



The Relationship between Sports Events and Branding; A Symbiosis of Sports and Brand Marketing

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ABSTRACT

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Sports events are witnessed with number of sponsors. The sponsorship of sporting events results in the promotion of a certain brand in exchange. Various sports events attract masses of crowd not only in ground but also on various media. It gives marketers the option to target such large masses of people and turn them into patrons who are devoted to their brand. This study focuses on the relationship between sports event and sponsoring brands. Sponsorship of sports is a great way for a company to become more visible. The brand is exposed to a large audience on athletic stages and in the media by associating with a sporting event or team. Making the most of distribution channels, including press appearances, social media, television broadcasts, and stadium advertising, is crucial to maximizing this visibility. The study is of qualitative nature using in depth interviews. Findings of the study suggest that there exists a mutually beneficial relationship "symbiosis" between sports and sponsoring brands. In the conclusion, this study highlights the dynamic relationship between sports and brand marketing, highlighting the continued significance of sporting events as crucial platforms for consumer interaction and brand promotion in modern international marketplaces.

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1. Introduction

Athletes are idols to millions of people worldwide because they find them trustworthy and credible. They have a higher purpose, thus they cannot "be bought". Customers lend companies instant credibility because they know that when an athlete uses, consumes, or wears a certain product, they genuinely believe in it (Anderson, 2024).

To begin discussing marketing communications during athletic events, it is important to first establish some fundamental terms that will provide a clear understanding of how marketing operates within the sports industry. First of all, marketing entails directing all efforts in the realm of product production and commerce toward a single main objective: satisfying the wants of the customer (Strzelecki & Czuba, 2018).

In sports, a product could be an athlete, a match, or a widely recognized sporting event. Consequently, these three components fulfill people's need for interaction with sport (Filo, Lock, & Karg, 2014). In a broad sense, sport is an activity that is performed methodically in accordance with a set of rules, marked by a strong competitive element and a propensity to attain better results, with the goal of showcasing physical abilities (H. Wang, 2011).

But the word "sport" also has a more restricted definition. The word originates from the Latin "desportare", which means to unwind or amuse oneself. Therefore, the most common definition of sport is a type of deliberate, voluntary human activity carried out in accordance with set regulations with the goal of enhancing physical strength and ability. However, research on the topic has always emphasized how complex sport is as a social phenomenon, encompassing not only physical prowess, competition, and fitness but also aspects of play, work, health, hygiene, religion, art, and entertainment as well as raising and educating the next generation (Gajek, 2016). In order to gain brands' support or engagement in the event, several sporting events form agreements with them. These kinds of partnerships are becoming more and more natural. In order to make the event feasible, it takes much more than just connecting the brand with it or providing funding. It's becoming more and more crucial to seize chances like these to connect with customers and give them a unique brand experience in the increasingly digital world we live in ("The importance of brand presence at sporting events," 2020).

Undoubtedly, much consideration must be given to selecting the right brand for the particular occasion. A win-win scenario is one in which both parties can relate to the occasion and will make excellent partners. The Heineken Champions Cup, which is now widely known as just the Heineken Cup, is a prime illustration of this. These days, no one can recall how rugby and this specific beer brand became associated, but the reality remains that the brand's DNA is now so deeply ingrained in the event that they are perceived as being synonymous. One is now impossible to have without the other("The importance of brand presence at sporting events," 2020).

Spending money on visceral, intimate encounters for customers helps them feel more connected to a company. This is the only logical conclusion. Attending sporting events is a great opportunity to engage with people via their interests. If you work in marketing, take into account the typical fan base for each kind of athletic event. If the demographics fit any of your target markets, live event marketing, sponsorships, or advertising will likely be effective ways to reach them (Si, 2022).

Following the successful "Adidas Streetball Challenge" campaign (1992) that featured a sequence of street basketball competitions, event marketing has garnered the interest of marketing experts and scholars (Nufer, 2015). The phrase "event marketing" and "event sponsorship" are sometimes used synonymously to describe the same phenomenon, which is the active participation of customers in sponsored events (T. B. Cornwell, 1995).

In 2019, brands spent \$46 billion worldwide on sponsorships of sports teams("Global Sports Sponsorship Spend to Reach \$65 Billion in 2019," 2019). The Asia Pacific region was predicted to expand 5.7% (\$16.6 billion) in 2018, exceeding the projected 5.1% increase in Europe (\$17.6 billion) and other regions when we look at worldwide sponsorship expenditure across geographies. This demonstrates how sponsorship is still expanding globally, particularly in Asia. However, as a result of the new coronavirus outbreak, global sports sponsorship spending fell to \$29 billion in 2020("Sponsorship Spend to Fall \$17.2bn; Financial Services by \$5.7bn," 2020).

Sports sponsorship is seen to be among the best ways to communicate a brand. Investing in a sports entity (e.g., player, league, event) to support a business's marketing goals or promotional strategies is known as sporting sponsorship(Shank & Lyberger, 2014).

Furthermore, studies have shown that consumers' recollections of sponsored sports events are more strongly correlated with the sponsor's brand image the longer the sponsorship is in place (T B Cornwell & Humphreys, 2013).

Increasing public awareness has been shown by the engagement of consumers in sports sponsorship events as well as their experiences with these events (Jeong & Kim, 2019). Additionally, it builds the sponsoring company's brand equity and promotes customer repurchases (Zarantonello & H, 2013).

Consumers' prior awareness of sponsored products—primarily well-known international brands—is crucial to their purchase intentions and brand equity at major sponsored sporting

events. On the other hand, improving participant happiness at a modest sponsorship event depends greatly on the event's quality (Kock & Lynn, 2012).

Sports sponsorship is regarded as one of the most effective forms of marketing communication. It saw sports sponsorship as an investment made by a business to further its marketing objectives or promotional plans in a sports entity (such as a player, league, or event). There is a substantial amount of research to back up the claims that sports sponsorship can boost consumer purchase intent and business image (Koo, Byon, & Baker, 2014).

Participants in the sponsor's brand experience showed stronger brand awareness than TV viewers did. The act of a firm providing financial support to an activity in exchange for exploitable commercial goals is known as sponsorship. A similar definition is given by another study as the purchase of the rights to directly associate with a good or event in order to reap the advantages of such relationship. Over the last few decades, sponsorship has grown to be a significant worldwide sector and a vital marketing tool (Alonso-Dos-Santos, Vveinhardt, Calabuig-Moreno, & Montoro-Ríos, 2016).

According to research, several businesses that have sponsored sports have seen a notable increase in revenue (Blake, Fourie, & Goldman, 2019). The increase in brand awareness and product consumption among athletes could be the reason behind this (Kelly, Ireland, & Mangan, 2017). Consumers' brand engagement and experiences can be enhanced by attending sporting events, which will uplift their spirits and raise their awareness of the sponsoring company's brand (R. T. Wang & Kaplanidou, 2013).

In a different study, the effects of global brand activation—such as Adidas and Nike—on conative, affective, and cognitive behaviors were examined and contrasted between nations. The attitude-purchase intentions of individuals from various nations were found to differ significantly (Quintal, Liu, Unsal, & Phau, 2020).

A study looked at how participant satisfaction was influenced by the caliber of the sponsored services (such as access, location, and contest quality) (Tzetzis, Alexandris, & Kapsampeli, 2014). A different study put forth a model of event image-satisfaction-behavioral intents in an effort to quantify the impact of modest sports sponsorship. They came to the conclusion that participants' opinions of the event's image and level of satisfaction with it influenced their intentions to return and suggest it. Apart from the earlier studies that concentrated on the events themselves (e.g., event quality or event image) (Koo, Byon, & Baker, 2014).

Another highlighted the significance of the sponsor's attributes (sincerity, credibility, etc.) and thought that the exceptional attributes may improve a favorable attitude toward sponsorship activities, such local amateur colleges' sports sponsorship (Low & Pyun, 2016).

Consumers' prior awareness of sponsored products—primarily well-known international brands—is crucial to their purchase intentions and brand equity at major sponsored sporting events. On the other hand, improving participant happiness at a modest sponsorship event depends greatly on the event's quality (Ko, Chang, Park, & Herbst, 2017).

2. Literature Review

Every game in the thrilling world of sports tells a tale, and every player matters a great deal. In this case, branding is more than just logos and standard colors—it's the core of a team's identity. This influences how supporters, aficionados, and the general public view and accept teams. A well-crafted brand is extremely important in a world where passions are high and loyalties are strong. A strong sports brand has the power to evoke strong feelings, create enduring memories, and strengthen bonds with fans ("Sports Management and Branding: Building a Strong Identity," 2023). Experiential marketing activation tactics are also required because of the lack of prior knowledge of sponsored items, which are often tiny sponsoring enterprises; these strategies are thought to significantly enhance brand equity (Ross, Russell, & Bang, 2008). Customers' satisfaction with the sponsoring event would be positively impacted by their positive experience with the sponsor's product. Additionally, customers' happiness with sponsorship and activation of experiential marketing will boost the sponsor's brand equity and

increase their propensity to buy the sponsor's goods (Liu, Kim, Choi, Kim, & Peng, 2015). Pleasurable fulfillment is the general definition of satisfaction. A customer's overall satisfaction level is determined by considering their entire interaction with service providers. According to this interpretation, satisfaction is a type of subjective and emotional reaction brought about by the consumer's assessment of other customers, such as the sensation of enjoying or not liking a product. But when customers look for reasons to justify their preferences for a specific product, customer satisfaction might also include cognitive factors (Zena & Hadisumarto, 2013).

Since intangible assets, particularly brand equity, account for a significant chunk of a company's worth, many organizations aim to develop powerful brands. In the context of services, customer happiness is heavily influenced by the caliber of the provided services and necessitates their active involvement in the process. According to studies, sponsoring businesses are therefore frequently at a benefit when it comes to interacting with event attendees and potential customers through brand-related activities (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2007). As is often argued in management strategies within the sport ecosystem, the contemporary sport sector evolved very swiftly in response to the increasing attention it gained from a range of stakeholders, including the public, the media, and other business partners (A E Manoli & I R Hodgkinson, 2017). As a consequence of this sudden surge in interest, the sport industry was compelled to expand almost immediately. Additionally, the commercialization, commodification, and globalisation of the encircling environment imposed additional pressures. This necessitated that it respond to demand rather than predict it in advance. Consequently, it was frequently discovered that proper procedures and protocols were either entirely absent or poorly executed. Nevertheless, the sport industry has been able to advance its strategic marketing techniques to a highly developed state, largely due to the efforts of its employees and the uniqueness of the sport, despite these initial challenges. These distinctive qualities have truly distinguished sports in the context of brand management (Gladden & Funk, 2001).

Sports has the capacity to elicit intense emotions in its fans, or consumers, and this is a vital element in cultivating their loyalty. This would result in a strong and unwavering commitment to a brand, known as brand loyalty, in the field of brand management. The expenses associated with moving to a different brand would be so significant that customers would not even consider any other competing brand (Fawbert, 2017). This strong brand identification is frequently seen as being specific to sports, particularly in contrast to consumer brands that may find it more difficult to build lesser levels of loyalty through distinction in terms of quality or price. A natural "marketing advantage" for sport is its incorporation of social, political, geographical, cultural, historical, and other characteristics and associations that surround it. This is said to help develop brand equity (Manoli & Kenyon, 2018).

The wealth of previous research on brand management in sports has offered in-depth study of outstanding approaches to developing and expanding sport brands as well as implementing "traditional" brand management techniques in sports. A study focused on brand connections in women's sports, which is rapidly growing. Their research utilizes brand architecture and brand association information to investigate Australian consumers' perceptions of women's professional sports team brands. Interestingly, their study contends that predispositions or historical, economic, and societal contexts have an impact on consumers' impressions in both positive and negative ways, with the latter seeming to be specific to the brands of women's professional sports teams. Regarding the former, positive associations, the study provides insights into specific positive associations that aid in highlighting prospects for the development of strategic brand management in sport (for the teams) and through sport (for the stakeholders connected to the teams, such as sponsors) (Doyle, Kunkel, Kelly, Filo, & Cuskelly, 2021).

The study focuses on a South Korean baseball club and examines how supporters' connection with their team and participation in an online community affects the team's brand equity. This investigation argues that a team's socially responsible image, although important for creating supporters' identification, is not sufficient on its own to generate brand equity. These findings indicate that fans' affiliation and participation in online communities might play a crucial role in the effective management of sports brands. The research examines the strategic management of a brand in the sports industry, with a special emphasis on how supporters' opinions of a team's corporate social responsibility are formed (Kim & Manoli, 2020). The

fusion of sport and entertainment is examined as the origin of "sportainment" viewed through the prism of the spectacle society, in which entertainment becomes the main attraction of any given encounter. Their research, which centers on a polar or extreme case study, presents a strategic "sportainment" mix that embodies how brand management and strategic marketing within and through sport can change to better meet the demands and opportunities of the modern sport consumer and the demands and opportunities of the current era. The suggested "sportainment" mix can then help to raise the customer and financial based brand equity of the participating organizations as well as the value of the sport consumer (Richelieu & Webb, 2021).

As many have argued during the last twenty years, modern strategic marketing faces a number of relatively new issues. The proliferation of media and the swift development of social media, together with their frequently unexpectedly short lifespans and high levels of popularity, have led to a sharp rise in the volume of messages and information available to consumers, creating what we can refer to as marketing "noise" (Argyro Elisavet Manoli & Ian R Hodgkinson, 2017). Customers seem to be "bombarded" by this never-ending flow of information that comes in all shapes and sizes, from text and photos to videos and interactive content, and that goes straight into their hands, eyes, and wallets. The rise in consumer "noise" has made audiences more adept at sifting through and frequently disregarding material that is directly provided to them. This has ushered in a new and more difficult period for marketing: the permission marketing era (Tezinde, Smith, & Murphy, 2002). Some firms have refocused their brand management efforts on differentiating themselves in the eyes of the consumer by promoting their distinctive features as a result of this growing problem and the ensuing struggle (Bauer, Sauer, & Schmitt, 2005).

2.1. Research objectives

- To discover the nature of relationship between sports events and brand marketing
- To find the level of brand endorsement through sports event sponsorship
- To find the role of media in affecting symbiosis between sports events and brand marketing

2.2. Research questions

1. Do sports event and brands have symbiosis relationship?
2. Does sports event sponsorship boost brand endorsement among consumers?
3. Does the media influence the symbiosis relationship between sports and brand marketing?

3. Methodology

The current study uses qualitative research method. Interview method was used to collect data from 15 experts comprising of sports event managers and marketing stakeholders. Later own thematic analysis was used to draw findings from collected data. The key research objectives and research questions require opinion of the experts involved in sports marketing and sports event organizations. Therefore, interview method with a thematic analysis helps to understand the symbiosis or mutually beneficial dependance, answering main query of the study. Moreover, it also helps to draw a clear picture of the relevant data acquired from the responses recorded from the participants of the study. Thematic analysis creates more clarity while organizing findings of the study. Themes were developed based on the key research question and objectives facilitating overall interpretation of the data collected for study. Themes and subthemes have been developed based on the research objectives and research questions. Themes and subthemes are listed as follows;

3.1. Sports events and marketing

- Nature of brands
- Types of sporting events
- Sponsorship meaning

3.2. Symbiosis between sports event and brand marketing

- Mutual relationship between sports and marketing
- Brand identity and consumer behavior

3.3. Role of media

- Sports event coverage by media
- Types of media
- Media partnership

3.4. Audience engagement and sports events

- Brand endorsement
- Sports sponsorship
- Consumer engagement with brand

3.5. Consumers trust building

- Sports event and public trust
- Consumer behavior
- Brand image through sports

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Sports events and marketing

Athletes, events, and brands are linked together through sports sponsorship as a marketing tactic to boost awareness and notoriety. By engaging in this activity, businesses take advantage of the passion and emotion that sports arouse in society and position themselves in the sports world to reach a broad audience from all sectors. Although brand marketing and sports may appear to be two separate fields, there is a clear and significant connection between them. Respondents of the study believe that the combination of brand marketing and sports produces a mutually beneficial partnership that is extremely beneficial to both domains. Sports have an indisputable impact on the business world, from marketing campaigns to sponsorship agreements. Argyro Elisavet Manoli and Ian R Hodgkinson (2017) notes that the modern sport sector grew quite quickly in response to the increased interest it garnered from a variety of stakeholders, including the public, the media, and other corporate partners, as is frequently asserted in management techniques within the sport ecosystem. Respondents argued that there are different types of sporting events happening at various levels. For example, there national and international level sporting events as well as local level sports are also known to the sport loving communities. Sponsorship of the sporting events is highly dependent on the level of sports event. International sports events such as Cricket World Cup, FIFA World Cup, Olympics Commonwealths Games are the events that are witnessed to be sponsored by big brands and conglomerates such as Adidas, KIA, Hyundai, Coca Cola and so on. However, national events include comparatively smaller brands than international giants. For example, in case PSL Bank Alfalah, Tapal Tea and other brands are found among the sponsors. Experts also noted that the division of brands further extend to sporting brand and non-sporting brands. A particular sporting brand gets both kind of sponsors. Both categories have equal chance of becoming the face of a sporting event.

4.2. Symbiosis between sports event and brand marketing

Beyond sponsorship sports offer important lessons and insights that can be applied to the marketing world. Respondents believe that this mutually beneficial collaboration teaches discipline, leadership, and fortitude as essential to athletic achievement apply just as much in the marketing world. Companies frequently use sports metaphors to encourage and motivate staff members by drawing comparisons between athletic accomplishments and brand marketing objectives. Innovation and progress in business can be fostered by the competitive spirit and excellence-driven mindset that are developed in sports, which can motivate individuals and teams to accomplish amazing things. The interplay between brand marketing and sports is complex and advantageous to both parties. A number of advantages are available to brands or businesses through sports sponsorship. First of all, it offers a special chance to expand brand awareness and recognition while connecting with a broad range of consumers. Additionally, since the public identifies the sponsoring brand with the ideals and feelings of sports, it facilitates the creation of favorable associations.

Experts believed that Sports and branding come together to form a dynamic ecosystem that stimulates economic growth, encourages innovation, and advances social good through sponsorship, marketing, shared ideals and entrepreneurial opportunities. Businesses will surely continue to use sports' power to accomplish their goals and establish a stronger connection with customers as sports' impact in the global marketplace grows. Despite their outward

differences, professional sports and the branding have a mutually beneficial relationship. Successful athletes frequently possess traits that carry over into their working lives, creating a link between brand motivation and sports motivation. In order to gain brands' support or engagement in the event, several sporting events form agreements with them. These kinds of partnerships are becoming more and more natural. In order to make the event feasible, it takes much more than just connecting the brand with it or providing funding! It's becoming more and more crucial to seize chances like these to connect with customers and give them a unique brand experience in the increasingly digital world we live in ("The importance of brand presence at sporting events," 2020).

4.3. Role of media

Sponsorship and advertising are two of the most obvious ways that business and sports interact. Big athletic events, like the Super Bowl, FIFA World Cup, and Olympics, draw millions of fans from all over the world, making them excellent venues for companies to advertise their goods and services. Companies may expand their brand awareness, connect with new markets, and align themselves with the enthusiasm and ideals of sports via sponsorship agreements and advertising campaigns. In exchange, sports groups gain critical funding that helps them grow and host their events, resulting in a win-win collaboration. Experts opined that the sports sector itself is a rich market with a wide range of investment and entrepreneurial potential. Many economic opportunities exist within the sports ecosystem, from the production of sports media and technology to sports clothes and equipment. Profiting from the increasing demand for sports-related goods and services, businesspeople and investors stimulate innovation and economic expansion. Modern stadium construction, fitness app development, and sports-themed restaurant openings are just a few examples of how the fusion of sports and business is driving a robust and dynamic economy. Media in the form of traditional as well as digital forms cover sports events enabling brands to reach masses of the potential consumers in the form of sports fans. Thus, a bigger market is earned through sponsorship for sports. Sponsorship of sports is a great way for a company to become more visible. The brand is exposed to a large audience on athletic stages and in the media by associating with a sporting event or team. Making the most of distribution channels, including press appearances, social media, television broadcasts, and stadium advertising, is crucial to maximizing this visibility.

4.4. Audience engagement and sports events

This strong brand identification is frequently seen as being specific to sports, particularly in contrast to consumer brands that may find it more difficult to build lesser levels of loyalty through distinction in terms of quality or price. A natural "marketing advantage" for sport is its incorporation of social, political, geographical, cultural, historical, and other characteristics and associations that surround it. This is said to help develop brand equity (Manoli & Kenyon, 2018). Experts opined that sports has power to attract huge number of fans all across the globe. This audience engagement is converted into brand consumers while sponsoring a sports event. Color, logos and advertisement of the brands create familiarity among sports fans. Such brand images remain in the memory of the fans and are likely to become their choice in the long run. Such a loyalty towards sports is converted into brand loyalty through frequent exposures. A company, athletic event, or athlete are all connected through sports sponsorship, a marketing tactic meant to boost brand awareness and notoriety. It provides a number of advantages, including creating favorable connections, increasing customer loyalty, enhancing brand perception, and creating business prospects. It is also crucial for supporting a healthy lifestyle and local sports. This essay will go into great depth on the foundations, significance, and advantages of sports sponsorship, as well as how it affects the oversight of athletic events and the advancement of young athletes. Because it may connect emotionally with customers and reach a large target audience, sports sponsorship is seen as a very powerful marketing technique. Brands are able to benefit from the prominence and status that well-known athletes and events provide by forming partnerships. Customers' perceptions of the company are enhanced as a result of this association, which forges a favorable relationship in their minds and supports the brand image.

4.5. Consumers trust building

Additionally, sports offer a rich environment for brand development and marketing tactics. Respondents opined that athletes frequently act as well-known brand ambassadors, promoting goods and upholding the principles of the organizations they represent. The

relationship between athletes and companies can have a big impact on consumer views and purchase decisions, whether it's a basketball player endorsing sneakers or a tennis champion in an upscale watch commercial. Companies use the charisma and popularity of sportsmen to tell stories that captivate their target audience and increase sales and brand loyalty. Spending money on visceral, intimate encounters for customers helps them feel more connected to a company. This is the only logical conclusion. Attending sporting events is a great opportunity to engage with people via their interests. If you work in marketing, take into account the typical fan base for each kind of athletic event. If the demographics fit any of your target markets, live event marketing, sponsorships, or advertising will likely be effective ways to reach them (Si, 2022). Respondents also noted that in order to preserve and improve client connections, brands are concentrating on long-term customer retention and incorporating a range of sporting events. The secret to a sports sponsor brand's success is on its fans' sports-loyal behaviors, which include constant attendance and repeat purchases. Through sponsored marketing, sports organizations can get a competitive advantage from these consumers. Nonetheless, it's critical to comprehend the variables influencing the nature of the interactions. Sports sponsors that have a deeper comprehension of the fundamental aspects of consumer behavior may be more equipped to manage relationships, attendance, and retention. Additionally, by demonstrating a commitment to their interests and passions, sports sponsorship fosters customer loyalty among current customers. Because sports sponsorship is seen as promoting healthy living and sports development, it can also help enhance the brand's image. Lastly, by building connections with other sponsors and partners of the athletic event, sports sponsorship can create economic prospects.

5. Conclusion

Sport has frequently proven to be the perfect vehicle for non-sport-related firms looking to develop or reshape their brand image into something more distinctive. When it comes to developing their strategic brand management, non-sport-related brands can take advantage of the distinctive brands, high brand awareness, remarkable brand identification, emotional attachment, and strong sociological, cultural, and historical brand associations that are found in sports. This will allow them to differentiate themselves from their competitors. A non-sport-related brand may identify itself with sport via a number of actions that make up strategic brand management through sport. This will allow the brand to develop memorability and distinctiveness in the eyes of customers, which will eventually lead to a competitive edge in today's competitive marketplace. The professional trend in relationship marketing in sports has not been supported or validated by a significant amount of theoretical work, despite the fact that relationship marketing with a focus on the customer has received a lot of attention in the field. Findings of the study suggest that there is symbiosis between sports sponsorship and brand image. Both aspects help each other to grow and get public attention. In terms of sports sponsorship brands are more likely to earn loyal customers. Brands can collaborate with athletes, teams, or particularly sporting events through sports sponsorship, a potent marketing tactic, to increase visibility and strengthen their brand. By leveraging the fervor and excitement that sports inspire in society, this type of sponsorship creates a direct link between marketing and sports. In short, highlighting the application of research findings to real-world situations enables marketing experts and sports event managers to make well-informed choices, make the most use of available resources, and produce measurable outcomes that raise brand awareness and customer involvement in the ever-changing sports marketing space.

5.1. Recommendations

Since findings of the study reveal a symbiosis between brands and sports marketing, there is need to reconsider marketing strategies on part of both sides i.e., sports and marketing. As for as Pakistani brands are concerned it can use such sports events for marketing and image building and get a global recognition through sports events. Even smaller brands can become globally recognized while endorsing sports events that have wider viewership.

Additionally, in the light of findings of current study future research can focus on;

- How small brands can use the opportunity of sports marketing and develop brand image?
- How branding can promote healthy activities such as sports leading to sustainable social and economic development?

- How branding, through sports, can help promotion of sports in areas with limited international recognition.

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