attend the event because they support the team that is playing – at least to some extent. This can be measured with the times the consumers are attending the event. The more they support the team, the more likely they are to attend the event as well. The support for the team drives consumers to engage with the brand passively but the attendance to the event makes the consumer to engage with the brand actively. In addition, the more informative the consumer is about the team and event, the more motivated they are to engage with the brand actively.

The acknowledgment of the brand and team's cooperation is an important aspect as well. The more consumers can identify the brand with the team, the more likely they engage with the brand. In other words congruence between the brand and team has a positive effect on brand engagement – in terms of passive brand engagement. However, when it comes to congruence between the brand and event, consumer does not engage with the brand.

All in all this is how sports event sponsorship works as a channel for brand engagement on social media. There are some other variables that have a role in this as well. As previously explained, theoretical contributions and managerial implications will be discussed next, in which the other variables are examined and explained.

7.1 Theoretical contributions

The current research suggests lots of interesting connections between sports event sponsorship, brand engagement and social media. As no prior research has been conducted of these concepts together, the results are not comparable to any other research – at least not in a direct manner. Moreover, as the studies of sports sponsorship can be seen outdated, and both brand engagement and social media are rather new concepts, there is a need for empirical studies of these concepts.

Even though brand engagement is rather a new concept there are some researches conducted of the topic. The previous researches show that four different motivational drivers for brand engagement – information and enjoyment, personal identity, social interaction and compensation – can be identified (Angela Hausmann et al., 2014, Enginkaya, Yilmaz, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Labrecque, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011), which is also supported by the current research results. Also brand engagement can be separated into two, passive and active brand engagement (Gummerus et al, 2012, Vivek et al., 2012, Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang et al., 2006), which is also supported by the results of the empirical research. The reason why brand engagement can be either passive or active comes from consumer's motivation for engagement, which were mentioned in the beginning of paragraph. The theory also suggested that active brand engagement has a stronger correlation with consumers than passive brand engagement (Gummerus et al, 2012, Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang et al., 2006), which is supported by the empirical reserach results. The newness of the topic can be seen now, as the previous researches have not categorized the motivational drivers into passive or active brand engagement – at least not in an obvious manner.

The only motivational driver that is directly categorized into passive brand engagement is information and enjoyment (Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang et al., 2006) that is supported by the results of the empirical research. Moreover, it should be mentioned that Enginkaya and Yilmaz (2014) indicate that social interaction could be active brand engagement because consumers want to meet

other people and interact with them. However, the empirical results suggest different – social interaction correlates to passive brand engagement. The rest of the categorization comes from the results of the empirical research: both personal identity and compensation are passive and active brand engagement. This is an interesting discovery because there are not any previous researches that could support this. Hence, this could be studied further.

The empirical research of sports event sponsorship shows some interesting results as well. The existing literature mostly supports the research results with some exceptions. These exceptions should be taken into consideration when studying further the topic. What should be mentioned especially is that there have not been any previous researches of sports event sponsorship and brand engagement together. Therefore, all the results concerning passive and active brand engagement cannot be reflected to the theory but should be seen as a possibility to build a bridge between these two concepts.

As stated multiple times before event sponsorship is one of the most popular sponsorship methods. As sports can captivate consumers during the event, it is crucial to investigate whether the consumers are willing to engage with brands on social media during the time of the event itself. The empirical research results support that the visibility of brand puts consumers under the brand's influence during the event (Cornwell, 2008, Lardinoit, Quester, 2001). Since sports can hold consumers' attention, the intensity level of the event is a factor that could either work in favor or against the sponsor (Carrillat et al., 2015, Cummins et al., 2012). The empirical results somewhat support this as there is a relationship between the intensity level and brand engagement, however, not a significant one. This means that consumers can engage with the sponsor regardless the actions during the game hence, the theory does not fully support the empirical findings.

Besides the exposure of the sponsor and event intensity, sports team has a significant role in sports event sponsorship because the team is naturally connected with the event. The previous researches reveal that sponsor's capability to prove its importance to the sports team, would in return encourage the

consumers support the sponsor (Biscaia et al., 2013, Ko, et al., 2008, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000). The empirical research results indicate that consumers indeed are willing to engage with the sponsor if they support the team. The consumers' behavior on social media leans more towards passive than active brand engagement.

Some researches also suggest that the attendance rate to the events could correlate either positively or negatively to the sponsor. Logically the higher attendance rate reflects to a positive representation of the sponsor (Lee et al., 2011, Wakefield, Bennet, 2010, Cornwell, 2008). The empirical research shows that the higher attendance rate to the sports events correlate to more active behavior on sponsor's social media, while it has no impact on passive behavior. The theory also indicated that prior information of the sports team and event affects consumers' ability to understand sponsor's message (Biscaia et al., 2013, Maroco, 2013, Olson, 2010, Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003). The results of the empirical study support this as the previous information of the sports team and event reflects to active brand engagement.

Brand that can be associated with the event creates congruence between the sponsor and the event. Strong congruence between the event and brand allows consumers to absorb the information the brand is sending. (Thomas, 2014, Biscaia et al., 2013, Olson, 2010, Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Gwinner, Bennett, 2008, Koo et al., 2006, Flynn, 2006, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000, Gwinner, 1997) The empirical research, however, indicates that the similarity between the event and brand does not have an effect on consumers. This means that congruence between the event and brand does not drive the consumer to engage with brands on social media, hence theory does not support the empirical research results. However, the case is different when it comes to the similarity between the sports team and brand. The congruence between the team and brand drives consumers to engage with the brand in passive manner but not in active. Biscaia et al. (2013), Lee et al. (2011) and Madrigal (2001) agree that consumers favor the brand if they can see and recall the sponsor as the team's sponsor.

Since the social media is an essential part of the study, it is also important to recognize the key demographics. Duggan and Smith (2014) argue that women are more present on social media than men. The empirical findings indicate different, as 64% of respondents were men while women made 36% of the total. The results also show that there are three big age groups using social media: 26% of the respondents are from 18 to 25, 29% of the respondents are from 29 to 35 and 20% are from 36 to 45. The rest of the age groups make 22% in total. The results indicate that consumers between 18 to 34 years use mostly smartphone rather than PC or tablet. However, when it comes to consumers that are above 35 years old, the PC is still a popular choice. Significantly the popularity of tablet increases in this age group compared to younger age group. Still, it is worth mentioning that PC and smartphone are more popular choices. Facebook is clearly the most popular SNS within this age group when Twitter and Instagram are still searching their audience. However, Instagram is almost equal to Facebook when analyzing the age group of 18 to 34 years old. Twitter is not seen popular in any age group. (eMarketer, 2015, eMarketer, 2014, eMarketer, 2014ac)

Kohli et al. (2014) have suggested in their research that social media is a two-way communication channel. In this research it could be suggested that social media makes sports event sponsorship a two-way communication channel as well. As sports event sponsorship can be seen rather push marketing than pull marketing, social media transforms sports event marketing into pull marketing as consumers have the control over SNSs they are in. According to the empirical findings, consumers indeed have the control in social media, which is why both team and brand should understand the results presented above.

A second regression analysis was also conducted, in which all the dependent and independent variables were included a step by step into the same analysis. The results stay mostly the same, however, some differences were also seen. The results in the second regression analysis indicate that support to the team (Biscaia et al., 2013, Ko, et al., 2008, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000) and prior information of the event and team (Biscaia et al., 2013, Maroco, 2013, Olson, 2010, Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003) have no effect on brand

engagement hence, hypotheses rejected. The results also indicate that visibility of the sponsor (Cornwell, 2008, Lardinoit, Quester, 2001) can only be associated with active brand engagement. The results give an interesting input as they indicate that these independent variables have a tendency to vary depending on the involvement of other variables.

7.2 Managerial implications

Sports sponsorship, brand engagement and social media are interesting, multifaceted and unpredictable concepts. They constantly live and evolve over time. That's why, the researches should follow the trend. However, only the surface has been scratched, as there is lack of academic research base. The current research investigates interrelations of these concepts and provides fairly thought-provoking, complex and surprising results. The hypotheses presented in the previous chapters are mostly supported by the results of the empirical research. Still, some hypotheses were also not supported, which is why it is important to analyze the reasons behind. Following theoretical contributions chapter, which presented the hypotheses supported or not supported by previous researches, it is necessary to explain what the theoretical suggestions actually mean to management. The results help and support managers to understand consumers' motivations and behavior patterns on social media during an event that is thrilling and intensive. The main purpose is to help managers to understand the benefits of social media combined with sports event sponsorship and brand engagement, and how they can have an impactful marketing method.

Consumers can be persuaded to engage with brands on social media during the event, if the brand is positioned in a visible place. The constant reminder of the brand's presence stimulates consumers to take the effort to log into their social media accounts and brand's page. The empirical results indicate that the strategic places to place the brand are on rink, ice, team's jersey, restaurants and arena walls. Moreover, a powerful way to encourage consumers to engage with brands

is for instance to advertise the social media channels with #brandX, @brandX and so on in the event. The results also indicate that the announcements of the brands are not a common promotion method during the game, as the consumers have not heard them. However, the results tell that consumers could be persuaded to engage with brands if they were mentioned in the event and/or the announcer encouraged consumers to visit the brands' social media site. Now, the brands rely on visual reminders when there is a remarkable underlying potential in capitalizing consumers' sense of hearing as well.

On the contrary to the suggestion of Carrillat et al. (2015) and Cummins et al. (2012), the intensity level of the event has almost no effect on consumer. Brands can motivate consumers to engage with them on social media even if the event is thrilling and intense. This can be seen as good news to brands as their visibility during the event can increase the traffic on their social media, hence increase the influence on consumer.

Brands can have either passively or actively engaged consumers. The main difference is that passive brand engagement is about consuming brand's social media page while active brand engagement is about creating content. Brands should decide which engagement behavior they want to inspire in consumers, as the behavior can be motivated in different ways. However, the results reveal that active brand engagement has a stronger relationship with the independent variables than passive brand engagement. This may be due to a fact that consumers truly feel connected with the brand hence, are willing to engage with brand.

Motivation to engage comes from the consumer. There are different reasons why consumers are motivated to engage with brands, most common reason being lack of information or boredom. These two reasons are associated with passive behavior meaning that consumers enjoy spending time on brand's social media page and look for information. This also means that they do not create any content on brand's social media page. Another passive motivational driver is social interaction, which was expected to correlate to active brand engagement. This is a

surprising result as Enginkaya and Yilmaz (2014) describe that consumers engage with brands because they desire to meet other likeminded people and interact with them. Since the results indicate that it is passive brand engagement, this would mean that consumers indeed wish to meet other likeminded people but choose not to interact, as it would be an active brand engagement. Labrecque (2014) explains that consumers create content when brand produces a content or message that consumer can relate to. In the current research the content on both brands' social media site is not inspiring enough for consumers to engage actively. If the brands aim at a more active social interaction on their social media site, they have to create content that would support communication between consumers.

The only motivational drivers that stir both active and passive brand engagement are personal identity and compensation. Identifying with a brand works as a motivational reason for consumer to engage with it. A content that can be related to consumers' personality and self-image encourages consumers to interact with the brand and show others that they choose to identify themselves with the brand. If the brand succeeds in being relatable, the consumers engage with them.

Compensation can be seen as rewards or money that can motivate consumers to be more active than passive, which can be free product samples during the event. The possibilities of winning brand's products during the event, however, encourage consumers to actively engage with the brand, thus active brand engagement. Surprisingly consumers are not motivated to engage if the brand promotes a lottery on their social media page in the event. The results indicate that lotteries etc. that take place in the event motivate consumers to engage while lotteries taking place on social media do not even if promoted in the event. This can be seen as an interesting result as this means that consumers are willing to engage with brands on social media if they are not pushed into it by brands selling their social media page. Consumers engage with brands on social media when the motivation comes from them.

One of the main reasons for engagement is consumers' fondness to the team. If the team has a connection with the consumer, the support reflects to the brand as

well. Consumers perceive the brand better if it can be associated with the team. The empirical results show that support for the team drives consumers to engage with the brand passively. It could be also stated that the more the consumer supports the team, the more likely they are to attend the event. The higher attendance frequency to the event reflects to active brand engagement. Therefore, the more the team can attract the consumer to the event, the more likely their behavior can be turned from passive to active. Furthermore, consumers that support the team and visit the event most likely have more information and knowledge of the team and event. This means that they know the brand in the event and are more attentive to the brand's communication. This also reflects to active brand engagement. Therefore, brands should consider, which team they would like to be associated with.

Regarding congruence between brand and event, the results indicate that it is not relevant. This means that the similarity between the brand and event does not push consumers to engage with the brands on social media on any level. The case is different when it comes to the congruence between the brand and the team. If the brand is similar to the team or can be recalled as team's sponsor, it encourages consumers to favor the brand as well and reflects to passive brand engagement. That's why, the management should focus on building the relationship and connection with the team, which would correlate to consumer's perception of the brand.

If looking at demographics of the current research, male respondents were more active than women, when in general women should be more active on social media than men. However, the gap is not as great as it could have been as the selected sport, ice hockey, is generally seen as a sport of men. Since the current research is partly focused on social media, the brand's desired target consumer should be in the age group from 18 to 35 years old because they are so called social media generation. These consumers also use smart phones, which enable an easier way to access social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Furthermore, these consumers tend to be present in different social media channels; the most popular being already mentioned Facebook and Instagram.

This also leaves out Twitter as a social media channel because it is irrelevant regardless age. The studied brands are present in these channels, which is why this age group should be targeted at. Moreover, this age scale makes 55% of the total respondents.

7.3 Limitations and future research proposals

Every research has limitations; hence, possibilities for further explorations. As the current research is one of the first, if not the first one, to explore interrelation between sports sponsorship, brand engagement and social media, there is room for additional studies. The current research is conducted in a single market, Finland. The further studies could expand the market to Nordics or make it worldwide. Moreover, another interesting aspect would be to study whether there are differences between countries, cultural regions or continents. For instance a comparison between Finland and Russia, Nordic and Iberian countries, and Europe and North America could be done.

The research also focuses on a single sport, ice hockey. Other sports could be studied as well such as football, basketball and baseball. In addition, the focus of the research is on ice hockey game, which is regarded as the event factor. It would be interesting to explore other sports events, for instance the already mentioned sports. Furthermore, it would be also relevant to investigate events that are not common or do not occur frequently as league games. Sports events that are one-time events, such as charity runs, or events that are not regular, for example Olympic games or World Championships, could provide more insight in the matter.

Besides, looking into sports or event, gender could provide an interesting aspect as well. Currently the data demographics suggest that men dominate the response rate. This is due to ice hockey as it is usually seen as men's sport. That's why, it would be fascinating to study if a women oriented sport could provide different results. As women tend to be more active on social media, focusing on a sport that

could be seen as women oriented, could offer different and exciting outcomes as well.

Moreover, the data is collected from a single sport league, Liiga. Another option would be Mestis, which is the second highest ice hockey league in Finland. On the other hand, the data could be also collected from an ice hockey league located in foreign country, for example SHL in Sweden, KHL in Russia and/or NHL in North America. It would be interesting to explore the similarities and differences between leagues. Furthermore, the current research involved two ice hockey teams. Including the rest of the teams from Liiga would provide more data, hence might increase the reliability of the research and support for the results.

The independent and dependent variables have been collected from the same source. The data could have been gathered from different sources as well. The data is collected from two brands that are the main sponsors of the team and event. The research could have also included other brands are sponsoring the event and team. Moreover, the studied brands are not sports oriented brand but they come from confectionary and brewery and soft drink industries. In the future researches including a sports oriented brand could provide an interesting aspect to the results. Consequently, it would provide a great possibility to compare sponsors from different industries and how and if the results differ significantly. For example, this could affect the results of congruence between event and brand.

Sponsorship is studied from sports event point of view. The research only scratched the surface of sponsorship of team but there is still a lot to examine. Furthermore, sponsorship of athletes would also provide a thought-provoking aspect to the future researches. If thinking beyond sports, different sponsorship forms could also be studied and compared to sports sponsorship, for instance a cultural sponsorship such as music festival.

In this research, cognitive and behavioral aspects of brand engagement are taken into account. However, emotional aspect was not included. By studying brand engagement completely would bring a broader view of brand engagement.

Moreover, sports usually generate strong emotions, therefore taking emotional aspect into further researches would most likely help to understand the feelings and reactions consumers are experiencing.

Apart from exploring the elements of brand engagement, social media could be studied more as well. At the moment it is limited to three SNSs but in the future some other SNSs could be included as well such as YouTube and Pinterest. Furthermore, the data is collected only from Facebook therefore it would be also beneficial to collect the data on other SNSs for example, from Instagram and Twitter.

The research is also a cross-sectional study, which means the data is collected once. Turning the research into a longitudinal study, the data is collected repeatedly with a longer period of time, would most likely increase the reliability of the research. Additionally, it would be interesting to see if there were any peaks during the time the survey was on. For example, how many did take the survey the first day and what was the amount the last days. Moreover, the team's success might affect the responses as well. Launching the survey in the beginning of ice hockey league season would probably give different results than launching it during and after the season. The publish time would indicate whether team's good or bad performance would affect the engagement with the brand and social media behavior. The research is also published on the teams' Facebook site. Another option would be to launch it on brand's Facebook site or other social media channel. This enables reaching a greater amount of consumers from different background as now the fans of the team are in the center of the research. In other words, this would eliminate the effect of teams' heavy users on the research.

The research method was chosen to be quantitative research method. However, it would be also interesting to have qualitative data to support the quantitative method. This could be done for example by interviewing consumers in the event. Lastly, the research is conducted from consumer's point of view, which is why there is a possibility to study the matter from organization's aspect as well, in this case from the brand and/or team's.

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Appendix 1. Motivation letter in Finnish

Kyselytutkimus joukkue XY ja sponsori XY yhteistyöstä joukkue XY ottelutapahtumissa

Hyvä Vastaaja,

Suurkiitos, että päätit osallistua tähän kyselytutkimukseen.

Kyselytutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, miten urheilutapahtumasponsorointi vaikuttaa käyttäytymiseen sosiaalisessa mediassa. Tutkimuksen kysymykset keskittyvät joukkue XY ottelutapahtumiin, joukkueen yhteistyökumppaniin ja sponsoriin brändi XY sekä katsojakunnan sosiaalisen median käyttäytymiseen. Kysely toteutetaan Lappeenrannan teknillisen yliopiston pro gradu -tutkielmana ja kyselyn vastaukset käsitellään anonyymisti. Vastaaminen kestää vain noin 10 minuuttia.

Osallistumalla kyselyyn sinulla on myös mahdollista voittaa herkullisia tuotepalkintoja! Muista jättää sähköpostiosoitteesi kyselyn lopussa olevaan kenttään. Tuotepalkintoja arvotaan yhteensä kolme (3) kappaletta ja onnekkaisiin otetaan yhteyttä sähköpostitse 07.12.2015 mennessä.

Vastausaikaa on 15.11.2015 saakka.

Jokainen vastaus on arvokas!

Vastauksista kiittäen,
Elli Karppinen
elli.karppinen@student.lut.fi (lisätietokyselyt)

Appendix 2. Motivation letter in English

A questionnaire research of team XY's and sponsor XY collaboration in team XY's game events.

Dear Guest,

Thank you very much for taking part in this questionnaire.

The purpose of this research is to find out how sports event sponsorship affects the behavior on social media. The questions of this research focus on the team XY's game events, team XY's cooperation partner and sponsoring brand XY and spectators social media behavior. The research is conducted as Master's Thesis in Lappeenranta University of Technology and the answers of questionnaires are dealt anonymously. The questionnaire takes only about 10 minutes.

By taking part in the research, you also have the chance to win delicious product prizes! Remember to leave your email address at the end of the questionnaire. There will be 3 prizes drawn and the lucky winners will be contacted via email by 7th of December, 2015.

The questionnaire will be open till 15th of November, 2015.

Every answer counts!

Best,
Elli Karppinen
elli.karppinen@student.lut.fi (contact information)

Appendix 3. Online questionnaire in Finnish

1. Yleinen

Ikä:

Alle 18, 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 55+

Sukupuoli:

Mies, Nainen

Miten usein käytät sosiaalista mediaa?

päivittäin, 3-5 kertaa viikossa, 1-2 kertaa viikossa, 2-4 kertaa kuukaudessa, harvemmin

Mitä sosiaalisen median kanavaa käytät?

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, joku muu mikä?

Millä laitteella selaat sosiaalisen median kanavia?

Tietokone, Kännykkä, Tabletti

Monta kertaa käyt joukkueen XY peleissä?

Viikottain, 1-2 kertaa kuussa, 1-3 kertaa vuodessa, harvemmin

2. Arvioi ottelukäyttäytymistäsi joukkueen XY peleissä. Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin:

(täysin eri mieltä, melko eri mieltä, en osaa sanoa, melko samaa mieltä, täysin samaa mieltä)

Pidän itseäni joukkueen kannattajana

Pidän itseäni jääkiekon kannattajana

Mielestäni tunnen lajin

Mielestäni tunnen joukkueen

Seuraan uutisia, jotka liittyvät joukkueeseen

Pidän joukkueesta

Pidän otteluista käymisestä

Käyn otteluissa enemmän, jos joukkue menestyy

Mielestäni ottelu on mielenkiintoinen, kun se on tasaväkinen

Mielestäni ottelu on mielenkiintoinen, kun se on rauhallinen

Mielestäni ottelu ei ole viihdyttävä, jos siinä ei tapahdu

Kun en ole viihtynyt ottelussa, selaan kännykkää

Selaan kännykkää, kun ottelussa tapahtuu (maali, ylivoima, voittolaukaus, tappelu jne.)

Selaan kännykkää ottelutaukojen aikana

Kun selaan kännykkää, käyn sosiaalisen median kanavissani

Ottelutauon aikana.

Käyn ostamassa virvokkeita, käyn ulkona, osallistun kilpailuihin, käyn sosiaalisen median kanavissa

3. Arvioi ottelun yhteistyökumppania. Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin.

Tiedän joukkueen XY sponsorit

Tiedän brändin XY

Olen ostanut brändin XY:n -tuotteita

Olen nähnyt brändin XY:
kaukalon laidassa, jäällä, joukkueen pelipaidassa, kuulutettuna

Ostan brändi XY:n tuotteita viikottain

Pidän brändi XY:n tuotteista

Mielestäni brändi XY on hyvä brändi

Koen että brändi XY ja urheilu sopivat yhteen

Koen että brändi XY ja joukkue XY:n ottelu sopivat yhteen

Koen että brändi XY ja joukkue XY ovat hyvä yhteistyökumppani

Koen että brändi XY hyödyttää joukkuetta XY

Koen että brändi XY on tärkeä joukkueelle XY

Olen valmis tukemaan brändi XY:tä joukkueen ja tapahtuman vuoksi

4. Arvioi sosiaalisen median käyttäytymistäsi. Vastaa väittämiin

Seuraatko brändeja sosiaalisessa mediassa?

Kyllä, Ei

Jos ei siirry kysymykseen 6

Seuraan brändeja...

Facebookissa, Twitterissa, Instagramissa, jossain muualla missä?

Seuraan brändejä koska:

Haluan saada lisää tietoa brändistä

Uskon että saan luotettavampaa tietoa sosiaalisesta mediasta

Haluan jakaa tietoni muiden sosiaalisen median käyttäjien kanssa

Brändin sosiaalisen median sisältö viihdyttää minua

Haluan rentoutua sisällön parissa

Saan uusia ideoita ja inspiroidun brändin sosiaalisen median sisällöstä

Koska minulla ei ole muutakaan tekemistä

Haluan jakaa viihdyttävän sisällön kavereilleni

Haluan tukea brändiä

Uskon brändin toimintaan

Haluan kuulua ryhmään, kun seuraan brändiä

Haluan kuulua ryhmään, joiden käyttäjillä on samanlaiset kiinnostuksen kohteet

Brändi sopii imagooni, jonka takia haluan, että muut näkevät sen

Haluan ilmaista itseäni brändin kautta

Haen hyväksyntää muilta käyttäjiltä

Voin samaistua brändin sisällön kanssa, jonka takia haluan sitoutua siihen

Tunnen kuuluvani ryhmään, kun seuraan brändiä

Haluan että muut käyttäjät näkevät, että samaistun brändiin

Se on suosittu

Kaverini tykkäävät siitä

Kaverini kutsuivat minut sivulle

Haluan voittaa palkintoja

Haluan saada tietää ensimmäisenä tarjouksista

Minulla on mahdollisuus voittaa rahaa

Seuraan brändiä XY sosiaalisessa mediassa?

Kyllä, ei

Jos ei siirry kysymykseen 6

5. Arvioi aktiivisuuttasi sosiaalisessa mediassa. Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin.

Käyn aktiivisesti brändien sosiaalisen median kanavissa

Huomaan ilmoitukset brändeistä

Luen ilmoitukset brändeistä

Selaan brändin sisältöä

Tykkään brändien ilmoituksista

Komentoin brändien ilmoituksia

Jaan brändien sisältöjä kavereilleni

Lataan itse sisältöjä brändien sivuille

Kirjoitan arvosteluja brändien ja/tai sen tuotteista

6. Minut saisi selaamaan brändin XY sosiaalisen median kanavia, kun

Näkisin brändi XY:n paremmin joukkueen XY ottelussa

Kuulisin brändi XY:n mainittavan joukkueen XY ottelussa

Saisin ilmaisia tuotenäytteitä joukkueen XY ottelussa

Voisin voittaa brändi XY:n tuotepalkintoja ottelussa

Brändin edustajat olisivat paikan päällä kertomassa brändistä tai sen tuotteesta

brändi XY:tä mainostettaisiin ottelussa esim. # brändi XY, @ brändi XY ja niin edelleen

Ottelun kuuluttaja kannustaisi käymään brändin XY sosiaalisen median kanavissa

Ottelussa mainostettaisiin brändi XY:n tuotteiden arvontaa brändi XY:n sosiaalisen median kanavissa

Ostaisin brändin XY:n tuotteita pelissä ja tuotteissa lukisi #brändiXY, @brändiXY jne

Otteluhallin seinillä tai jossain muussa samankaltaisessa paikassa mainostettaisiin brändi XY:tä, mikä kannustaisi tykkämään brändi XY:stä sosiaalisessa mediassa

Saisin tietoa brändi XY:stä ja joukkue XY:stä brändi XY:n sosiaalisen median kanavissa

Appendix 4. Online questionnaire in English

1. Common

Age:

Under 18, 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 55+

Gender:

Male, Female

How often do you use social media?

Daily, 3-5 times per week, 1-2 times per week, 2-4 times per month, less frequently

Which social media channel do you use?

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, other?

Which device do you use when browsing social media?

Computer, Mobile phone, Tablet

How frequently do you attend the team XY's games?

Weekly, 1-2 times per month, 1-3 times per year, less frequently

2. Evaluate your behavior during the team XY's games. Answer the following claims:

(strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree)

I am fan of the team

I am fan of ice hockey

I know the sport well

I know the team well

I follow the news regarding to the team

I like the team

I like going to the games

I tend to go to the game more often if the team is successful

I think the game is interesting when it is tight

I think the game is interesting when it is peaceful

I think the game is not entertaining if it is not exciting

If I am bored, I tend to use my mobile phone during the game

I tend to use my mobile phone when there is action during the game (goal, powerplay, penalty kill, fight etc.)

I use my mobile phone during the breaks between the periods

When I use my mobile phone, I tend to browse my social media channels

During game breaks:

I buy beverages and/or food, I buy fan products, I go outside, I participate in the competitions during the breaks, I browse my social media channels, I sit in my seat

3. Evaluate game's cooperation partner. Answer the following claims.

I know the team's XY sponsors

I am familiar with the brand XY

I have bought the brand XY's products

I have seen the brand XY:

On the rink ads, on the ice ads, on the team's jerseys, I have heard it announced, in forms of food and/or beverage, on ice arena's wall, I have not noticed the sponsor

I buy the brand XY's products on weekly basis

I like the brand XY's products

I think the brand XY is a good brand

I think the brand XY and sport is a good fit

I think the brand XY and the team XY's events are a good fit

I think the brand XY and the team XY are good partners

I think the brand XY benefits the team XY

I think the brand XY is an important partner for the team XY

I am ready to support the brand XY for the sake of the team XY and the event

4. Evaluate your social media behavior. Answer the following claims?

Do you follow brands on social media

Yes, No

If not move on to the question 6

I follow brands...

On Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, somewhere else where?

I follow brand because

I want to get more information of the brand

I believe that I can get more trustworthy information on social media than anywhere else

I want to share my information to other social media users

The brand's social media content is entertaining

I wan to relax with the brand's social media content

I get new ideas and get inspired by brand's social media content

I have nothing else to do

I want to share the entertaining content to my friends

I want to support the brand

I believe in the brand

I want to belong in the brand's community

I want to belong in a community that users' have the same interests

The brand fits my image therefore I want others to see it

I want to express myself through the brand

I seek for acceptance from other users

I can identify myself with the brand's content therefore I want to engage to it

I feel that I belong in a community when I follow the brand

I want other users to see that I identify myself with the brand

It is popular

My friends like the brand

My friends invited me to like the brand's page

I have the opportunity to win product prizes

I want to be the first one to know about offers

I have the opportunity to win money

5. Evaluate your activeness on social media. Answer the following claims.

I visit actively the brand's different social media channels

I notice the notifications of the brand that I follow

I read the notifications of the brand that I follow

I browse the content of the brand X that I follow

I like the posts of the brand that I follow

I comment on the posts of the brand that I follow

I share the content to my friends of the brand that I follow

I upload content to the brand's page that I follow

I write reviews of the brand and/or its products that I follow

6. I would follow the brand XY's social media channels if

I would see the brand XY better during the team XY's game

The brand XY would be mentioned during the game

I would get free product samples at the team XY's game

I could win the brand XY's products at the game

The brand XY's representatives would be at the game to explain about the brand or its products

The brand XY would be advertised for example with #brandXY, @brandXY etc at the game

The announcer of the game would encourage to visit the brand XY's social media channels

A lottery of the brand XY's products would be advertised at the game and would be on the brand XY's social media channel

I would buy the brand XY's products and the product itself would advertise #brandXY, @brandXY etc at the game

On the hall's walls or any other similar place there would be the brand XY's advertisement, which would encourage to like the brand XY on social media

I would get information of the brand XY and the team XY on the brand XY's social media channels

Appendix 5. Research questions and hypotheses

How does sports event sponsorship work as a channel for brand engagement on social media?

H1 – H12

Do consumers engage with brands on social media when brands are sponsors in sports events?

H8 and H7

How are consumers motivated to engage with brands on social media in sports event?

H1, H2, H3, H4

How active are consumers in brand engagement on social media?

H5

How does sports team motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

H9, H10, H11

How does sports event motivate consumers to engage with a brand (sponsor) on social media?

H8, H10

How does congruence between sports event and brand affect consumers to engage with brand on social media?

H12, H6

Appendix 6. Hypotheses and researchers

H1, H2, H3, H4 Brand engagement

Muntinga et al., 2011

H1: Information and enjoyment

Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Yimaz, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011, Angela Hausmann et al., 2014

H2: Personal identity

Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011

H3: Social interaction

Enginkaya, Yimaz, 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011, Angela Hausmann et al., 2014, Labrecque, 2014

H4 Compensation

Labrecque, 2014, Goncalves Pereira et al., 2014, Muntinga et al., 2011

H1AB, H2AB, H3AB, H4AB, H5 Brand engagement behavior

Gummerus et al, 2012, Muntinga et al., 2011, Shang et al., 2006

H6 Congruence between sponsor and event

Thomas, 2014, Biscaia et al., 2013, Olson, 2010, Wakefield, Bennett, 2010, Gwinner, Bennett, 2008, Koo et al., 2006, Flynn, 2006, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000, Gwinner, 1997

H7 The visibility of sponsor

Cornwell, 2008, Lardinois, Quester, 2001

H8 Intensity level of the event

Carrillat, et al., 2015, Cummins, et al., 2012

H9 Supporting the team

Biscaia et al., 2013, Ko, et al., 2008, Madrigal, 2001, Speed, Thompson, 2000

H10 Prior information of the event and team

Biscaia et al., 2013, Maroco, 2013, Olson, 2010, Roy, Cornwell, 2004, Roy, Cornwell, 2003

H11 Frequency to attend the event

Lee et al., 2011, Wakefield, Bennet, 2010, Cornwell, 2008

H12 Congruence between sponsor and team

Lee et al., 2011, Koo et al., 2006

Appendix 7. Pearson correlation coefficients

Pearson Correlations

	INFLUENCED_VIS	MOT_INF_NJ	MOT_SOCIAL	MOT_PERSONAL	MOT_PRESURE	MOT_COMPENSATION	BRAND_ENG_PAS	BRAND_ENG_ACT	TEAM_SUPPORTERS	INFORMED_SUPPORTERS	EVENT_BEHAVIOR
INFLUENCED_VIS	1	,272**	,339**	,268**	,372**	,332**	,217**	,408**	,107	,242**	,028
Pearson Correlation											
Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,005	,000	,057	,000	,624
N	320	167	167	167	167	167	167	167	320	320	320
MOT_INF_NJ	,272**	1	,398**	,333**	,243**	,245**	,498**	,240**	,053	,075	-,056
Pearson Correlation											
Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,001	,001	,000	,002	,480	,314	,458

	N	167	181	181	181	181	181	167	168	181	181	181
MOT_SOCIAL	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	,339**	,398**	1	,445**	,409**	,083	,504**	,340**	,148*	,226**	-,043
	N	167	181	181	181	181	181	167	168	181	181	181
MOT_PERSONAL	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	,268**	,333**	,445**	1	,435**	,191**	,393**	,526**	,107	,117	-,140
	N	167	181	181	181	181	181	167	168	181	181	181
MOT_PRESSURE	Pearson Correlation	,372**	,243**	,409**	,435**	1	,353**	,206**	,378**	,190*	,162*	-,118

BRAND_EN G_ACT	Pearson Corr elati on Sig. (2- taile d) N	,408** ,000 167	,240** ,002 168	,340** ,000 168	,526** ,000 168	,378** ,000 168	,360** ,000 168	,341** ,000 167	1 ,920 168	,008 ,920 168	,169* ,028 168	-,081 ,295 168
TEAM_SUPP ORTERS	Pearson Corr elati on Sig. (2- taile d) N	,107 ,057 320	,053 ,480 181	,148* ,046 181	,107 ,151 181	,190* ,011 181	-,028 ,704 181	,173* ,025 167	,008 ,920 168	1 ,920 369	,144** ,006 365	-,213** ,000 369
INFORMED_ SUPPORTE RS	Pearson Corr elati on	,242**	,075	,226**	,117	,162*	,043	,016	,169*	,144**	1	-,051

	Sig. (2- taile d)	,000	,314	,002	,117	,030	,568	,841	,028	,006		,333
	N	320	181	181	181	181	181	167	168	365	365	365
EVENT_BEH AVIOR	Pear son Corr elati on	,028	-,056	-,043	-,140	-,118	,110	-,070	-,081	-,213**	-,051	1
	Sig. (2- taile d)	,624	,458	,566	,061	,113	,141	,367	,295	,000	,333	
	N	320	181	181	181	181	181	167	168	369	365	369

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 8. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
TEAM_SUPPORTERS	322	13,8997	1,69501
INFORMED_SUPPORTERS	322	10,7123	2,42854
EVENT_BEHAVIOR	322	10,0000	2,42608
IMAGE_OF_SPONSOR	322	28,9918	4,59424
IMPORTANCE_OF_SPONSOR	322	12,6384	2,20655
MOT_INF_ENJ	181	13,9890	2,57118
MOT_SOCIAL	181	14,2210	2,86663
MOT_PERSONAL	181	12,8122	4,35100
MOT_PRESSURE	181	6,0276	2,19957
MOT_COMPENSATION	181	9,6685	2,73872
BRAND_ENG_PAS	168	17,2635	4,01083
BRAND_ENG_ACT	168	8,7083	3,81198
INFLUENCED_VIS	322	21,9875	7,46611

Appendix 9. Harman's single factor test**Total Variance Explained**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3,491	31,734	31,734	3,491	31,734	31,734
2	1,290	11,731	43,465			
3	1,207	10,970	54,435			
4	1,009	9,173	63,608			
5	,797	7,249	70,857			
6	,738	6,713	77,570			
7	,648	5,886	83,456			
8	,604	5,487	88,943			
9	,522	4,747	93,690			
10	,366	3,323	97,014			
11	,329	2,986	100,000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.