

QATAR UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

The Effect Of Achievements On Fans Pride, Team Identification And Sense Of  
Community And Their Effect On Fans Purchase Intentions: A Comparison Study  
Between Real Madrid Fans In Madrid And Qatar

BY  
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## ABSTRACT

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Title: The Effect Of Achievements On Fans Pride, Team Identification And Sense Of Community And Their Effect On Fans Purchase Intentions: A Comparison Study Between Real Madrid Fans In Madrid And Qatar

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Team identification, pride, and sense of community is generally presented in the literature as an important factor that affects the level of fandom for football fans. In this vein, the present study aims to investigate the differences between local fans and others abroad, in terms of team identification, pride and sense of community with purchase intentions behaviors and how achievements affect their engagement. To realize this objective, data were collected through an online survey for Real Madrid fans in Madrid (n=116). Qatar (n=434) and the data were analyzed via PLS-SEM using Smart-PLS3 and SPSS 28. Results revealed important differences between Real Madrid fans in Qatar and Madrid. For example, the behavioral intentions of the fans in Madrid depend mainly on the past achievements of the team and the level of pride. In contrast, fan behavior in Qatar is highly dependent on the current achievements of Real Madrid and the sense of community. The results of the study will help future researchers understand the mechanism of identification with a foreign international sports franchise and will offer important guidelines for clubs in implementing an international marketing strategy.

Keywords: pride, team identification, purchase intentions, PLS-SEM, Real Madrid, Qatar

## DEDICATION

*To everyone who believes in me*

*This is for you.*

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

According to (Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), 2021), there are around 5 billion football fans all over the world; this means that football has a huge customers base. These people can be considered an income source for football associations such as clubs, national teams, football federations such as FIFA, CAF, UEFA ....., between 2015 and 2018 total revenue of FIFA according to (FIFA.com, 2021) is 5,656 million USD.

Behaviors of football sports clubs' fans' all over the world have become an interesting topic to study in sports marketing and management regarding their level of fanatic and other aspects that drive their behavior. Fans are known to have a feeling of belonging for clubs beyond their country borders and feel a sense of affiliation become as they are born in the city of the club. Some teams have fans communities all over the world and worldwide TV broadcasting of football matches has further spread this phenomenon. Regardless of the brand and name, sports fan consumption populations play an essential part in sports marketing strategy. (Hedlund, 2014)

Sporting teams gather people all over the world who share one interest, support one team, and love one logo which is their favorite team regardless of the name. People from different backgrounds, with diverse languages or cultures, share the bond they have with their favorite team. All these elements are beneficial and vital for football clubs. Without fans, clubs will face a lot of difficulties in broadcasting matches on TV, they will not be able to attract sponsors or sell tickets or subscriptions. People from different countries in

different continents with different languages, cultures are becoming a craze for the same teams; at the same time, the biggest football clubs are developing international marketing strategies and running after fans all over the world to increase their fan base, and seek better returns on investment and drive higher economic reviews.

One of the most popular teams in the world is Real Madrid, a Spanish team established in 1902 (Real Madrid, n.d.). FIFA named it the “best soccer team of the 20th century.” This excellence makes this club a reference point in sport in general and in football in particular (Callejo & Forcadell, 2006). Given the many competitions that they have won, they have been able to attract top stars players have made a significant contribution to the 100 year-old old club that is full of achievements at the local, European and international levels; this legacy has helped create a huge fan base all over the worlds.

Past and present achievements are two main drivers of how much fans love their club, and this love greatly affects fans purchasing intention, attending matches, and following their favorite team in media (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016).

## **1.2 Research problem**

Nowadays, fans have become a major source of income for soccer teams, but there some essential characteristics of these fans to be considered; the more these fans are engaged to this club, the more they will spend on the club. Moreover, football has become a worldwide sport, so people in Qatar can be found to support teams in England and Spain and this support may surpass their support for their local teams. For example, a recent study exploring fans behavior in Qatar indicates that football fans in Qatar are more attached to the Spanish Liga teams (e.g. Real Madrid and FC Barcelona) than Qatari local teams (Theodorakis et al., 2017).

As mentioned before there are fans all over the world for teams such as Real Madrid, but one of the salient questions is how to turn distant fans into “real” profitable fans for the club without having them feel unvalued or bored. So, having, maintaining, and developing loyal profitable fans is a long-term key success factor for the sports teams (Chang et al., 2017). This retention provides the team with both short-term and long-term value (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012) and this fan base is not exclusive to the fans living in the city or country of the club but includes all the fans over the world.

In football, team achievements are considered as the main driver to get new fans and keep current ones, but sports teams cannot win every day, so creating loyal fans who support the team because of the logo as opposed to only winning is an important aspect to maintain the source of all year round. In football, clubs try to gather many fans whose engagement is unconditional and turn fans into permanent consumers (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2017), fans who support their team regardless of the results. All the emotions experienced from winning and losing moving to the engagement with the team play a dominant role in purchase intentions intention (Kwon & Kwak, 2014).

In sporting teams, different aspects affect the purchase process because the aim of football clubs is not just to make people buy the product, but also to make people buy any new product every new season, attend the game weekly, and follow the team daily. This behavior needs to become a permanent part of the fans’ lifestyle.

The importance of fans’ purchase behavior is an essential issue discussed by the researcher, but as mentioned before, fans nowadays are not just people who live in the city where the club is located; people all over the world support them. However, previous research has focused on the place and attachment to the place to explain the driver of

fans' behavior and even the meaning of teams and team identification (Delia & James 2018). To our knowledge, no previous work focused on the difference between local fans (living in the city or the country of the club) and distant fans (leaving far from the country of the club) in terms of purchase behaviors and the driver of these behaviors. The present research aims to address this gap by studying how local fans and those living far from the city of the club feel about their club and how that affects their purchase intentions. It also aims to understand how people from these two categories of fans could be attached to their club and whether or not they feel identified to their club? Do they have a sense of relationship with the club community? Do they feel a sense of pride to announce that they are fans of their favorite club?

### **1.3 Research Contributions**

This thesis aims to contribute to the theoretical and managerial implications to the sports marketing fields. In terms of theoretical contributions, it explores some important variables that have been investigated separately in sports marketing literature in a different context. Moreover, the present study has practical significance as it can help sports clubs' managers in implementing international marketing campaigns targeting fans all over the world.

Previous literature measured some of the variables investigated in this study and questioned the distant fans' behavior. However, to our knowledge, it is the first time that a study aims to compare the behaviors of local and distant fans of the same football team. Understanding the difference and similarities between local and distant fans in terms of purchasing intention behaviors and their drivers, could enrich the literature and research

field and will be beneficial for people involved in the field of sports, specifically in international football teams' management and marketing.

This study could open new doors for sport club managers to know how people all over the world feel about their team, and they could focus on improving weaknesses and consolidating strengths.

In addition, this study is an answer to different calls from different scholars (Chang et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2019; Decrop & Derbaix, 2010; Hedlund, 2014) indicating that the variables included in this research such as team pride, team identification or team achievements, need more empirical examinations from several points of view, such as different audience from different countries, considering both direct and indirect effects.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The present research aims to understand differences in terms of purchase intention behaviours between local and distant fans. It aims to identify the variables related to the fans and the teams that affect purchase intention behaviours for local and distant fans by considering three types of purchase intentions: merchandise purchase, attending games, and media consumption.

To achieve these objectives, the present research mainly examines the difference between Real Madrid fans in Qatar and in Madrid. It focuses on the direct effects of important fans-related variables (team identification, team pride, and sense of community), and the indirect effects of important team-related variables (past and current achievements) on fans' purchase intentions.



## **1.5 Research Methodology**

This research adopted a quantitative research methodology whereby a self-administrated survey was designed on SurveyHero.com in three languages Spanish, Arabic, and English, depending on the participants' preferred language. In total, 1591 individuals viewed the survey, and there were 1090 responses from those who started the survey and 599 completed, but only 550 were valid and usable. The study used pre-tested measurement items adopted from prior literature. Data analyses were conducted using the SPSS version and Smart PLS3.

## **1.6 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is categorized into six chapters. The first chapter overviews the topic, explains the research problems and gaps existing in the current literature, and outlines the objectives of the current study, also elucidating how it fills the research gaps and explains the used methodology.

The second chapter discusses the previous literary studies describing the variables of this research. Chapter three presents the hypothesis, linked with the literature related to each hypothesis. Chapter 4 presents the adopted research methodology, including the research type, research type, measurement items, and questionnaire design, questionnaire mapping table, research context, data analysis methods, and sampling techniques. Chapter 5 describes the data analysis. It starts with descriptive test analysis using SPSS 28, then explicates the measurement model tests such as reliability and validity of the data, then structural model assessment with hypothesis test finally multi-group analysis tests to compare between Real Madrid local (living in Madrid) and distant (living in Qatar) fans, before discussing the main findings. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the

conclusions and managerial implications while defining the current research limitations along with future research suggestions.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter theoretical background was investigated from prior literature which this study builds on. According to the table below, three levels, that is, two levels of antecedents and purchase intention were measured first was fan-related antecedents which are the most important antecedent according to the prior literature. These are Pride, Team Identification, and a Sense of Community; after defining each one of them and their relation with Attending Games, Licensed Merchandise Purchase, and Media Consumption was reviewed. The second level of antecedents is Past Achievements and Current Achievements. Then more search is carried out to determine the achievements on fans-related antecedents. This is followed by seeking information on fans' purchase intention and how it could be affected through Pride, Team Identification, and a Sense of Community.

Table 2.1 Fans and team related

Article	Direct antecedents	Indirect antecedents	Outcomes
Aikena, Beeb, & Walkerc (2018)	Team identification Pride		Sports consumption (time spent, money spent, coping ...)
Prayag et al. (2020)	Team identification	Pride	Event attachment (Matches) positive purchase behaviour
Taute et al. (2017)		pride	Purchase intention
Kwon et al. (2007)	Team identification		Purchase licensed merchandise products.
Decrop & Derbaix, (2010)	Pride		Increased consumption of new products, and different team merchandise.
Theodorakis & Al-Emadi (2017)	Team identification		Purchase behavior such as attending behavior, purchase merchandise, or following their team on television, Internet, and social media.
Sierra & Taute (2019)	Pride	Sense of community	Attending game intention and Intention to purchase team apparel
Fillis & Mackay (2014)	Sense of community	Sense of community	Buying club shirts, following the team in media, and watching his team weekly.
Chang et al. (2017)	Achievement Team identification Pride		Achievement affects fans pride and team identification Team identifications moderate the relation between Pride and corporate social responsibility

## **2.2 Purchase Intention**

Clubs' business model contains several elements related to consumers who, in the case of sports teams, are fans considered to be an income source. From these customers, other different elements are created, such as fan base, club members, media, sponsors, merchandise, and local communities along with other sources of income and football network packages that collectively build the business model. Huge clubs such as Real Madrid fans and their loyalty are considered one of the ways to earn money and complement it with matches' tickets, T.V rights for people who are unable to attend the matches, and other merchandise that could be interested in people related to the club (Dolles & Söderman, 2005; Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016)

Sports consumption behavior is explained as intrinsic and extrinsic self-determined that motivates a need to participate in sports and obtain positive benefits. It is affected by several drivers such as socializing with people, getting a sense of community, and interacting with others within the fan's community. Next, esteem is also an important factor when the fan feels a sense of victory and accomplishment when the team is winning; this sense of identification with the team is one of the drivers that affect sports consumption. Moreover, socializing and esteem affects three kinds of sports consumption: individuals attending their team games in the stadium, purchasing team-related merchandise, and following the team using media sources (Funk et al., 2012).

Club products collection attitude is considered normal for football fans as they collect matches kits, jerseys and other product that offers symbolic value to the club and others buy the clubs products as gifts. In addition, fans club merchandise consumption comes from various cities as a kind of identification as a team fan; they fill the distance

gap between them and local fans by using this merchandise as “compensative symbolism” (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010). The level of consuming differs from one to another and starts from casual fans until the season ticket holders who are considered most committed with the club and one of the most essential groups for the club in term of business (Da Silva & Las Casas, 2017)

Supporters are considered one of the most important income providers for football clubs because they purchase different kinds of merchandises that the club offers, buy tickets to attend in the stadium, pay membership fees, and purchase the channel that broadcasts their favorite team matches. To attain this level of fans consumption, the club should attract top stars who can help the club win the competitions, thereby enhancing their reputation, winning new fans, and deepening the relationship between the club and its fans; all of this leads to institutional and financial sustainability for the club (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2017).

### **2.2.1 Licensed Merchandise Purchase Intention**

Regardless of the price hike, many loyal and pride fans spend a lot of money to acquire products for their favorite clubs; the important thing is that this item is related to the team that they love. Moreover, building a loyal fan base is important not only when the team is winning but also then it is having a bad day (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010). Callejo and Forcadell, (2006) argued that in the past, clubs could rely in the sport events to generate income but with the growth of this market and the limited numbers of seats in the stadiums and T.V. broadcasting, clubs should think about new ways to make profits. They should use traditional ways of using the sport events and increase the value of the team’s brand name, which opens new product lines. In case of Real Madrid, one of the strategies of

President Perez was to use marketing through all media tools, to expand the club sources of income, to focus the brand name, and to convert fans to customers for the products/services that fans could purchase and services that fans could use. To do so, they used fan cards as a tool to stay connected with their fans all over the world; also, they are focusing on licensing and franchising program to preserve the brand's legal rights. Moreover, the merchandising rights are a crucial issue for the clubs, which is why they are keen to protect their rights, the players' images, and the rights to distribute content. All of these actions are taken by the club; for this reason, many illegitimate companies are copying the club products and selling them as original, thus violating all international laws and norms, which, in turn, causes losses to the club because it is tantamount to sealing the club's brand in addition to piracy of the T.V. exclusive content and broadcasting it free of charge.

Licensed products are considered very important income sources and the Counterfeit merchandise represents a real threat in this area. Callejo and Forcadell, (2006) mentioned that in 2000/2001, Real Madrid gained \$39.7 million by selling 500,000 shirts of only three stars of the team. Kim, Trail and Ko (2011) finds that identification had notable effects on Licensed Merchandise Consumption for the fans and non-significant effects on Media Consumption Intention or Attendance Intention, given the social aspects that affect Media Consumption and Attendance Intention and also depending on the level of the individuals' fandom.

Kwon and Kwak (2014) indicates that emotion rewards, which is the utilitarian products, (products with symbolic meaning, when the fan feels a sense of belonging to this club and shows others that he is a fan of this club and), are one of essential drivers in

consuming clubs licensed merchandise, which leads to the understanding that team identification provides this feeling that the fans need to consume licensed merchandise. Another driver for consuming clubs licensed merchandise is manufacturers; they should be reliable and with good reputation to guarantee the quality of the products because low quality products affect the sales negatively; moreover licensors should guarantee that there products are easy to reach in the marketplace by ensuring that the products are available for the audience online and in the retail shops. Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou, (2018) also spoke about the important role of aesthetics and unique designs on fans licensed merchandise consumption of their team.

### **2.2.2 Attending Game and Media Consumption Intention**

Spectators' effects on the team business lately have been grown, which has led to a big transfer in the professional team business model regarding the benefits that spectators bring to the team on both attending games in the stadium or following the team through media. In the year of the pandemic, a lot of mega professional teams have been negatively affected because of restrictions that prevented fans from attending games in the stadiums.

Sports consumers could have different benefits, motives, and causes that prompts them to attend their favorite teams' matches; these motives could be measures based on their level of engagement with the team and their consuming behavior toward different kind of products such as attending games, purchasing merchandise and other kind of products, etc. Consumers tend to be highly involved with a brand, which is the team they support because they follow directly and track their teams (Da Silva & Las Casas, 2017)

In a study conducted by Atlético Madrid club in 2010/2011 season, the financial statistics illustrate that match day revenue and membership costs represent more than



46% of total revenue (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016). The role of stadiums is much more than just a place that the team plays in; in many cases, it is an important part of the team brand, which can be seen in many stadiums (Wear & Heere, 2020). In many cases, stadiums become as an important tourist attraction for the city and clubs began to use their stadiums as a source of income for the club. Wear and Heere (2020) also mentioned that stadiums have become a place for acquaintance with the fans of one team, especially since the team plays half of its matches in its stadium, and the fans meet often, where they share common interests. Real Madrid policy depends upon ticket booking as an income source since 1947 when President Santiago Bernabéu enlarged the capacity of Real Madrid stadium to accommodate more fans to sell as more ticket sales (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2017). Real Madrid data in 2011/2012 season is as follows: TV rights (32.5%) and marketing and merchandising (31.3%) (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016)

According to Dwyer, (2013), achievements of the team in the season has little impact on the media consumption behavior which starts high among fans and increases if the team has a successful season. At the same time, the failure of the team in the season has a negative impact in the consumption intention.

Attending games could entail a lot more than merely supporting the team; it could be as a weekly event for friends and family to gather, especially for groups who share the same sport interests, also for normal fans (not commitment fans) it could be as escape of the routine activity. At the same time, fans with high levels of pride and commitment will attend the games to support their teams as a normal routine (Ridinger & Funk, 2006).

Comparing both type of fans, attending games could be an essential thing for pride and committed fans; they feel like they must attend mainly as a duty if their team plays in

their home stadium. Others mainly look to escape from their daily routines after a while, they may find their way out by attending matches, which enhances their commitment to the team which will lead them to become real fans of the team.

Callejo and Forcadell (2006) discussed some of the strategies used by Real Madrid in terms of using the stadium as a revenue source; one of the strategies used by the club is to use the stadium the whole year and not only during the events; so, the club arranges tourists visits to the stadium and have them watch the trophy gallery and get into the pitch, season ticket owners can relinquish their ticket if they couldn't attend one of the matches, and will get discount for the next year season-ticket. This ticket will be re-sold to other individuals; this strategy helps the club to gain new fans attending to the stadium because these fans pay more on products and services and maintain the club's brand. It also leads to the diversification of fans attending the stadium as the club allow only 60,000 seasonal tickets yearly, which allows 20,000 for other fans.

Park and Dittmore (2014) find that social media consumption affects team identification and word-of-mouth directly, and team identification mediates the effects between social media consumption and attendance intention; given these findings, they suggest that social media should use beyond just distributing information and news to enhance identification and in attendance intention so as to drive the revenue flow.

## **2.3 Fans related antecedents**

### **2.3.1 Pride**

Fans demonstrate and represent pride for their favorite teams in several ways. Some fans celebrate and talk proudly about the team's past and current achievements and others feel pride from their clothes and other behaviors that make it evident to others that they are

fans of this team. All of this goes to show that pride is one of the important variables in measuring football fans' support level given its effect on the fan's behavior toward their teams in terms of different types of relationship and how it could affect that behavior (Decrop & Derbaix, 2010; Gordon et al. 2019). Sense of pride differs from one individual to another and could be affected by several variables; also, it could affect some behaviors which will be discussed later on in this paper.

Decrop and Derbaix (2010) defined pride based on psychological perspectives as the inner feeling of satisfaction, delectation, or pleasure in an achievement that the individual feels or has the ability to feel. It could also be someone close or connected to the individual who attains the same feeling. Moreover, Decrop and Derbaix (2010) in their study demonstrated that the sense of pride is an inner feeling that could be affected by even past achievements. This result raises a question as to which achievements could affect more or do fans support their teams only for the sake of pride regardless of the results. According to their finding, fans have a feeling of pride because of the shared region that they and their favorite team belongs to.

Chang et al. (2019) defined pride as the feelings of higher status and senses of importance that the fans adapt because of the team they support, and this feeling could be improved when self-continuity is enhanced. This feeling could be adapted from several things such as the region, achievements, performances, or other reasons. In the same study, Chang et al. (2019) argue that pride could play a key role in developing self-continuity and word-of-mouth; they supported the idea that pride could affect fans spreading positive information about their favorite team. They conclude their study by explaining how pride

could be valuable and an exciting indicator in explaining fan behavior and added that the results show a positive relation between proud fans and positive WOM.

Kirk et al. (2015) suggest that pride could be divided into the two types: a) firstly authentic pride, which leads and affects psychological ownership and b) hubristic pride which is affected by the outcomes and results. If the owners want to improve and develop their psychological ownership, they should concentrate on simplifying hubristic pride that results from achievement; so, the customer should focus not merely on achievements but also on the relationship between customers and brand. If customers reach this sense of pride, they will be more open to purchasing new products (Kirk et al., 2015)

Chang et al. (2016) finds that corporate social responsibility (CSR) has a positive effect on fans' pride which then increases the sense of team identification for them. In other words, pride has a direct relation with team identification, which supports the findings of Decrop and Derbaix (2010) about the correlation between pride and team identification. In another study, Chang et al. (2017) finds that pride has direct and positive relation with WOM.

Gordon et al. (2019) indicates in his research that studying sports consumers' pride about sport organizations (which in this case is sports clubs) could be measured accurately; moreover, they find that pride has a direct relation with team identification and fan community. They note that intangible pride sources such as songs are a primary aspect influencing fan community and team identification; also, pride can affect the employees internally which will encourage them to provide better services for the customers and all that could reflect positively on the organization. According to the authors, pride build a perception of status among sport customers.

Sense of pride on football fans has a positive consequence on the customer consume behavior, so we can see proud fans have the intention to purchase the club products (Caetano, 2019). Choi (2019) also mentioned that sense of pride affects fans purchase intention to the club merchandise.

Decrop and Derbaix (2010) offered insights into the effect of pride in term of purchase intention; they stated that pride influences increased consumption, collection behaviour, and WOM, and that fans with pride are loyal customers for the team products. For example, some fans buy the session jersey every year; another type of fans buy something at every game they attend even if they keep the ticket. Moreover, they mentioned that one of the most important results for pride is commitment and loyalty to the team/ Also, enhanced consumption is a major influencer for pride and fans use their team merchandise to enhance their involvement with the team and to show everyone that they belong to this team. Clothing gives them this feeling. At the same time, proud fans always spread news about their team in the media for free and are considered a source for the club news. In that sense, proud fans are the “twelfth man on the field” because they engage in all sorts of consumptions such as attending games, purchasing merchandise, media consumption, and WOM.

Real fans of the team consider themselves a source of pride for the team and the team is a source of pride for them, even if they may perform some immoral behaviour. In addition to that, they encourage the club in all forums, whether in the city or outside, regardless of their actions. Pride leads these fans to travel great distances to attend the matches of their favourite club in the stadium (Rookwood & Pearson, 2012).

Emotions like sense of pride of the supporter influence their decisions of being involved in media consumption, especially when the result of a match is positive because sports is a means of entertainment and if this experience is satisfactory for the customer, they might think about attending the game in the stadium in the future; moreover, hedonic emotion plays an important role in the media consumption intention (Jang et al., 2017).

Decrop and Derbaix (2010) mentioned that pride has not been studied much in the field of marketing literature and that pride assumes great importance for marketers and customers, which has positive consequences and makes pride the main aspect in personality processes in any area of consumption. This viewpoint is agreed upon by (Soscia, 2007), who indicated in her study that brand proud customers are willing to repurchase and spread positive WOM about their experience.

### **2.3.2 Team Identification**

Chang, et al. (2017) defined team identification as the inner feeling and psychological connection that the fans have with the team they support in both good and bad days; according to this study, team identification is related to team performance (results and achievements) and pride. Also, another study finds that team identification has a high mediation relation between pride and regional attachment, and this identification that they have with their city which their club belong to increases attachment with their hometown (Chang et al., 2016).

Snyder et al. (1986) mentioned that people with high identification are more likely to maintain their relationship with the club even in their failure days and if the team does not perform well. However, fans with low level of team identification could cut their relationship with such a team. This indicates that the level of fans' team identification has

a direct relation with team achievement. Wann and Branscombe (1993) agreed with the findings of Snyder et al. (1986) that fans with high identification are not likely to cut their relationship with the team when they lack achievements, they have positive expectations for the team in the future, and they are willing to pay to watch the team playing despite the current failure.

According to Blank et al. (2018), sports teams' personalities and character has a greater effect on the fans team identification as opposed to performance; highly identified fans are not negatively affected by the performance. They might have some negative reaction, but will stay with high level of team identification. On the other hand, Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2018) mentioned that identified fans are affected by the visual appeal and attractiveness of teams' licensed products, which means that if the products have distinctive designs, they could attract more fans.

Park and Dittmore (2014) pointed in their study that team identification has a positive and direct impact on actual attendance and WOM, as others have found in previous studies. Moreover, they pointed out in the same study that inappropriate comments by the team stars, organizers, or anyone related directly to the team could negatively affect the team identification.

In football, the relationship between fans and their clubs has multiple dimensions; it's not just about watching the matches. Supporters in football also face a range of emotions from happiness which leads to pride and feeling attached to the team, to sadness which leads to disappointment. These emotions boost the passion of the fans, which could impact their emotional life, self-respect, and satisfaction (Vallerand et al., 2008; Hay & McDonald, 2007). All this causes a strong bound between fans and their clubs.

Gray and Wert-Gray (2012) finds that team identification has a significant positive effect on attending games, purchasing merchandise, and media consumptions, which suggests that this variable could affect the fans' retention and improve their bond with the team. They also suggested that team identification should be considered with all of the four modes of consumption mentioned separately, and that all the efforts to increase team identifications among fans are worth the effort since because they help in enduring fans' retentions. Any attempts to enhance fans' psychological attachments are positive attempts given the value added by attachment to a sports institution, especially if that institution is seeking long-term bond with fans. Fans based on team identity are not considered normal customers; they consider themselves an inseparable part of the organization (Heere & James, 2007).

The level of identification toward local team plays an important role in building a sense of belonging for the supporters given that supporters want to be identified as a fan of the team which will increase their sense of belonging with the team, and while increasing team identification enhances engagement between the fans and their team, it is also a powerful indicator of their purchase intention and attendance intention (Theodorakis et al., 2012).

James and Trail (2008) indicated that if we apply social identity theory, we will see that fans with a high level of team identity will somehow engage in consumption behavior toward their team; this behavior could include attending matches in stadiums, purchasing their favorite team merchandise, wearing clothes branded with their teams logo and following their team via different media platforms. Their study showed that team identification has a direct and indirect relation with the consumptions intentions, adding



that team identification has a significant relation with both media and merchandise consumptions. It is also related with attending games intentions; finally, they mentioned that teams should focus on enhancing team identification by organizing more event for fans to engage more closely with the team, players, coaches and anything that could push team identification level in fans.

Kwon and Kwak (2014) observed that the relation between team identification and purchase attitudes is more significant for utilitarian products and the relation between team identification and consumer values is stronger for hedonic products. However, both of them show that team identification positively affects the purchase intention for licensed merchandise; all this indicates that strong team identification influences consumers to identify a greater functional, emotional, and social value of a licensed product. Highly identified fans have unchanged attitudes towards teams' licensed merchandise. Even if some changes have taken place in the team properties such as logo, they have an irrevocable engagement with their team. They may show some negative reactions, but will maintain their preexisting feelings toward their team (Ahn et al., 2012).

Wakefield (2016) conducted a study to measure the drivers affecting consumption; he found that fans' identification toward the team is consumption-related, especially in terms of media consumption behavior as evidenced in how they use social media pages everyday and interact with their team across social media platforms and while also interacting with others supporting the same team to identify their relation with the team. As per the authors, future research studies could seek more information on the level of engagement and passion of the fans and how it could affect media consumption.

Highly identified fans rejoice in the success of their teams as compared to people with less identification; also, fans with high team identification maintain their relationship with their team even when they lose. Moreover, both high and low identified fans show that the team is equally important; moreover, highly identified fans will stand with their team in all circumstances, even if other fans make fun of their teams' performance. The gap may grow for low identified fans with their team during failures but fanatical fans will stay attached to their team no matter what happens. Fans who are moderately involved with the team or have a low identification could be affected by the results, which explains why fans attendance fluctuates from one season to another (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

Decrop and Derbaix (2010) posited that highly identified fans feel that the success of the team is their own success and the failure of the team is their own failure; that's why when they talk about their team, they refer by 'We' and 'Us' and not 'them' or 'they', because they feel as if they are a part of the team.

### **2.3.3 Sense of Community**

In the past, professional teams focused more on individual consumption, but lately this orientation has changed like-minded groups given the big role this community plays in the individual consumption behavior, so these teams start creating fan-based communities to increase the sense of engagement in this community then creates a collaborative consumption community. As per the findings, the membership and participations in this type of community has both direct and indirect effects on individual consumption behavior. An example of this behavior is purchase intention behavior which includes game attending intentions, merchandise purchase intentions, and positive WOM (Hedlund, 2014). All this reflects the importance of sense of community in different types of purchase intentions,

and how engagement in the fans' community either as a member or participant affects individual purchase intention.

On the other hand, Hedlund, (2014) shows in his study that the participation in this type of community has a financial benefit for the team in terms of different types of purchasing mentioned above as well as the element of recommending others to purchase and attend matches etc. However, in order to have the feel of belonging and attachment which leads to the sense of community, the individual should have something in common with their favorite team and for fans, this is the main condition and that creates an opportunity to become involved in the fan club community. To develop a sense of community within members, old and experienced members should make this process easy because the more the individual gets involved, the more the feel of belonging will increase, which result in higher participation in community activities and positive WOM, thus raising the possibility of new members entering the community. The entire circle will reap financial benefits for the team because when the new members see older members wearing the team's t-shirt and logo, they will also get motivated to do the same and feel a sense of belonging in their community.

In term of sense of community, Wear and Heere (2020) finds that there are changes in fans' perceptions from the beginning of the season and months after, and from the end of the season and later. Evidence suggests that long-term changes are being made in the fans' feelings toward the club, which gives insight into the value of sense of community among consumers.

Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2017) opined that clubs attract people to become fans of the team; when people start supporting certain football teams, they begin looking for a

social community to share their excitement and emotions. All kinds of fans are important for the team even if they are normal fans as opposed to fanatic fans; that is why clubs have some direct and indirect methods to maintain the relation between the club and the fans by offering things such as loyalty cards and other indirect methods to maintain the fans' loyalty.

People with a low sense of belonging with their team are more likely to change their team once they feel that their team is no longer what it used to be. To increase the sense of community among the fans, people in sports administrators can work on campaigns to encourage people to get involved with other fans from the same team by issuing some statements which suggest that all the people in this community share the same interests. They should also pay attention to this campaign and spread them all over the fans since these communities are a fertile environment for increasing belonging among the fans, so it becomes like a circle in which everyone feels attached to each other and clubs are the main source of belonging, which in turn, leads to an increase in sports consumption (Theodorakis et al., 2012).

The study conducted by Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou, (2018) pointed that people need to prove that they belong to a team, so the team's products, especially those that contain the team's logo, are useful in showing that. This increases the sense of community around them; this idea is supported by the mainstream consumer behavior theory which suggests that people find meaning in products that facilitate forming relationships with others who have the same interests.

Mahony and Moorman (1999) mentioned that fans with a high sense of community with their teams are willing to follow their team regardless of the results and achievement

of the team, and fans with less sense of community are less likely to watch their team if there is a high probability of them losing. Fans' sense of community can be affected by an incident where affecting state is raised over time; the team's history could affect the fans' sense of belonging with their teams (Fillis & Mackay, 2014).

Fans involved in the team community are more likely to attend all the games regardless of the team's results and they are recognized by wearing the club uniforms and attending all the games as well as club fan club activities. (Fillis, & Mackay, 2014). Sometimes, these fans are involved in the club community and travel with the team to support them when they play in different stadiums.

Fillis, and Mackay (2014) add that real supporters have a sense of belonging and loyalty with the supporters in the team community and do not mind paying money for the teams they support in all the ways that they can; fans with a high sense of community are an integral part of the team. They are related to the team and more loyal than other type of fans. Finally, the researchers suggest that football fans' communities are mostly developed through involvement, knowledge, participation and social integration. All this factors help create a loyal fan. Fans also have the potential to support the development path of normal followers of the team and turn them into committed supporters,

#### **2.4 Team-related Antecedents: (Current Achievements and Past Achievements)**

Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2016) stated that achievements linkage with fans is a very critical topic that club managers work on. They must break the link between achievements and attachment because there will times when the team will not perform as expected, so the fans' relationship with the club should not be affected. They added that only people with certain characteristic maintain their relation during difficult periods and cognitive

background that allows them to separate the findings from faithfulness and attachment to the club. Managers should think of developing their relationship between the fans and the club beyond achievements, and to do that, they must develop a big fan base that does not get affected by achievements or the lack thereof.

Team performance and achievements, as mentioned before, assume great importance. Chang et al. (2017) investigated the relationship between them to find how they could affect WOM and found some comforting results for club managers team performance was not found to have a direct effect on the WOM intention, which showed that fans could still recommend their teams when they were not performing well. However, pride has a significant mediating role between teams' performance and WOM positive recommendation. Pride has a distinct impact on WOM, while team performance is considered an essential driver for pride. Sports customers are also responding to the efforts put in by the marketing departments of the club, so if the team had community efforts, fans would appreciate it.

It is interesting how clubs can increase their fan base and win the sympathy of their fans even in the absence of achievements. In the case of Real Madrid, managers try to drive people's feelings and behaviors toward their club with their great legacy as 13 times European Champions League winners (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016).

Gordon et al. (2019) advise practitioners to focus on the memorable moments in the history of the organizations when they market their in order to positively affect the consumers and drive their feelings. In case of a sports organization, past achievements of the club will be the memorable moments that the practitioners should focus on; this kind

of marketing could affect the fans internally in the city of the club and externally for the fans abroad by, instilling the feeling of pride which can affect their purchase behavior.

Sometimes, the team performs well but suffers from bad luck, so, satisfaction with the performance of the team positively impacts fans' physical attendance in the stadium and media-based consumption which entails watching games and following the team on media. On the other hand, the findings shows that satisfaction with team performance has no significant impact on fans' merchandise purchase behaviors (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012) which might indicate that fans will purchase merchandises and spread WOM regardless of the results of their team.

Bristow et al. (2010) noted that the real supporters would keep attending games even if their team are not winning in some periods, because they like the history of the game and of their clubs. Some clubs reach certain milestones, which make their fans loyal. Moreover, some fans consider the club's history as their personal glory and associate themselves with this glory. Also, Bristow and Sebastian (2001) add that in all sports such as football, fans only focus on supporting winning teams and during times of failure, they suggest to the team managers that they must focus on the teams' past achievements or memorable players/moments. All this can help maintain fan loyalty even in the absence of achievements. Campbell et al. (2004) argued that some fans stay loyal to the past era even if their team are winning because they are afraid of big failures. Fisher and Wakefield (1998) also revealed that teams could maintain a sense of loyalty and identification with the team through its history, such as a superstar representing the team or its achievements. Fans with high identification and loyalty are more likely to maintain their level of support even when the team is going through a lean patch.

## **2.5 Chapter Conclusion**

In this chapter, many prior studies have been reviewed for each variable in terms of building this research framework, starting from Pride, Team Identification and Sense of Community. Two paths were discovered: first, the path as dependent variable with Past and Current Achievements and ways of extending achievements that could affect fans' Pride, Team Identification and Sense of Community. Next, the independent variable involves Attending Games, Licensed Merchandise Purchase and Media Consumption, and how this can extend its effect on Purchase intention. Secondary results shows Pride, Team Identification and Sense of Community affects purchase intention. Based on all these insights, the next chapter develops the hypothesis of this study and develops the conceptual framework.



## CHAPTER 3: HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into four sections. After the introduction, the first two sections present the hypothesis development, summarizing the expected statistical relationship between our dependent, independent and mediators' variables that the literature review discussed and what other scholars found in these constructs' relationships.

Current and past achievements will be the main independent variables. Pride, team identification and sense of community will be the mediating variables, whereas purchase intention will be the main dependent variable. All these hypotheses will be summarized in Table 3.1 at the end of this chapter to clarify all the hypotheses for this research, whereas the mediation relationship will be clarified further in the analysis chapter.

The fourth section of this chapter presents the research conceptual framework model which visually describes the relationship between all the variables.

#### 3.1.1 Current & Past Achievements Relation with Pride

Current achievement is one of the important drivers in fans' passion towards their teams, and obviously for some fans, it controls their engagement with the team but in the literature, it is shown that engagement and affects depend on the level of fandom of each individual. Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2016) mentioned that engagement and attachment is relevant with the team achievement and it's an issue that club managers are working on. Chang, et al. (2017) pointed out that current team performance is essential predictor and has direct effect on fans' sense of pride. Gordon et al. (2019) and Decrop and Derbaix

(2010) stated that fans with a sense of pride will express it by talking about their current or past achievements and the level of pride could be affected by current and past achievement.

Chang et al. (2019) posited that fan pride could be adapted by performances and achievements. The positive results give the fan a motivation to talk about their team, and sometimes in the absence of current achievements, fans start talking about the glory of the past if their team has a bright history such as Real Madrid, Manchester United, etc.

We can notice some fans talking proudly about their team in a period where their team are not performing well and there is a lack of achievements within the team, but this kind of pride comes from a strategy operated by the team; they remind the fans about the legacy of the team and how they were performing before; for example Real Madrid managers always remind their fans about the fact that they had 13 titles of the Champions League and this is enough to let the fans feel proud even if they are away from winning the title during such periods (Rodriguez-Pomeda et al., 2016). We can see this among Real Madrid fans between 2002 and 2014, when the team didn't win the Champions League but they are still talking proudly about their team.

Moreover, Gordon et al. (2019) suggested that memorable moments in the history of the organizations could generate feeling of pride among fans; these moments could drive the emotions and feelings of the fans which will help to maintain a sense of pride no matter the circumstances that the team is in.

So, according to the prior research that studied achievement and its relationship with a sense of pride among football fans, we hypothesized:

H1: Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride.

H2: Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride

### **3.1.2 Current & Past Achievements Relation with Team Identification**

Chang, et al. (2017) defined team identification as a psychological connection that the fans have when their teams win or lose. They found in the study that team identification is directly related with the team's current results and the glory of the past. Blank et al. (2018) said that team identification is affected by the personality of the team and not the results; they mentioned that the fans may be negatively affected and be disappointed with the results, but they will stay highly identified with their team. According to Snyder et al. (1986) and Wann and Branscombe (1993), fans with a high level of identification are less likely to cut their relationship with the team, and they are willing to maintain their relationship with the team even when the team didn't perform well. These kinds of fans have a positive view about the team's future.

Moreover, Wann and Branscombe (1990) opined that fans with a sense of team identification are more delighted during phases of success, and will maintain their relationship with the team in the absence of achievements. Bristow et al. (2010) mentioned that fans with team identification will remain attached with the team during the absence of achievements because they are attached to the game and their team history; other fans consider their team past glory as their personal success so they will stay always stay attached to the team.

Bristow and Sebastian (2001) suggest that managers must maintain fans relationships with the team to focus on past achievements or memorable players/moments

of the team to keep the fans loyal. Campbell et al. (2004) said that fans will remember the past achievements no matter what transpires in the future.

Concordantly, Fisher and Wakefield,(1998) added that teams could keep fans highly identified through historical achievements, and highly identified fans will stay attached with their team by mentioning and recalling these moments. More recently, Chang (2017) indicated in their measure of team fans identification a direct positive relationship with current team performance.

So according to the previous findings, we hypothesize that there is a relation between current achievements and the level of identification.

H3: Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification.

H4: Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification.

### **3.1.3 Current & Past Achievements Relation with Sense of Community**

According for some resources, sports fans communities have become an important part of each team fans, because these types of fans have a very high sense of belonging with the team they support. Theodorakis et al. (2012) postulated that people with a low sense of community with their club are more likely to change the club they support if the club is going through difficult periods, and fans with high sense of community with the club are more engaged with their club because the sense of belonging to the fan's community gives them the feeling of attachment with the club. Mahoney and Moorman (1999) agreed with the argument that achievements could affect people with a reduced sense of community. Fillis and Mackay (2014) pointed out that memory and history could affect the sense of belonging of the fans, because they consider it their legacy. Moreover, fans involved with the team community are supporting

their team regardless of how they are currently faring and a committed supporter always wants his/her team to do well but the lack of success has little impact on his/her loyalty .

Other resources mentioned in the literature review chapter indicate the importance of sense of community within fans and how it could be barely affected by lack of achievement. To have more indicators and to further study this idea. We hypothesized that:

H5: Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of community.

H6: past achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of community

#### **3.1.4 Pride Relation with Purchase Intention**

Kirk, et al. (2015) mentioned that if fans of sports teams attain a sense of pride, they will be more open to purchasing new products related to the team. Also, Decrop and Derbaix (2010) noted that loyal fans are willing to buy team products without thinking about the money; the only important thing for them is that this item is related to the team that they love. Moreover, they add that proud fans are more loyal when it comes to consuming the club merchandise and spreading positive WOM about the team regardless of the channels they are using. Also, pride inspires fans to keep collecting items relating to the team, so they may buy the team jersey and other merchandise every year to maintain their involvement with the team, Finally fans with a sense of pride use different kinds of consumption such as attending games, media consumption, merchandise purchasing, and word-of-mouth, which is why they are called “twelfth man on the field.”

Also talking media positively to media is regarded as an important media consumption intention. Chang et al. (2019) stated that fans with a sense of pride are more

willing to talk positively through the media about their team and will spread a positive WOM about their team in different communication channels. In this regard, Soscia (2007) said that proud fans are more likely to purchase and repurchase the team merchandise.

Caetano, (2019), Choi (2019), and Decrop & Derbaix (2010) mentioned that a sense of pride has positive consequences on the fans purchasing behaviors, so pride affects purchase intention positively. This means that when the fans have a sense of pride, they will be more open to purchasing their team merchandise.

Real fans, who have high level of pride, loyalty and commitment consider as important of income for the team because they attend all the game that the team play in their field and sometimes travel to support the team when they play far from their city (Rookwood & Pearson, 2012). Also, in term of media consumption fans with sense of pride and attachment with the team follow the team in the media and when they enjoy the performance, they think to attend games (Jang et al. 2017)

According to the literature mentioned in this chapter and chapter two, there are relation between sense of pride and purchase intention, so we hypothesized.

H7: Pride has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise.

H8: Pride has a positive effect on fans attending game intention.

H9: Pride has a positive effect on fans media consumption.

### **3.1.5 Team Identification Relation with Purchase Intention**

Wann and Branscombe (1993) mentioned in their study that fans with a high level of team identification are willing to pay money to watch their teams even if the teams are not performing well in that period. Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2018) and Kwon

and Kwak (2014) noted that identified fans are more likely to purchase their teams' licensed products, especially if it has attractive design.

Also, team identification has a direct impact on fans attending games in the stadium and spreading positive word of mouth via any platform that they use (Park & Dittmore, 2014). Also, Gray and Wert-Gray (2012) found that there is a positive relation between identified fans with attending games, purchase licensed merchandise, and media consumption. They suggested that increasing the identification through the fans will be very beneficial for the team, because the fans with high identification consider themselves non-inseparable part of the team.

Moreover, Theodorakis, et al. (2012) agreed that team identification increases the sense of belonging among fans, and is an important predictor in attending games and purchase merchandise intention. James and Trail (2008) and Funk et al. (2012) opine that fans with a high level of identity will somehow engage with the team by attending games, buying merchandise belong to the team, or following the team through and media tool and that relation is significant.

Ahn et al. (2012) pointed that identified fans purchase their favorite teams' licensed products even there some changes are made to the logo. Nevertheless, media consumption is considered one of the results of fans' sense of team identification (Wakefield, 2016). Based on the findings of the above literature, we hypothesized:

H10: Team identification has a positive effect on fans purchasing teams' licensed merchandise.

H11: Team identification has a positive effect on fans attending game intention.

H12: Team identification has a positive effect on fans media consumption.

### **3.1.6 Sense of Community Relation with Purchase Intention**

Funk et al. (2012) and Theodorakis, et al. (2012) stated that sense of community is one of the drivers that affects the kind of consumption by attending games physically, following the team in the media, and purchasing team merchandise because by the individual can interact with the fan community using these types of consumption.

Loyalty cards is a unique method that sport clubs have started to use lately to build fan base and increase the sense of community within the fans; this method allows fans all over the world connect to each other as well as to their team; this engagement results in a greater consumption of club products (Callejo & Forcadell, 2006).

Wear and Heere (2020) stated that attending matches builds a friendly environment for the fans of one team, especially since the team plays half of the matches in its stadium and these fans meet often in the stadium; this motive is an incentive to attend the matches to enhance this spirit of belonging within the club fan community.

Ridinger and Funk (2006) discussed that attending games could be a weekly fan community event to enhance the fans' sense of community while also benefitting the club from sale of tickets, and making people attend the game, thus opening the door to other types of purchasing from the club shop in the stadium.

Hedlund (2014) stated that like-minded groups play an important role in the individual consumption behavior, which allows sports club to start working toward a fan community and increase the sense of community within their fans; this type of community has a positive impact on individuals' purchase intention, game attendance, and positive WOM, add to that they recommend their pairs in the community to do the same consumption behavior.



According to Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2017), fans start to get involved in the fan community when they start purchasing merchandises like clothes with the club logo, attending games, and following the team in the media.

According to the insights mentioned above and in the findings of literature review chapter, we hypothesised

H13: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise.

H14: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans attending game intention.

H15: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans media consumption.

### 3.2 Conceptual Framework

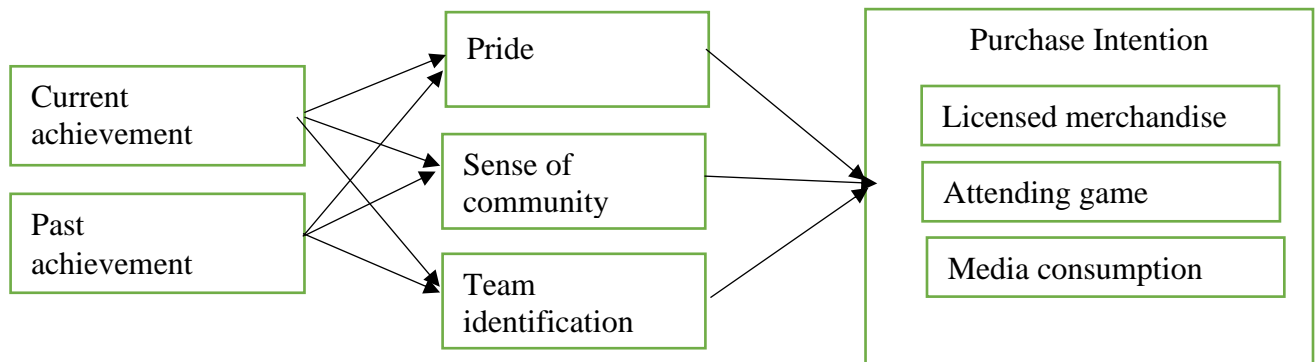


Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework

Table 3.1 Hypotheses summary

Hypothesis number	Hypotheses
H1	Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride.
H2	Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride
H3	Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification.
H4	Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification.
H5	Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of community.
H6	past achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of community
H7	Pride has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise.
H8	Pride has a positive effect on fans attending game intention.
H9	Pride has a positive effect on fans' media consumption.
H10	Team identification has a positive effect on fans purchasing teams' licensed merchandise.
H11	Team identification has a positive effect on fans attending game intention
H12	Team identification has a positive effect on fans' media consumption.
H13	Sense of community has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise.
H14	Sense of community has a positive effect on fans attending game intention.
H15	Sense of community has a positive effect on fans media consumption.

### 3.3 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presents the hypothesis developed based on the previous chapter. As shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, these are the relationships that this chapter aims to investigate. The chapter reviewed all the insights founded in chapter 2, and developed hypotheses accordingly. The next chapter will discuss the methods that will be used in this study to examine the relation between the constructs, how the data were collected, the method of analysis, and other methods used in the data analysis process.

## CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

In the last two chapters, we presented the previous works done by other researchers in this context and how we developed the proposed hypothesis through literature review to further examine them in the thesis. To attain the objectives stated in chapter 1, this chapter presents the research method starting with the research type and then explores the measurement items used followed by the questionnaire design. Furthermore, this chapter explains the research context and the sampling method, before presenting the data analysis method. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief summary.

### 4.2 Research Type

This study implemented a quantitative explanatory research approach, with the hypothesis supported by the previous literature. Quantitative research uses statistical methods to quantify fans -related variables (pride, sense of community, and team identification), team related variables (team's past and present achievements), and intent behaviors (purchasing merchandise, attending game, and media consumption) using a population sample and then generalizing the results to a larger population related to the same interests and concerns, which in this study, is represented by football fans (DeFranzo, 2011). Two categories of fans are studied: local fans living in Madrid and distant fans living in Qatar.

### 4.3 Measurement Items and Questionnaire Design

The measurement items are based on pre-tested items that have been adapted from existing literature. Some slight adjustment of the adapted items involved rewording to in line with the aims of the current study, for example, adding the years on the achievement

items and renaming the team's names on other questions. The questionnaire was conducted in English and then translated to Arabic for the audience in Qatar and Spanish to audience in Madrid. The survey was shared using SurveyHero because it gives the option of adding three languages of each survey. Moreover, distributing the survey using the internet give easy access to a large sample of people. Before starting the survey, the questionnaire was presented to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to approve all the items included in the research and to obtain approval to publish the questionnaire.

The survey started with the consent letter which is an essential part of the survey. The information provided to the participants of the questionnaire pertained to their rights and benefits. The consent letter contains (a) the IRB approval number and IRB contact information; (b) the title and aims of the survey; (c) who is the target audience and the number of participants required; (d) suggested time needed to fill the survey; (e) confidential agreement and no harms and benefits expected; and (f) contact details of the presented researchers (See Appendix 1) The survey started with two questions to filter the participants: "Are you a fan of Real Madrid" and "Do you live in." If the answer of the first as well as the second question was no, the participant had to quit the survey immediately (See Appendix 1).

Then the measurement questions of this survey covered all the variables tested in this thesis: current achievements with a 5 item scale; past achievements with a 3-item scale; pride with a 4-item scale; team identification with a 4-item scale; sense of community with a 6-item scale; merchandise purchase intention with a 3-item scale; attending games intention with a 3-item scale; and media consumption intention with 3-item scale, All the questions in this section of the survey were measured using a 5-point

Likert scale, where 5 represented “strongly agree,” which is the highest , and 1 represented “strongly disagree,” which is the lowest point in the scale, and the participant was supposed to choose only from each item.

The last section was the demographic questions, “where are you from” to guarantee that the participants were from Madrid or Qatar, who then disclosed their age, marital status, education level and gender (For the full survey See Appendix 1).

Table 4.1 Questionnaire mapping table

Variable	Items	Source
Current achievement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Real Madrid performs excellent currently</li> <li>2. Currently Real Madrid’s record is good</li> <li>3. Currently Real Madrid is highly ranked.</li> <li>4. Currently Real Madrid is doing well in the league.</li> <li>5. Currently Real Madrid is an excellent performing team.</li> </ol>	Chang, Connaughton, Ju, Kim & Kang, (2019)
Past achievement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Real Madrid has done well in the past 10 years</li> <li>2. Real Madrid’s record has been good for the past 10 years</li> <li>3. Real Madrid ‘s performance is good for the past 10 years</li> </ol>	Chang, Kang, Ko & Connaughton, (2017)
Pride	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I love Real Madrid</li> <li>2. I am proud of Real Madrid</li> <li>3. Real Madrid is among my favorite interests.</li> <li>4. I am proud to declare my support of Real Madrid</li> </ol>	Sierra & Taute, (2019)
Team identification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When Real Madrid wins a game, it feels like a personal success.</li> <li>2. When someone praises Real Madrid, it feels like a personal compliment.</li> <li>3. When someone criticizes Real Madrid, it feels like a personal insult.</li> <li>4. When Real Madrid loses a game, it feels like a personal failure.</li> </ol>	Chang, Ko, Connaughton & Kang, (2016)

Variable	Items	Source
Sense of community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. . The friendships I have with other fans of Real Madrid mean a lot to me.</li> <li>2. If other fans of Real Madrid planned something, I'd think of it as something 'we' would do rather than something 'they' would do.</li> <li>3. I see myself as part of the community regarding Real Madrid</li> <li>4. I frequently refer to other fans of Real Madrid as 'us' or 'we'.</li> <li>5. I frequently refer to fans of other teams as 'them'.</li> <li>6. I feel a sense of co-ownership with Real Madrid.</li> </ol>	Sierra & Taute, (2019)
licensed Merchandise Purchase intention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am likely to purchase Real Madrid's licensed merchandise in the future.</li> <li>2. In the future, purchasing Real Madrid licensed merchandise is something I plan to do.</li> <li>3. In the future, I intend to purchase licensed merchandise representing the Real Madrid.</li> </ol>	Kim, Trail & Ko, (2011)
Attending game intention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I intend to attend Real Madrid's games</li> <li>2. There is a likelihood that I will attend Real Madrid's games as soon as I'm able to.</li> <li>3. I will attend Real Madrid's games as soon as I'm able to.</li> </ol>	Kim, Trail & Ko, (2011)
Media Consumption Intention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will track the news on the Real Madrid through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)</li> <li>2. I will watch or listen to the Real Madrid's games through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)</li> <li>3. I will support the Real Madrid by watching or listening to Real Madrid's games through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)</li> </ol>	Kim, Trail & Ko, (2011)

#### 4.4 Research Context

The background of this research is important, given the importance of sports business. This study was carried out in two locations: Qatar and Madrid. Qatar belongs to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) and has become a global sporting destination known for hosting mega sports events. The State of Qatar attaches great importance to sports in all its fields and is determined to improve its performance and capabilities as well as to achieve outstanding achievements in this field (Government Communications Office, 2021). And with the development of sports, Qatar has built huge stadiums with big number of spectators capacity for hosting the FIFA world cup 2022 (Supreme committee, 2021) so increasing sports consumption in general is considered a main goal to reach to develop the country's reputation in sport. Moreover, Mr. Florentino Perez, President of Real Madrid Football Club, in the beginning of 2014, inaugurated the Royal Club Supporters Association in Qatar, the first official association approved by the Royal Club in the Middle East and includes members from Qatar, the Gulf, and Spain. (Real Madrid, 2014). Second, Madrid is the mother city of Real Madrid football club. It is also one of the world's largest clubs in terms of achievements and popularity. Real Madrid has 252.1 million followers in all their social media platform together: also. Real Madrid appears to have the biggest number of fans all over the world (Goal.com, 202), thus showing that Real Madrid has millions of fans all over the world. In terms of developing the business and increasing the revenues, the thesis context provides more insights about the antecedents that lead to their purchasing behavior.

## **4.5 Sampling**

Non-random sampling using snowball technique was used in this research to collect data in Qatar. To reach the target audience, the researcher contacted Real Madrid's fan club president to send this survey to the club members. We also contacted some Real Madrid fans in Qatar, also using some Snap Chat celebrities fans of Real Madrid to spread the survey through their accounts. For Spain, it was distributed through Amazon Mechanical Turk, which is a universally recognized tool for collecting data by identifying the characteristics of the participants in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to people who meet the characteristics to fill the questionnaire and then provide a code that proves that they have filled the entire questionnaire (Amazon Mechanical Turk, 2021). All surveys were distributed online through SurveyHero and it was available in three languages.

A total of 1591 individual viewed the survey, and 1090 responses started filling the survey. However, only 599 could complete the survey and 491 could not. We filtered the surveys answers and removed all the surveys indicating that respondents who completed the survey but were not fans of real Madrid or were not living in Qatar or Madrid. After filtering, 550 valid responses remains and were used in this research.

## **4.6 Data Analysis Methods**

The data analysis is divided into several stages, starting from cleaning the data and shortening the names of variables using Microsoft Excel, using Statistical Package for Social Science 28 (SPSS) for the descriptive statistics, shifting to Smart PLS3 to assess the measurement model, ensuring validity, reliability, and structural model, and conducting additional multi-group analysis. Exporting the data from SurveyHero was the



first step in the data analysis and only completed responses were exported (incomplete responses were ignored). Using Microsoft Excel, participants who answered that they were not fans of Real Madrid and were not from Madrid or Qatar were eliminated because some participants completed the survey even though they were not Real Madrid Fans. The second stage entailed identifying the characteristics of the participants using SPSS 28 by running descriptive analysis. Then, PLS Structural equations modeling was conducted via Smart PLS3.3 to evaluate the measurement model (the validity, reliability..) and the structural model and test the hypothesis as shown in chapter 5. An MGA or multi-group analysis was conducted using SmartPLS3.3 to investigate the moderation effect of fans location (Qatar vs. Madrid).

#### **4.7 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the methodology of the research starting from research type and then discusses all the variables used in this research. It then described the stages of conducting the survey from getting the IRB approval, consent, and survey questions, to the survey explaining in detail by adding the Questionnaire mapping table. In addition, the chapter explicated the significance of the research context of fans in Qatar and Madrid and then provided an overview of the sampling method in Qatar and Madrid, eventually using instruments in the data analysis.

## CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, statistical analysis is presented for the collected data using Smart PLS3 and SPSS 28. Further, the chapter discusses the results founded from the analysis. This chapter is divided into several sections, starting from descriptive statistics which calculates the personal information for the participants that shows the Age, Gender, place of living, and other personal information for the participants, then moves on to the measurement model assessment which considers the quality and consistency of the data by conducting reliability and validity tests. Furthermore, structural model assessment was conducted to analyze the hypothesis paths' results, indirect affect, model fit, and PLS-MGA test to determine the difference between Real Madrid fans in Qatar and Madrid and make a comparison between them. This was followed by a general discussion to discuss and clarify the data analysis and compare it with the secondary research.

## 5.2 Descriptive Data Analysis

### 5.2.1 Sample Characteristics

This section highlights the demographic characteristics of the sample. SPSS 28 descriptive analysis frequencies are used to include gender, age, education level, marital states, and place of living.

*a. Age:*

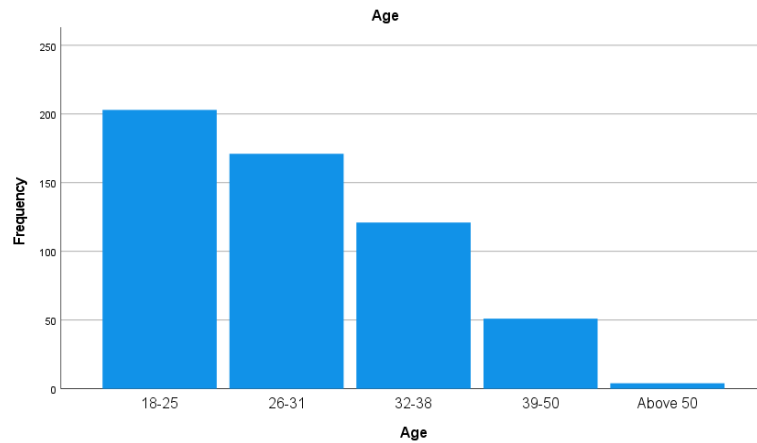


Figure 5.1 Age group distribution graph

Table 5.1 Age group distribution table

Age		
	N	%
1	203	36.9%
2	171	31.1%
3	121	22.0%
4	51	9.3%
5	4	0.7%

The above table and figure indicate the ages of the participants in this study; as shown above, the aging groups are classified into five: the first group (18-25) is considered the

largest group of participants with the highest number of participants (203) representing 36.9%. This is followed by the (26-31) group and the number of participants is (71) representing 31.1%. The third group was (32-38) and the number of participants was 121 representing 22.0%; the fourth group was (39-50) with 51 participants representing 9.3%. The last group was (above 50) the number of participants (4) representing 0.7%.

*b. Gender*

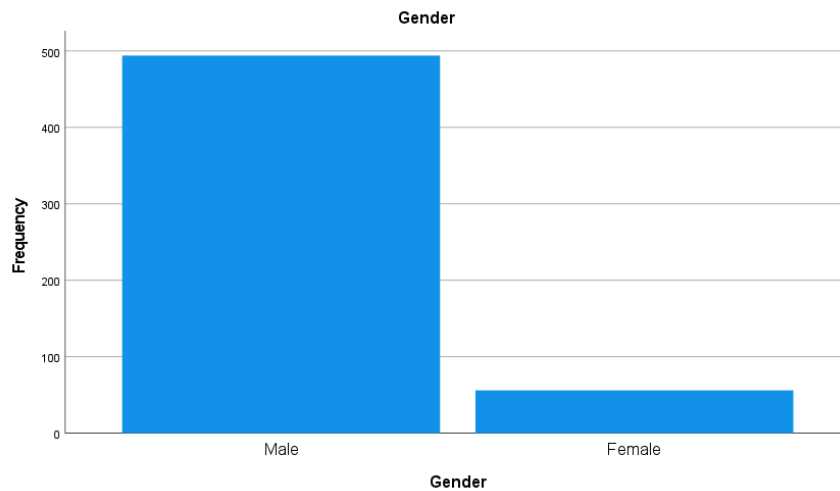


Figure 5.2 Gender distribution graph

Table 2.2 Gender group distribution table

	N	%
1	494	89.8%
2	56	10.2%

Figure 5.2 and Table 5.2, indicate the gender of the participant. As is known, football is more popular among males than females. The number of male participants in our study

was 494 accounting for 89.8% of the total participants, while the number of female participants was 56, representing 10.2% of the total participants.

*c. Educational level.*

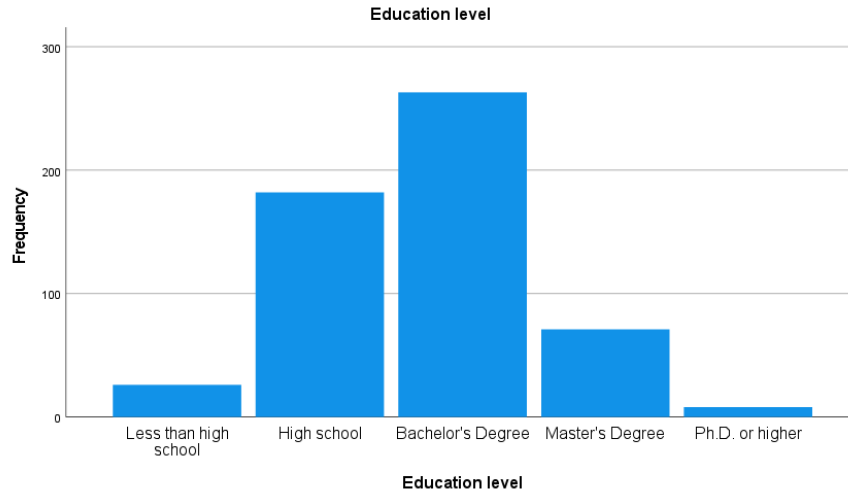


Figure 5.3 Education level distribution graph

Table 5.3 Education level distribution table

	N	%
1	26	4.7%
2	182	33.1%
3	263	47.8%
4	71	12.9%
5	8	1.5%

Regarding educational level, the choices were divided into five categories, which is less than a high school with 26 participants representing 4.7%; the second was a high school with 182 participants representing 33.1%. The third was bachelor’s degree with number of participants was 263 which represented 47.8% and was the largest group.

Then, the fourth group was master's degree with 71 participants representing 12.9%, and the final group was Ph.D. or higher with 8 participants representing 1.5%.

*d. marital status:*

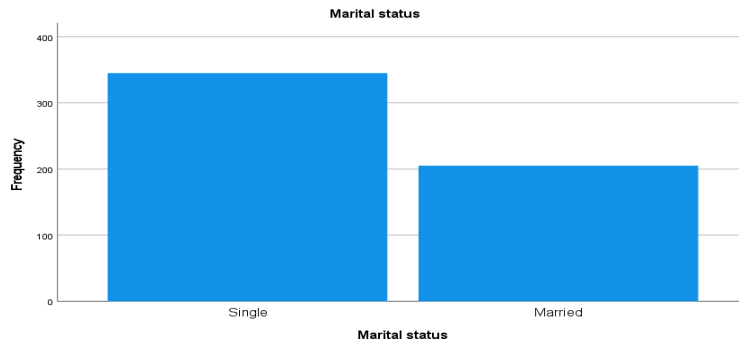


Figure 2.4 Marital status distribution graph

Table 5.4 Marital status distribution table

	N	%
1	345	62.7%
2	205	37.3%

Also, participants were asked about their marital status, and the answers were between married with 205 participants which represented 37.3%, or single with 345 participants representing 62.7%.

*e. place of living*

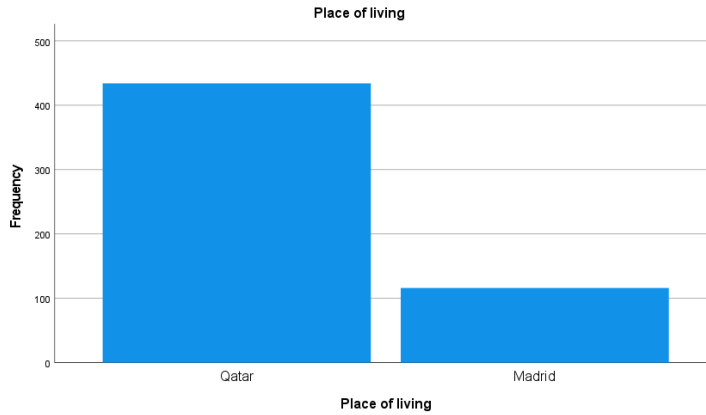


Figure 5.5 Place of living distribution graph

Table 5.5 Place of living distribution table

	N	%
1	434	78.9%
2	116	21.1%

The place of living is one of the most important elements in this research to compare between two categories of fans: distant fans represented by Real Madrid fans who live in Qatar with 434 participants which represent 78.9%, and local fans or Real Madrid fans who live in Madrid with 116 participants representing 21.1%. All respondents who indicated that they do live in Qatar or Madrid were excluded from the final sample.

Table 5.6 Summary of the participants' personal information

Characteristic	groups	Frequency	Percentage
Place of living	Qatar	434	78.9
	Spain	116	21.1
	Total	550	100
Age	18-25	203	36.9
	26-31	171	31.1
	32-38	121	22.0
	39-50	51	9.3
	Above 50	4	0.7
	Total	550	100
Marital status	Single	345	62.7
	Married	205	37.3
	Total	550	100
Education level	Less than a high school	26	4.7
	High School	182	33.1
	Bachelor's Degree	263	47.8
	Master's Degree	71	12.9
	Ph.D. or higher	8	1.5
	Total	550	100
Gender	Male	494	89.8
	Female	56	10.2
	Total	550	100



### 5.3 Measurement Model Assessment

The first step in the data analysis in smart PLS3 after importing the data is draw the modal, then adding the variables with the items belong to each variable, then connecting the independent variables with the dependent variables

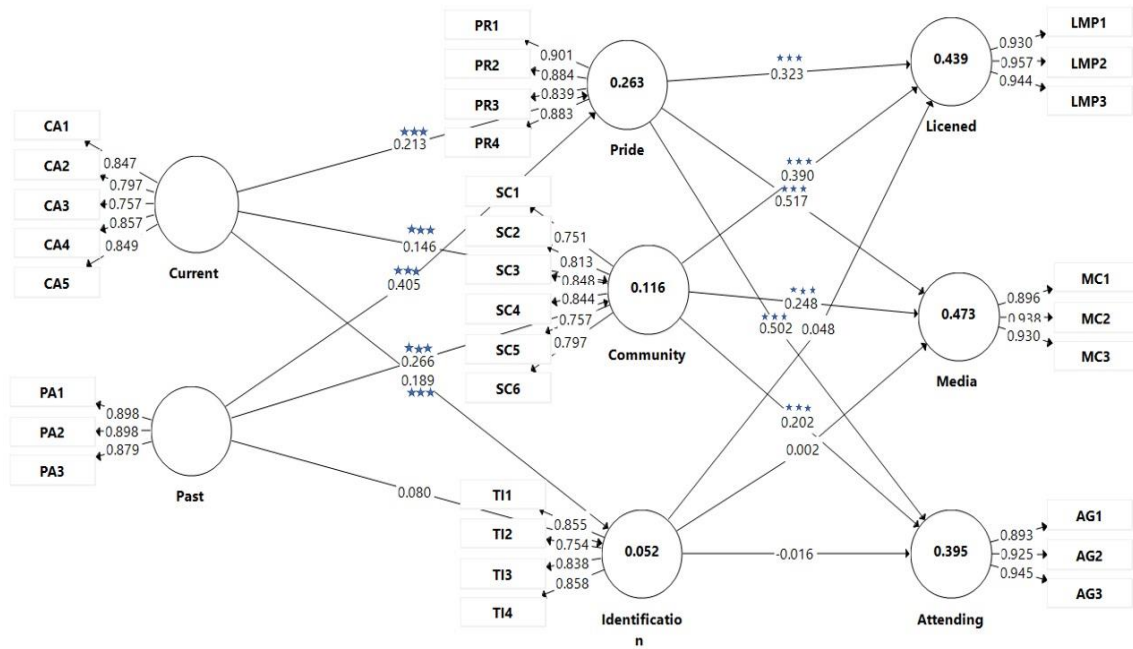


Figure 5.6 Measurement model including the items

After connecting all the variables in its path with other variables, testing the quality of the data and understanding if the measures are good enough to continue to other models and tests, reliability (consistent) and validity (accuracy) test was conducted using PLS Algorithm.

#### 5.3.1 Reliability

Reliability has been defined as measuring to what extent the measurement instrument are consistent (Cronbach, 1947) Testing the quality and consistency of the constructs and items used in this study is the first step of the analysis. Reliability was

tested using three kinds of tests which is Cronbach's alpha, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability. To explore if the items or constructs are reliable, the outer loading must be above 0.70 (Hair et al. 2011; Kock, 2013). Considering Cronbach's alphas for the different constructs, the lower one was for team identification, which is 0.848, and the higher one was licensed merchandise purchase intention, which is 0.939. All the loadings obtained in this research are between 0.848 and 0.939 which implies that all the constructs are reliable given that all the Cronbach's alphas are way more than 0.70 (Table 5.7). Finally, the composite reliability required that the value is above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). Looking at the current research, all the constructs have acceptable reliability values, the lower one is 0.896, which is team identification and the highest is 0.961, which is licensed merchandise purchase intention. This means that all the values ranging between 0.896 and 0.961 are accepted.

### **5.3.2 Convergent Validity**

Convergent validity was assessed using average variance extracted (AVE) with acceptable value above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010) and the lower values was 0.644, so all items are converging in measurement for the latent construct, and all constructs had acceptable AVE values. This denotes the convergent validity of the different constructs.

Table 5.7 Reliability and loading's criteria for the measurement model

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Outer VIF
Attending games	AG1	0.893	0.910	0.913	0.944	0.848	2.514
	AG2	0.925					3.505
	AG3	0.945					4.130
Current Achievement	CA1	0.847	0.880	0.887	0.912	0.676	2.498
	CA2	0.797					1.805
	CA3	0.757					1.792
	CA4	0.857					2.801
	CA5	0.849					2.334
licensed Merchandise Purchase	LMP1	0.930	0.939	0.939	0.961	0.891	3.527
	LMP2	0.957					5.384
	LMP3	0.944					4.572
Media Consumption	MC1	0.896	0.911	0.912	0.944	0.849	2.480
	MC2	0.938					3.872
	MC3	0.930					3.695
Past Achievement	PA1	0.898	0.871	0.871	0.921	0.795	2.425
	PA2	0.898					2.501
	PA3	0.879					2.097
Pride	PR1	0.901	0.900	0.900	0.930	0.769	3.267
	PR2	0.884					3.066
	PR3	0.839					2.078
	PR4	0.883					2.575

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Outer VIF
Sense of Community	SC1	0.751	0.889	0.892	0.915	0.644	1.915
	SC2	0.813					2.369
	SC3	0.848					2.587
	SC4	0.844					2.558
	SC5	0.757					1.908
	SC6	0.797					1.993
Team Identification	TA1	0.855	0.848	0.882	0.896	0.685	1.809
	TA2	0.754					1.646
	TA3	0.838					2.196
	TA4	0.858					2.364

### 5.3.3 Discriminant Validity

To measure the discriminant validity, two tests were used: the Fornell-Larker criterion and the Heterotrait- Monotrait method. The first measure was Fornell-Larker criterion (as shown in 5.9); we can see that the correlation of all variables together is higher than their correlation with other variables, which indicates that all the variables have discriminant validity. For example, the correlation between pride and pride is 0.877 and it is higher than the correlation between pride and sense of community (0.560) and the correlation between pride and team identification (0.419). In addition, the Heterotrait- Monotrait method was also used to test the validity of the data presented in this research. The ratio of each correlation between all the variables should be less than 0.9 to be established (Gold et al. 2001; Henseler et al. 2015). In this study, the discriminant

validity is established because the higher value is 0.780 and it is less than 0.9, whereas all the values of other variables are lower than 0.9.

To sum up, both the Fornell-Larker criterion and the Heterotrait- Monotrait method did not reveal any problem with the discriminant validity of our constructs, so the data are accurate and valid to proceed to the next step of the analysis.

Table 3 Discriminant validity Fornell-Larker criterion

	AG	CA	LMP	MC	PA	PR	SC	TI
Attending games	0.921							
Current Achievement	0.293	0.822						
licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.566	0.221	0.944					
Media Consumption	0.641	0.235	0.555	0.921				
Past Achievement	0.383	0.310	0.240	0.395	0.891			
Pride	0.608	0.339	0.561	0.656	0.471	0.877		
Sense of Community	0.471	0.229	0.604	0.539	0.311	0.560	0.802	
Team Identification	0.333	0.214	0.452	0.389	0.139	0.419	0.688	0.827

Table 5.9 Discriminant validity Heterotrait- Monotrait (HTMT)

	AG	CA	LMP	MC	PA	PR	SC	TI
Attending games								
Current Achievement	0.321							

	AG	CA	LMP	MC	PA	PR	SC	TI
licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.613	0.240						
Media Consumption	0.704	0.259	0.600					
Past Achievement	0.430	0.345	0.265	0.442				
Pride	0.671	0.376	0.609	0.724	0.532			
Sense of Community	0.521	0.250	0.658	0.595	0.352	0.620		
Team Identification	0.364	0.233	0.492	0.426	0.154	0.459	0.780	

#### 5.3.4. Collinearity Statistics:

The third test conducted to measure the validity of the study is Collinearity Statistics. Multicollinearity is measured using inner variance inflection factor (VIF). Collinearity tests examine the relationship between two or more constructs. Hair et al, (2014) indicated that the value should not exceed 5.0, and as indicated in Table 5.10, all the VIF are lower than 5.0.

Table 5.10 Collinearity statistics inner VIF values

	AG	CA	LMP	MC	PA	PR	SC	TI
Current Achievement						1.106	1.106	1.106
Past Achievement						1.106	1.106	1.106
Pride	1.461		1.461	1.461				
Sense of Community	2.284		2.284	2.284				
Team Identification	1.903		1.903	1.903				

## 5.4 Structural Model Assessment

After ensuring that the data are reliable and valid, the next step is to examine the theoretical hypothesis relationships. This section presents the direct effects, indirect effects, and the model fit.

### 5.4.1 Direct Effects

The first test used is the path coefficient test through bootstrapping. The test was two tailed and the weighting scheme was path, significant T statistics greater than 1.96 (Hair et al., 2014). To test the significant of the hypothesis, the  $p$  value should be  $< 0.05$ , ( $\beta$ ) presented as the original sample column.

The path coefficient shows that there was a positive significant relationship between Current Achievement and Pride ( $\beta = 0.213$ ,  $t = 5.611$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Current Achievement and Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.146$ ,  $t = 3.499$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Current Achievement and Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.189$ ,  $t = 4.185$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Past Achievement and Pride ( $\beta = 0.405$ ,  $t = 6.259$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Past Achievement and Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.266$ ,  $t = 5.087$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Pride and Attending Games ( $\beta = 0.502$ ,  $t = 8.631$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Pride and Licensed merchandise purchase ( $\beta = 0.323$ ,  $t = 6.231$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Pride and Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.517$ ,  $t = 9.105$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Sense of Community and Attending Games ( $\beta = 0.202$ ,  $t = 3.419$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) Sense of Community and Licensed Merchandise Purchase ( $\beta = 0.390$ ,  $t = 5.985$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and Sense of Community and Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.248$ ,  $t = 4.314$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

Moreover, the path coefficient shows that there was no significant relationship between Past Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.080$ ,  $t = 1.875$ ,  $p = 0.061$ ), Team Identification  $\rightarrow$  Attending games ( $\beta = -0.016$ ,  $t = 0.325$ ,  $p = 0.745$ ), Team Identification

-> Licensed Merchandise Purchase ( $\beta = 0.048$ ,  $t = 0.801$ ,  $p = 0.423$ ) and Team Identification -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.002$ ,  $t = 0.039$ ,  $p = 0.969$ ) So, H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H13, H14 and H15 are supported, and H4, H10, H11 and H12 are rejected (See Table 5.11)

Table 5.11 Path coefficient

	Hypothesis path	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
H1	Current Achievement -> Pride	0.213	0.211	0.038	5.611	0.000
H5	Current Achievement -> Sense of Community	0.146	0.148	0.042	3.499	0.000
H3	Current Achievement -> Team Identification	0.189	0.191	0.045	4.185	0.000
H2	Past Achievement -> Pride	0.405	0.399	0.065	6.259	0.000
H6	Past Achievement -> Sense of Community	0.266	0.265	0.052	5.087	0.000
H4	Past Achievement -> Team Identification	0.080	0.082	0.043	1.875	0.061
H8	Pride -> Attending games	0.502	0.498	0.058	8.631	0.000
H7	Pride -> Licensed merchandise purchase	0.323	0.321	0.052	6.231	0.000
H9	Pride -> Media Consumption	0.517	0.512	0.057	9.105	0.000
H14	Sense of Community -> Attending games	0.202	0.203	0.059	3.419	0.001
H13	Sense of Community -> Licensed merchandise purchase	0.390	0.392	0.065	5.985	0.000
H15	Sense of Community -> Media Consumption	0.248	0.249	0.058	4.314	0.000
H11	Team Identification -> Attending Games	-0.016	-0.015	0.050	0.325	0.745
H10	Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.048	0.048	0.060	0.801	0.423



	Hypothesis path	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
H12	Team Identification -> Media Consumption	0.002	0.005	0.044	0.039	0.969

#### 5.4.2 Specific Indirect Effects

The indirect effects were conducted to measure the mediating role of pride, team identification, and sense of community between current and past achievement of the purchase intention.

First, we start with pride. Table 5.12 shows that there are indirect effects for pride, and that pride mediates the relation between current achievement and the three-purchase intention method used in this study, Current Achievement -> Pride -> Attending Games ( $\beta$  0.107,  $t = 4.222$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Current Achievement -> Pride -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase ( $\beta$  0.069,  $t = 3.808$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and Current Achievement -> Pride -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.110,  $t = 4.332$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Also, pride mediated the relation between past achievement and three-purchase intention method used in this study: Past Achievement -> Pride -> Attending Games ( $\beta$  0.203,  $t = 4.412$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Past Achievement -> Pride -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.209,  $t = 4.406$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and Past Achievement -> Pride -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase ( $\beta$  0.131,  $t = 4.242$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

Furthermore, concerning the second mediation relation between sense of community and three-purchase intention method used in this study, the analysis discovered a significant indirect effect for all the variables mediated by sense of community; first with current achievement: Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Licensed merchandise purchase ( $\beta$  0.057,  $t = 3.028$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.036,  $t = 2.738$ ,  $p =$

0.006) and Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Attending Games ( $\beta$  0.030,  $t = 2.375$ ,  $p = 0.018$ ), then with past achievement, Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Attending Games ( $\beta$  0.054,  $t = 2.709$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.066,  $t = 3.067$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) and Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Licensed merchandise purchase ( $\beta$  0.104,  $t = 3.945$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

Finally, the analysis shows that there was no mediating role for team identification between current and past achievement and all the purchase intentions variables were used in this study, starting with current achievement: Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.000,  $t = 0.038$ ,  $p = 0.970$ ), Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Attending games ( $\beta$  -0.003,  $t = 0.314$ ,  $p = 0.753$ ) and Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Licensed merchandise purchase ( $\beta$  0.009,  $t = 0.765$ ,  $p = 0.444$ ). This was followed by Past Achievement: Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Media Consumption ( $\beta$  0.000,  $t = 0.034$ ,  $p = 0.973$ ), Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Attending games ( $\beta$  -0.001,  $t = 0.282$ ,  $p = 0.778$ ) and Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase ( $\beta$  -0.001,  $t = 0.282$ ,  $p = 0.753$ ).

**Table 5.12 Specific indirect effects**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.057	0.058	0.019	3.028	0.002
Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Media Consumption	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.034	0.973
Past Achievement -> Pride -> Attending Games	0.203	0.200	0.046	4.412	0.000
Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Media Consumption	0.000	0.001	0.009	0.038	0.970
Past Achievement -> Pride -> Media Consumption	0.209	0.206	0.048	4.406	0.000
Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Media Consumption	0.036	0.037	0.013	2.738	0.006
Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Attending Games	-0.001	-0.001	0.005	0.282	0.778
Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Attending Games	-0.003	-0.003	0.010	0.314	0.753
Past Achievement -> Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.004	0.004	0.006	0.642	0.521
Current Achievement -> Pride -> Attending Games	0.107	0.106	0.025	4.222	0.000
Current Achievement -> Pride -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.069	0.068	0.018	3.808	0.000

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Past Achievement -> Pride -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.131	0.129	0.031	4.242	0.000
Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Attending Games	0.054	0.054	0.020	2.709	0.007
Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Media Consumption	0.066	0.066	0.022	3.067	0.002
Past Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.104	0.104	0.026	3.945	0.000
Current Achievement -> Sense of Community -> Attending Games	0.030	0.030	0.012	2.375	0.018
Current Achievement -> Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Purchase	0.009	0.009	0.012	0.765	0.444
Current Achievement -> Pride -> Media Consumption	0.110	0.109	0.025	4.332	0.000

### 5.4.3 Model Fit:

#### *a. effect size*

Explanatory power (R-square) and effect size (f-square) are used to quantify the model performance in PLS3 (Mimoun & Ingrid, 2015). For the  $f^2$  value equals 0.02, it is considered a small effect,  $f^2 = 0.15$  is considered medium effect, and  $f^2=0.35$  is considered a large effect (Cohen, 1988).

So according to Table 5.13, there was a small effect for current achievement on pride (0.056), sense of community (0.022) and team identification (0.034); for the past achievement. It was a large effect on pride (0.201), and the small effect on sense of community (0.072) and no effect on team identification (0.006). For pride there was a large effect on attending games (0.285) and media consumption and small effect on licensed merchandise intention (0.127). For sense of community, there was an effect on attending games (0.029), licensed merchandise intention (0.119) and media consumption (0.051). Finally, for team identification, there is no effect on attending games (0.000), licensed merchandise intention (0.002) and media consumption (0.000).

Table 5.13 Effect size ( $f^2$ )

	AG	CA	LMP	MC	PA	PR	SC	TI
Current Achievement						0.056	0.022	0.034
Past Achievement						0.201	0.072	0.006
Pride	0.285		0.127	0.347				
Sense of Community	0.029		0.119	0.051				
Team Identification	0.000		0.002	0.000				

*b. Explanatory power ( $R^2$ )*

R-squared calculates the level of variance that the independent variables in the model could cause in the dependent variables. The value for a substantial model is 0.75, whereas the values for a moderate level and a weak level are at 0.50, and 0.25, respectively (Hair et al., 2014). The model weakly predicted attending game (0.395),

licensed merchandise intention (0.439), media consumption (0.473), pride (0.263), and very weakly predicted sense of community (0.116) and team identification (0.052)

Table 5.14 R-Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Attending games	0.395	0.391
Licensed merchandise intention	0.439	0.435
Media consumption	0.473	0.470
Pride	0.263	0.260
Sense of Community	0.116	0.113
Team Identification	0.052	0.048

*c. Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)*

The SRMR defined as the standardized variance between the observed and expected correlation. For Standardized Root Mean Square Residual, the model is perfectly fit if the value is 0.000 and it is a good fit if it is less than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) and as shown in the below table, the model is in a good fit.

Table 5.15 SRMR

Saturated Model	
SRMR	0.050

All these results indicate that our structural model is a good fit.

### 5.5 Multi Group Analysis (MGA)

Multi-group analysis (MGA) is a test operated using Smart PLS3 to assess the differences among the selected groups where accepted significant *p-values* are lower than

0.05 (Cheah et al., 2020). Two tests are used for this purpose: PLS-MGA and bootstrapping.

### 5.5.1 Comparing between Fans in Qatar and Madrid

#### a. PLS-MGA

This research is exclusive for Real Madrid fans in Qatar and Madrid. PLS-MGA test shows that there were no significant differences between Real Madrid fans in Qatar and in Madrid in terms of the direct relations in measured model. As shown in Table 5.16, all  $p$  values were higher than 0.05. Current Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Pride (diff- $\beta$  = -0.074,  $p$  = 0.430), Current Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Sense of Community (diff- $\beta$  = 0.117,  $p$  = 0.263), Current Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Team Identification (diff- $\beta$  = 0.077,  $p$  = 0.478), Past Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Pride (diff- $\beta$  = 0.135,  $p$  = 0.311), Past Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Sense of Community (diff- $\beta$  = -0.026,  $p$  = 0.828), Past Achievement  $\rightarrow$  Team Identification (diff- $\beta$  = -0.098,  $p$  = 0.390), Pride  $\rightarrow$  Attending Games ( $\beta$  = 0.005,  $p$  = 0.957), Pride  $\rightarrow$  Licensed Merchandise Intention (diff- $\beta$  = -0.011,  $p$  = 0.937), Pride  $\rightarrow$  Media Consumption (diff- $\beta$  = 0.078,  $p$  = 0.560), Sense of Community  $\rightarrow$  Attending games (diff- $\beta$  = 0.081,  $p$  = 0.568), Sense of Community  $\rightarrow$  Licensed Merchandise Intention (diff- $\beta$  = 0.180,  $p$  = 0.218), Sense of Community  $\rightarrow$  Media Consumption (diff- $\beta$  = 0.052,  $p$  = 0.696), Team Identification  $\rightarrow$  Attending Games (diff- $\beta$  = -0.011,  $p$  = 0.924), Team Identification  $\rightarrow$  Licensed Merchandise Intention (diff- $\beta$  = -0.080,  $p$  = 0.527), Team Identification  $\rightarrow$  Media Consumption (diff- $\beta$  = -0.110,  $p$  = 0.527).

Table 5.16 PLS-MGA place of living tests

Hypothesis path	Path Coefficients- diff (Qatar - Madrid)	p-Value original 1-tailed (Qatar vs. Madrid)	p-Value new (Qatar vs. Madrid)
Current Achievement -> Pride	-0.074	0.785	0.430
Current Achievement -> Sense of Community	0.117	0.131	0.263
Current Achievement -> Team Identification	0.077	0.239	0.478
Past Achievement -> Pride	0.135	0.155	0.311
Past Achievement -> Sense of Community	-0.026	0.586	0.828
Past Achievement -> Team Identification	-0.098	0.805	0.390
Pride -> Attending games	0.005	0.478	0.957
Pride -> Licensed merchandise intention	-0.011	0.532	0.937
Pride -> Media consumption	0.078	0.280	0.560
Sense of Community -> Attending games	0.081	0.284	0.568
Sense of Community -> Licensed merchandise intention	0.180	0.109	0.218
Sense of Community -> Media consumption	0.052	0.348	0.696
Team Identification -> Attending games	-0.011	0.538	0.924
Team Identification -> Licensed merchandise intention	-0.080	0.736	0.527
Team Identification -> Media consumption	-0.110	0.832	0.336



*b. Bootstrapping:*

Bootstrapping tests results shows the real differences between the between fans in Qatar and Madrid; the significant paths for Qatar were Current Achievement -> Pride ( $\beta = 0.258$ ,  $t = 16.034$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Current Achievement -> Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.195$ ,  $t = 4.335$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Current Achievement -> Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.221$ ,  $t = 4.467$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Past Achievement -> Pride ( $\beta = 0.427$ ,  $t = 4.996$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Past Achievement -> Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.280$ ,  $t = 5.236$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Pride -> Attending Games ( $\beta = 0.478$ ,  $t = 6.119$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Pride -> Licensed Merchandise Intention ( $\beta = 0.331$ ,  $t = 5.676$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Pride -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.551$ ,  $t = 8.431$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Sense of Community -> Attending Games ( $\beta = 0.236$ ,  $t = 3.488$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Sense of Community -> Licensed Merchandise Intention ( $\beta = 0.417$ ,  $t = 5.419$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and Sense of Community -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.238$ ,  $t = 3.635$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

The non-significant paths for Qatar were Past Achievement -> Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.076$ ,  $t = 1.661$ ,  $p = 0.097$ ) Team Identification -> Attending Games ( $\beta = -0.015$ ,  $t = 0.247$ ,  $p = 0.805$ ) Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Intention ( $\beta = 0.027$ ,  $t = 0.381$ ,  $p = 0.703$ ) and Team Identification -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = -0.018$ ,  $t = 0.364$ ,  $p = 0.716$ )

The significant paths for Madrid were Current Achievement -> Pride ( $\beta = 0.255$ ,  $t = 3.063$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), Past Achievement -> Pride ( $\beta = 0.292$ ,  $t = 2.886$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) Past Achievement -> Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.306$ ,  $t = 2.871$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) Pride -> Attending Games ( $\beta = 0.473$ ,  $t = 4.887$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) Pride -> Licensed Merchandise

Intention ( $\beta = 0.342$ ,  $t = 3.098$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) Pride -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.473$ ,  $t = 4.138$ ,  $p = 0.000$ )

The non-significant paths for Madrid were Current Achievement -> Sense of Community ( $\beta = 0.078$ ,  $t = 0.791$ ,  $p = 0.429$ ) Current Achievement -> Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.143$ ,  $t = 1.442$ ,  $p = 0.149$ ) Past Achievement -> Team Identification ( $\beta = 0.174$ ,  $t = 1.656$ ,  $p = 0.098$ ) Sense of Community -> Attending games ( $\beta = 0.155$ ,  $t = 1.270$ ,  $p = 0.204$ ) Sense of Community -> Licensed Merchandise Intention ( $\beta = 0.237$ ,  $t = 1.906$ ,  $p = 0.057$ ) Sense of Community -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.186$ ,  $t = 1.735$ ,  $p = 0.083$ ) Team Identification -> Attending Games ( $\beta = -0.003$ ,  $t = 0.032$ ,  $p = 0.974$ ) Team Identification -> Licensed Merchandise Intention ( $\beta = 0.107$ ,  $t = 0.994$ ,  $p = 0.320$ ) Team Identification -> Media Consumption ( $\beta = 0.092$ ,  $t = 0.892$ ,  $p = 0.373$ )

Accordingly for the hypothesis, Table 5.17 shows the rejected and accepted path for all hypothesis separated Madrid fans from Qatar fans.

Table 5.17 Hypothesis path separated.

	Hypothesis path	Qatar	Madrid
H1	Current Achievement -> Pride	Accepted	Accepted
H5	Current Achievement -> Sense of Community	Accepted	Rejected
H3	Current Achievement -> Team Identification	Accepted	Rejected
H2	Past Achievement -> Pride	Accepted	Accepted
H6	Past Achievement -> Sense of Community	Accepted	Accepted
H4	Past Achievement -> Team Identification	Rejected	Rejected
H8	Pride -> Attending games	Accepted	Accepted
H7	Pride -> Licensed merchandise purchase	Accepted	Accepted

	Hypothesis path	Qatar	Madrid
H9	Pride -> Media Consumption	Accepted	Accepted
H14	Sense of Community -> Attending games	Accepted	Rejected
H13	Sense of Community -> Licensed merchandise purchase	Accepted	Rejected
H15	Sense of Community -> Media Consumption	Accepted	Rejected
H11	Team Identification -> Attending games	Rejected	Rejected
H10	Team Identification -> Licensed merchandise purchase	Rejected	Rejected
H12	Team Identification -> Media Consumption	Rejected	Rejected

Table 5.18 Bootstrapping test a comparison between local and distant fans

	Path Coefficients Original (Madrid)	Path Coefficients Original (Qatar)	Path Coefficients Mean (Madrid)	Path Coefficients Mean (Qatar)	STDEV (Madrid)	STDEV (Qatar)	t-Value (Madrid)	t-Value (Qatar)	p-Value (Madrid)	p-Value (Qatar)
Current Achievement -> Pride	0.255	0.181	0.258	0.176	0.083	0.046	3.063	3.927	0.002	0.000
Current Achievement -> Sense of Community	0.078	0.195	0.082	0.197	0.099	0.045	0.791	4.335	0.429	0.000
Current Achievement -> Team Identification	0.143	0.221	0.151	0.226	0.099	0.049	1.442	4.467	0.149	0.000
Past Achievement -> Pride	0.292	0.427	0.284	0.417	0.101	0.085	2.886	4.996	0.004	0.000
Past Achievement -> Sense of Community	0.306	0.280	0.299	0.278	0.107	0.053	2.871	5.236	0.004	0.000
Past Achievement -> Team Identification	0.174	0.076	0.170	0.077	0.105	0.046	1.656	1.661	0.098	0.097
Pride -> Attending games	0.473	0.478	0.473	0.474	0.097	0.078	4.887	6.119	0.000	0.000
Pride -> Licensed merchandise intention	0.342	0.331	0.344	0.328	0.110	0.058	3.098	5.676	0.002	0.000

	Path Coefficients Original (Madrid)	Path Coefficients Original (Qatar)	Path Coefficients Mean (Madrid)	Path Coefficients Mean (Qatar)	STDEV (Madrid)	STDEV (Qatar)	t-Value (Madrid)	t-Value (Qatar)	p-Value (Madrid)	p-Value (Qatar)
Pride -> Media consumption	0.473	0.551	0.469	0.547	0.114	0.065	4.138	8.431	0.000	0.000
Sense of Community - > Attending games	0.155	0.236	0.158	0.238	0.122	0.068	1.270	3.488	0.204	0.000
Sense of Community - > Licensed merchandise intention	0.237	0.417	0.234	0.420	0.124	0.077	1.906	5.419	0.057	0.000
Sense of Community - > Media consumption	0.186	0.238	0.178	0.239	0.107	0.065	1.735	3.635	0.083	0.000
Team Identification -> Attending games	-0.003	-0.015	-0.004	-0.014	0.100	0.059	0.032	0.247	0.974	0.805
Team Identification -> Licensed merchandise intention	0.107	0.027	0.105	0.026	0.108	0.071	0.994	0.381	0.320	0.703
Team Identification -> Media consumption	0.092	-0.018	0.100	-0.015	0.104	0.049	0.892	0.364	0.373	0.716

## 5.6 Discussion

This thesis focuses on the influence of achievement on football fans team identification, pride, and sense of community, and aims to study the influence of fans team identification, pride, and sense of community on licensed merchandise purchase intention, attending games and media consumption. PLS SME were used to examine the relation between dependent and independent variable in the proposed model. The indirect effects were also tested to measure the mediation effects. This study proposed fifteen of which eleven were accepted and four was rejected; for each hypothesis, a sub examination was conducted to investigate the hypothesis results in each country.

The first two hypotheses were H1: Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride, and H2: Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' sense of pride. According to this study, both were accepted in Qatar and Madrid. These results confirmed the research direction of (Chang, et al. 2017; Chang et al. 2019; Gordon et al., 2019; Decrop & Derbaix, 2010) and others who stated that fans level of pride could be affected by the team's achievement regardless of whether it is current or past and that fans talk proudly about their teams' history.

H3 and H4 were about the relation between achievement and team identification and its shows some differences between fans in Qatar and Madrid. H3: Current achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification and H4: Past achievement has a positive effect on fans' team identification. The results shows that H3 was rejected in Madrid but accepted in Qatar. H4 was accepted in Madrid and Qatar. Chang et al. (2017) said that fans highly identified with their team and didn't get affected by the team results as well. Blank et al. (2018) stated that the fans are identified with a team and not

its results. Also, Bristow et al. (2010), Campbell et al. (2004), and Wann and Branscombe (1990) as well as others stated that highly identified fans didn't get affected by team achievements because they are attached to the team and its history. The results rejected H3 in Qatar only but it was accepted in Madrid, which indicates that overseas fans' level of identification could be affected by the team's current achievement; on the other hand, local fans will stay highly identified regardless of the results.

Next two hypotheses were H5: Current achievement has simple effect on fans sense of community and H6: Past achievements has a direct effect on fans' sense of community. Prior studies indicate that people with a low sense of community are more likely to change their teams when they face some difficulties in achieving good results, as confirmed in previous studies (Mahony & Moorman, 1999; Theodorakis, et al., 2012). H6 was accepted in Qatar and Madrid, and H5 was accepted in Qatar only but not in Madrid. This shows that the sense of community of fans living in the city of the club did not get affected by the absence of achievement currently. This was consistent with the views of Fillis and Mackay (2014) who indicated that fans will be involved in the team community regardless of the results.

Moving on to the first variable tested with purchase intention, pride was tested three times - H7: Pride has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, H8: Pride has a positive effect on fans attending game intention, and H9: Pride has a positive impact on fans' media consumption. As mentioned before, each hypothesis was tested separately with fans in Qatar and in Madrid. All the hypotheses sub hypotheses was accepted in Qatar and Madrid, which is consistent with the findings of Decrop and Derbaix (2010), Soscia (2007), Choi (2019) and Caetano (2019), who stated

that pride has a direct impact in fans' purchase intention and repurchase intention. Kirk, et al. (2015) opined that whenever fans have a sense of pride with their team, they will be open to purchasing their teams' products. Decrop and Derbaix (2010) indicated in their research that proud fans are more likely to purchase the team merchandise and spread positive posts about their team in all the communication channels, which is consistent with this study's results: pride has a direct impact on purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game and fans' media consumption, and this is applicable to all fans who are living in the city of the club or far away.

The next variable was sense of community; the three-hypothesis related to this variable were H13: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed. H14: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans attending game intention. H15: Sense of community has a positive effect on fans' media consumption. All three hypothesis were supported, but the interesting thing here is that all the three hypotheses were rejected in Madrid and accepted in Qatar, which suggests that there is a major difference in between fans with a sense of community living in the city of the club and those living abroad. For Real Madrid fans who are located in Madrid sense of community didn't affect their purchase intention, but for the fans living in Qatar, sense of community did affect their purchase intention as stated on some literatures. Funk et al. (2012) and Theodorakis, et al. (2012) said that sense of community has a direct effect on fans attending games, following their team on media, and purchasing team merchandise. In addition, Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2017), Ridinger and Funk (2006) and Wear and Heere (2020) add that fans should purchase the team merchandise and attend games, which will also lead to increased sense of community.



The last variable was team identification; this variable also was tested three times. H10: Team identification has a positive effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise. H11: Team identification has a positive effect on fans attending game intention, and H12: Team identification has a positive effect on fans' media consumption. All these hypotheses were rejected in both Madrid and Qatar. Although it was not stated in previous literature, this study observed that team identification has an effect on fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans' media consumption (Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2018; Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Kwak, 2014). Other scholars mentioned in Chapters three and four found a positive relationship between team identification and purchase intention.

Finally, when the mediating effect was tested, the results shows that pride mediated the relation between current and past achievement with the fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention, and fans' media consumption. Moreover, the mediation relation tests were performed for sense of community; the analysis shows a significant indirect effect for current and past achievements mediated by sense of community with fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans' media consumption. Lastly, for team identification, the results shows that that there is no mediating role for team identification between current and past achievement with fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans, media consumption

## **5.7 Chapter Conclusion**

As a summary for this chapter, all the data analysis needed for this study were conducted through Smart PLS3 and SPSS 28, starting from the personal information,

descriptive statistics shows that the largest number of participants in the study was males from Qatar, furthermore the measurement model assessment found that the data are valid and reliable. In addition, the structural model assessment found that H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H13, H14 and H15 are supported, and that H4, H10, H11 and H12 are rejected. Finally, MGA analysis found that there are some differences in six hypothesis paths when we separated fans in Qatar and Madrid. Finally, in the discussion, an overview was given about the hypothesis tests.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. After describing theoretical and managerial implications of the study, it discusses the research limitations and future research directions.

### **6.1 Conclusion**

This thesis presents multi hypotheses model to study the relationships between team related variables (past and present achievements), fans related variables (team pride, team identification and sense of community) and three different purchase intentions (purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans media consumption). All the relations between variables were compared between local fans (fans living in Madrid) and distant fans (fans living in Qatar).

For the relationship between achievements and pride, this study indicates that there is a significant relation between them; in simple words, when a team wins, his fan feels proud and declares that they are fans of this team proudly. Nevertheless, fans are also proud of their team history if their team has a good history and they will proudly even if their team has recently had a difficult time as the history compensates them for the failures of the present.

Moving forward, for the relationship between achievements and team identification the literature stated that fans with low identification will be affected with the team current or past results and others they might not get affected, and this thesis analysis shows that this is true for fans of Real Madrid who live in Madrid but for fans of

Real Madrid who live in Qatar, it's partially true given that our results show that fans identification gets affected by current achievement.

The last variable tested with achievement was sense of community; the results show a significant relationship between past achievement and sense of community, which demonstrates that fans of teams with a history could be more involved in the team community, but for current achievement, the significant relation was for fans in Qatar only, which indicates that the fans of Real Madrid in Madrid will have high sense of community independently from team results.

The next step involves testing the relationship between pride with fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans' media consumption; the results were significant. It was shown that proud fans are more likely to spend money on their team, watch them, attend their games, buy their merchandise, and follow their news. Further, for a fan to declare his pride, he must do tangible things like wear the team's clothes so that everyone can see that he is a fan of this team.

Furthermore, relationships between sense of community with fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans' media consumption was measured, and the results are divided fans in two segments: for fans in Qatar sense of community is impactful for purchase intention, whereas fans in Madrid didn't need a sense of community to purchase Real Madrid merchandise or to attend games.

As well as the two variables before, team identification relation with fans purchasing team licensed merchandise, fans attending game intention and fans' media consumption was tested, and the results indicate no effect of team identification on the

different types of purchase intentions, which contradicts the literature review showing a significant relation between team identification and purchase intention.

Generally, the most important result of this thesis is the difference between fans in Qatar and Madrid in specific and the difference between fans living in the city of the club and fans living far away (distant fans) in general; there are several differences between each group showed in this thesis. Characteristics of each segment are different as a result of the place of living and the environment of each group. The surrounding environment greatly affects the feelings of the fans, in addition to the challenge that occurs between the clubs within the same country, which makes each person become a stronger fanatic for his team being with a large group of fans in the city that supports the same team and other factors that affect the fans' feelings and behaviors. Managerial and theoretical implication section will further highlight this difference.

Football has become a huge business industry with the inflation in players' salaries and prices; obtaining sources of income for clubs has become a tedious matter, and club owners are trying to arrange the an increasing number of sources of income, whether they are inside or outside the club's city, and if there are opportunities outside the city, club owners will certainly seek to take advantage of them. This research highlight such matters that may be useful for club owners.

In conclusion, fans are considered the main driver for clubs and nowadays, having normal fans within the city of the club does not suffice, so developing the level of engagement and loyalty of fans is a crucial factor that helps gain the largest number of fans outside the city of the club, which is crucial factor too, and having both together will be very beneficial for the team, but the team should work harder and strive for

achievements that meet the aspirations of fans and build a legacy, altogether transforming the club from an ordinary team into a football empire.

### **6.3 Managerial Implications**

This research has several valuable implications for the club owners, managers, and marketers. Club owners now should acknowledge that they need every single individual to be a fan of his team whether they live in his country or anywhere else in the world because football is a global sport. Club managers should start studying all available markets all over the world and observe each culture and what drives their behaviors in order to identify a marketing strategy first to gain new fans and to develop them into loyal, proud, and committed fans who feel personal success and failure in the success or failure of the team. Extending the same marketing strategy to all markets will not benefit the team appropriately due to the difference of each culture and country as we saw in this study.

Teams with rich past and poor future should focus on their history as Rodriguez-Pomeda et al. (2016) stated that Real Madrid managers have always highlighted the legacy that their team has in the Champions League so even if the team has is not doing well, they have something solid to build up their strategy on. Nevertheless, teams with poor past should focus on other things to ensure their fans loyalty. If they are currently performing well, then that could also attract new followers since Kwon and Kwak (2014) mentioned that good reputation also attracts fans.

Having club fan community everywhere is one of the main factors that club owners should focus on, they are supposed to target countries which contains many

football fans with good purchasing power and start a club fan community and/or open official stores.

Additionally, club managers in their marketing strategy should focus on anything could increase fans sense of pride such as statement, legacy, stars, etc. All this will enhance the sense of pride within the fan community and this will lead fans to purchase more, follow more and attend more. Teams should focus more on fans who attend the games to offer them the access to visit the store before and after the match, because in this period fans are highly identified and proud with the team and they will pay money without thinking.

Finally, people call fans the twelfth man of the team, but managers should know that the fans are a top priority for the team; their benefit is not only from their attendance at the matches and encouragements behind the screens, but if there are appropriate promotional campaigns, the benefit will be larger and enhance the mass attendance and the reputation of the club. These days, the fan controls a large part of the team income. They shouldn't be underestimated, and there must be great attention from the club management to get, maintain, and develop fans from normal ones into loyal/committed ones.

#### **6.4 Theoretical Implications**

Besides managerial implications, this thesis offers some valuable and interesting theoretical implications, given the new idea that this study pointed, which is the comparison between fans in Qatar and Madrid. Some of the findings of this study were in line with previous research but some of it was in contrast and given the large sampling of

Qatar participants' comparison with Madrid, the results show some interesting implications.

Five of the hypotheses was accepted in Qatar and rejected in Madrid or vice versa, which gives an indication that fans have some differences, and their emotions and behaviors are not the same. For the future studies, they should start focusing on both because as mentioned before football speaks international language.

The previous studies shows that there is direct relation between team identification relation with purchase intention (James & Trail 2008; Funk et, al 2012; Theodorakis, et al., 2012; Wakefield, K. 2016; Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012), but this thesis shows that the relation between team identification and purchase intention are not significant. This has opened a new door to investigate more about this construct in different markets.

Regarding sense of community this study shows that this construct differs from fans living in the city of the club and others, some constructs shouldn't generalize on all fans, because nowadays in football, fans are everywhere and every one of them has different behavior and emotions. So studying fans all over the world is interesting field, especially for clubs with fans all over the world.

Moreover, this thesis undoubtedly agreed with other studies in terms of the direct effect of past achievements on pride, and the direct effect of pride on purchase intention, in both fans in Qatar and Madrid. This indicates the importance of pride as the main driver of fans' emotions and behaviors.

Furthermore, this thesis gives an important implication for research departments of the sport clubs, that there are a lot of factors that drive fans' purchase behavior, which



they can delve deeper into. Additionally, they should start doing more research to look for sports that attract more fans and do some research to find more about that market. These findings could open a new path of research for European sports clubs to study the in Qatar in specific and in GCC in general.

Finally, building on this research model, other studies could make comparisons between fans living in the city of the club and fans living in abroad for other clubs to explore the difference more.

### **6.5 Limitations**

Every study conducted has some limitation; presenting some of these limitations could help other scholars to fill this gap. The first limitation for this study is the small number of participants in this study from Madrid in comparison with those from Qatar. This was because of the difficulty in reaching the target audience in Madrid; even with using Amazon Mechanical Turk, a limited number of people were reached. Further, some research methodologies could be used to enhance the results of this study such as focus group and in-depth interviews, but given the paucity of time and health situation, this study only focused on the quantitative method.

Also, the number of people that started the survey but did not complete it could be considered one of the limitations. Some participants mentioned that the survey was very long, which could explain this phenomenon. The study focused on only one team, which is Real Madrid, and there are a lot of fans who support different teams like to participate and express their feelings.

Finally, sometimes, a fan's opinion could be biased when it comes to their favorite team; they want to protect the best for their team, so they may say something that

is not true or relevant as of now. In addition, the timing of filling the survey could play a role in the fans feeling considering the last game their team plays.

## **6.6 Future Research Directions**

The context of sports marketing in research has unlimited areas that offer future research directions. This section offers some unique research opportunities that can be developed from this thesis.

Firstly, the Qatari and GCC audience is considered an interesting topic to study with other clubs given that there are a lot of football fans who ask if their other study relates to their favorite club so they can participate.

Second, there are some other variables that could be investigated, such as regional attachment and how it could affect the purchase intention, also how fans in Qatar and Madrid fans behave in terms of word of mouth.

The most important direction that this thesis opens to other researchers is the comparison between local fans or fans living in the city of the club and distant fans living all over the world not just in Qatar. There are some sports that could be interesting in other countries too like China, Egypt, KSA, and others.

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## APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

We would like to invite you to participate in this research study which is approved by Qatar University Institutional Review Board with the approval number QU-IRB 1497-E/21. The study title is “The effect of achievements, Pride, team identification, sense of community and regional attachment on football fans purchase intention: a comparison study between Real Madrid Fans in Spain and Qatar”. If you have any questions related to ethical compliance of the study, you may contact them at [QU-IRB@qu.edu.qa](mailto:QU-IRB@qu.edu.qa).

The survey is conducted as part of master thesis For MSc Marketing program at Qatar university and your participation in this survey is highly appreciated.

The study aims to investigate the difference between within club city fans and abroad fans in the purchasing Real Madrid products intent. The nature of the study is comparison study between fans in Qatar and Madrid.

This study target only those who are 18 years old of age and above and must be Real Madrid fan and living in Qatar or Madrid. Any participation not in compliance with these conditions will be excluded the sample size targeted is between 500-600 participants.

The survey should not take more than 10-15 minutes of your time. The information collected will be kept strictly confidential, secured and password protected. The data will be used for the purpose of this study only and will be erased after finishing the analysis of the results. Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. You may skip any question or withdraw from this Survey at any time. We do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research, the surveys will not contain information that will personally identify you. You will receive no direct benefits from this study however your answers will be valuable to understand more in this field.

Do not hesitate to contact the researchers if you have any questions about the study or this questionnaire; you may contact me Abdulrhman al-Obaidli via email at [200701950@qu.edu.qa] or by phone +974 66663961 or my supervisor Mohamed Slim Ben Mimoun via email at [mbenmimoun@qu.edu.qa] or by phone +974 4403 7149.

If you would like to obtain the results you can contact the researchers.

Please indicate that you have read, understood, and agree to participate; kindly click on “Next” to start the survey. If you do not wish to participate, kindly close this window.

Thank you for your participation.

Q1. Are you a fan of Real Madrid?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If you answer Yes, please proceed to the next question

If your answer is No, many thanks for your time and interest, you can stop the questionnaire, this study is targeting only Real Madrid Fans

Q2. Do you live in

- a. Qatar
- b. Madrid
- c. Other please precise:

If your answer is a or b, please proceed to the next question

If your answer is c, many thanks for your time and interest, you can stop the questionnaire, this study is targeting only Real Madrid Fans living in Doha or Madrid.

Q3. Current achievement: (Chang, Connaughton, Ju, Kim & Kang, 2019)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
CA1. Real Madrid performs excellent currently	5	4	3	2	1
CA2. Currently Real Madrid's record is good	5	4	3	2	1
CA3. Currently Real Madrid is highly ranked.	5	4	3	2	1
CA4. Currently Real Madrid is doing well in the league.	5	4	3	2	1
CA5. Currently Real Madrid is an excellent performing team.	5	4	3	2	1

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Q4. Past achievement: (Chang, Kang, Ko & Connaughton, 2017)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
PA1. Real Madrid has done well in the past 10 years	5	4	3	2	1
PA2. Real Madrid's record has been good for the past 10 years	5	4	3	2	1
PA3. Real Madrid 's performance is good for the past 10 years	5	4	3	2	1

Q.5 Pride: (Sierra & Taute, 2019)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
P1. I love Real Madrid	5	4	3	2	1
P2. I am proud of Real Madrid	5	4	3	2	1
P3. Real Madrid is among my favorite interests.	5	4	3	2	1
P4. I am proud to declare my support of Real Madrid	5	4	3	2	1

Q6. Team identification: (Chang, Ko, Connaughton & Kang, 2016)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
TI1. When Real Madrid wins a game, it feels like a personal success	5	4	3	2	1
TI2. When someone praises Real Madrid, it feels like a personal compliment	5	4	3	2	1
TI3. When someone criticizes Real Madrid, it feels like a personal insult	5	4	3	2	1
TI4. When Real Madrid loses a game, it feels like a personal failure	5	4	3	2	1

Q7. Sense of community: (Sierra & Taute, 2019)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
SC1. The friendships I have with other fans of Real Madrid mean a lot to me.	5	4	3	2	1
SC2. If other fans of Real Madrid planned something, I'd think of it as something 'we' would do rather than something 'they' would do.	5	4	3	2	1
SC3. I see myself as part of the community regarding Real Madrid	5	4	3	2	1
SC4. I frequently refer to other fans of Real Madrid as 'us' or 'we'.	5	4	3	2	1
SC5. I frequently refer to fans of other teams as 'them'.	5	4	3	2	1
SC6. I feel a sense of co-ownership with Real Madrid.	5	4	3	2	1

Purchase intention

Q8. licensed Merchandise Purchase intention: (Kim, Trail & Ko, 2011)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
LP1. I am likely to purchase Real Madrid 's licensed merchandise in the future.	5	4	3	2	1
LP2. In the future, purchasing Real Madrid licensed merchandise is something I plan to do.	5	4	3	2	1
LP3. In the future, I intend to purchase licensed merchandise representing the Real Madrid.	5	4	3	2	1

Q9. Attending game intention: (Kim, Trail & Ko, 2011)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
AG1. I intend to attend Real Madrid's games	5	4	3	2	1
AG2. There is likelihood that I will attend Real Madrid's games as soon as I'm able too.	5	4	3	2	1
AG3. I will attend Real Madrid's games as soon as I'm able too.	5	4	3	2	1

Q10. Media Consumption Intention: (Kim, Trail & Ko, 2011)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
MC1. I will track the news on the Real Madrid through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
MC2. I will watch or listen to the Real Madrid's games through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
MC3. I will support the Real Madrid by watching or listening to Real Madrid's games through the media (e.g., TV, Internet, Radio, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1

Q11. Personal information:

Place of living	Qatar Spain
Age	18-25 26-31 32-38 39-50 Above 50
Marital status	Single Married
Education level	Less than a high school High School Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree Ph.D. or higher
Gender	Male Female
Citizenship	

## APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ETHICS APPROVAL



### Qatar University Institutional Review Board QU-IRB

QU-IRB Registration: IRB-QU-2020-006, QU-IRB, Assurance: IRB-A-QU-2019-0009

DATE: March 1, 2021

TO: Mohamed Slim Ben Mimoun,  
FROM: Qatar University Institutional Review Board (QU-IRB)

PROJECT TITLE: 1713838-1 Title: The effect of achievements, Pride, team identification, sense of community and regional attachment on football fans purchase intention: a comparison study between Real Madrid Fans in Spain and Qatar

QU-IRB REFERENCE #: QU-IRB 1497-E/21  
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS  
DECISION DATE: March 1, 2021  
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Qatar University Institutional Review Board (QU-IRB) has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to Qatar Ministry of Public Health regulations. Please note that exempted proposals do not require renewals however, any changes/modifications to the original submitted protocol should be reported to the committee to seek approval prior to continuation.

**Note: Please note that this approval covers the part of the study that will be conducted in Qatar and it is the investigator's responsibility to check if they need an ethics approval from the Spain and to obtain such approvals.**

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

#### Documents Reviewed:

- Application Form - qu-irb-application-human-subject-V1.2.doc (UPLOADED: 01/28/2021)
- Consent Form - spanish consent.docx (UPLOADED: 02/17/2021)
- Consent Form - english consent.docx (UPLOADED: 02/3/2021)
- Consent Form - Arabic consent.docx (UPLOADED: 02/3/2021)
- Other - QU-IRB Check List.pdf (UPLOADED: 01/28/2021)
- Qatar University - IRB Application - Qatar University - IRB Application (UPLOADED: 02/3/2021)
- Questionnaire/Survey - spanish survey.docx (UPLOADED: 02/17/2021)
- Questionnaire/Survey - english survey.docx (UPLOADED: 02/3/2021)
- Questionnaire/Survey - Arabic survey.docx (UPLOADED: 02/3/2021)

If you have any questions, please contact QU-IRB at 4403 5307 or [qu-irb@qu.edu.qa](mailto:qu-irb@qu.edu.qa). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

Best wishes,



Dr. Ahmed Awaisu  
Chairperson, QU-IRB



This letter has been issued in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Qatar University's records.

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