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The determinants of brand loyalty of football supporters. A study of Bundesliga

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Dissertation written under the supervision of professor Marcin Awdziej Ph.D.

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Abstract

The dissertation addresses the factors which influence loyalty for football supporters with regards to the Bundesliga. Success seemed to be important for football clubs and logically to be important for having a large group of supporters. In terms of membership numbers, the Bundesliga shows a different result. There are several clubs which are not that successful in terms of performance but have a big amount of members. The dissertation gives a deeper insight on this problem and this can be seen in the main research question, that is the determinants influence on loyalty of football supporters, especially for the Bundesliga. The results of online survey of 167 respondents suggest that group affiliation, emotional stimulation, economic motives and self-identity correlate positively with loyalty. Interestingly, the factor of success does not appear to be of an influence on loyalty of supporters. Additionally, four in-depth interviews with football supporters were conducted to gain a deeper insight. The results of the in-depth interviews have strengthened the results of the questionnaire and gave a further insight that values of the club, local proximity, being with friends and sharing memories are the main drivers for loyalty. The research serves as a contribution to the scientific process as preliminary work for metaregression.

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Title of the dissertation: The determinants of brand loyalty of football supporters. A study of Bundesliga

Keywords: Bundesliga, football, brand loyalty, group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity, success

Abstrato

A dissertação aborda os factores que influenciam a lealdade dos adeptos de futebol no que diz respeito à Bundesliga. O sucesso tende a ser importante para os clubes de futebol e, logicamente, é importante ter um grande grupo de adeptos. Em termos de número de membros, a Bundesliga apresenta um resultado diferente. Há vários clubes que não são tão bem sucedidos em termos de desempenho, mas que têm um grande número de membros. A dissertação dá uma visão mais profunda sobre este problema e isto pode ser visto na principal questão de investigação, ou seja, a influência dissuasora na lealdade dos adeptos de futebol, especialmente para a Bundesliga. Os resultados da pesquisa online de 167 inquiridos sugerem que a filiação em grupo, a estimulação emocional, os motivos económicos e a auto-identidade correlacionam-se positivamente com a lealdade. Curiosamente, o factor de sucesso não apela a uma influência sobre a lealdade dos adeptos. Além disso, foram realizadas quatro entrevistas aprofundadas com adeptos de futebol para obter uma visão mais profunda. Os resultados das entrevistas aprofundadas reforçaram os resultados do questionário e deram uma visão adicional de que os valores do clube, a proximidade local, estar com amigos e partilhar memórias são os principais motores da lealdade. A investigação serve como um contributo para o processo científico como trabalho preliminar para a meta-regressão.

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Introduction

The football industry is becoming more and more into the areas of real business and gets the attitude of being commercialized. Some football clubs are going to the stock market, others have investors or owners behind their clubs which spend a big amount of money for transfers. It is all about being successful and being represented at international tournaments and winning national championships. In this commercialized atmosphere, one group has not being taking into consideration but has a big impact on a club's representation: the supporters. This report focuses on the loyalty of the supporters, what influences this loyalty and which type of supporters are existing with a focus on the supporters of the Bundesliga.

The paper consist of six chapters. The first one is the introduction, with an overview of the paper, the second presents the literature review, followed by the third chapter, the methodology, the fourth chapter includes the quantitative and qualitative analysis. The fifth chapter is the discussion and the comparison between theory and analysis. The last chapter six is the conclusion with limitations and future research.

In the current state of knowledge in the literature, there are four types of football supporters: committed/carefree casuals, repertoire fans, fanatics and season ticket holders. They are segmented in different levels depending on their loyalty towards a club. The committed/carefree casuals are the least loyal members of a club and the season ticket holders are the most loyal ones. They are separated between attitudinal loyalty (their attitude towards a club) and behavioral loyalty (their participation in the club). The theory identified five different drivers for loyalty inside football: group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity, economic motives and success of a club.

In the methodology part, the main drivers were put into comparison to the different types of football supporters, based on this, five hypotheses were set up. Furthermore, an online questionnaire was set up, addressing supporters which are interested in football and the Bundesliga. This questionnaire addressed the questions to identify which type of football supporters the participants are and how their attitude towards several drivers of loyalty is. The total number of participants of this questionnaire was 167. In addition to this method, four in-depth interviews were conducted with football supporters of Bundesliga clubs. This qualitative method was chosen to develop a deeper insight in what are the main determinants to influence loyalty.

The analysis part was divided into quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. The quantitative part was done by a hypothesis test with the Kruskal-Wallis test to identify differences between the different types of supporters and their attitude towards motivations and the Spearman's correlation coefficient to identify correlation to verify or falsify the hypothesis. In the qualitative part, the four in-depth interviews were analyzed by the qualitative content analysis.

The results of the quantitative analysis have shown that all motivations from the theory influence loyalty positively, except the success factor which had no significant influence on the participants. Additionally, the motivation of self-identity had the biggest influence to create loyalty towards a club. The in-depth interviews agreed on those results besides success and economic motives all drivers influenced their loyalty. In group affiliation, the main driver was spending time with friends. The family in this motivation was a starting point of loyalty for most of the interviewees. Memories influence the motivation of emotional stimulation. Shared values with the club and local proximity of the club were important for self-identity as an influence. Additionally, the in-depth interviews have shown that success serves as a starting point for being loyal towards a club.

Those results can be used by the marketing of the Bundesliga clubs to increase the brand loyalty of their supporters towards the club. Further research should focus on the internationalization of clubs, how to gain a loyal base of international supporters. The data analysis method can be seen as a limitation of this report as well as the representativity towards the total population.

Chapter 2. Literature review

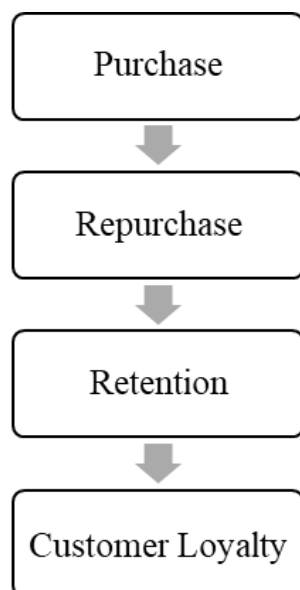
2.1. The concept of customer loyalty

The following part describes the concept of customer loyalty shortly and explains in which context it can be found.

In the academic world, there is no uniform definition of customer loyalty. Oliver (1997, p.432) defined customer loyalty as follows: *'A deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour'*. This definition reflects on the purchasing of a customer towards a product. Other authors defined customer loyalty as follows: *'[...]Loyalty is related to the proportion of expenditure devoted to a specific brand or store'* (Gee, R. et al., 2008, p.360).

In the literature, there are several theories that define customer loyalty as a goal of marketing efforts (G. Watson, 2015). To classify it better customer loyalty belongs to customer relationship management (M. Cavallone, 2017). It is the end of a successful marketing process, which starts with the purchase of a product, followed by the repeat purchase, retention and ends in customer loyalty. There are two main drivers which lead to a purchase. The first one is the concept of need and the psychological process. First, a person realizes a lack of something useful. This can be done by an advertisement. The second step is the psychological process, so all steps in which the person gathers information and makes the decision to buy a specific product (M. Cavallone, 2017). The following Figure 1 shows the four steps to customer loyalty.

Figure 1. Four steps to Customer Loyalty



Source: Designed based on the theory of Cavallone, M. et al. (2017), *Marketing and Customer Loyalty*, “The Extra Step Approach”.

The second phase is the repurchase which occurs when the purchased product fulfills the expectations of the consumer. Repurchase means that the consumer buys the same product/service from the same producer where it bought the previous product. This phase is supported by two drivers, the first one is that the consumer achieved satisfaction in the first experienced purchase and secondly the lack of motivation to change to another producer with a substitutional product (M. Cavallone, 2017).

The third phase is retention. To retain a consumer the company has to be active and try that the consumer continues purchasing their product. In this phase, the consumer is not emotionally involved and does not have a preference towards the product. The marketer has to become the active part. Therefore, consumer retention focuses on a repeat purchase, which is initiated by the marketing of the company. The retention of a consumer compared to the repeat purchase differs in the results of the purchase. So the consumer either buys more of the company’s products/services or the company aims for applying a premium price and still the consumer buys the product (M. Cavallone, 2017).

The last and most aimable phase is customer loyalty. In this phase, the consumer does not only show its loyalty through repeating a purchase but also shows actively its emotional connection to a specific brand. This can be described by the following components: attitudes, preferences

and allegiance. The attitudes describe the positive relationship of the consumer towards the brand. The consumer is emotionally involved in that brand and would even recommend this product to other people. The preference describes the relationship of the consumer to the competitor products on the market. The consumer buys the brand more and more often compared to the other products on the market which are made by the competitors, even though on a rational level those products would suit the consumer more. The last part is the allegiance which describes the period in which the consumer buys the product. This period is long-term, so the consumer buys the product constantly over a longer period (M. Cavallone, 2017).

Customer loyalty has economic effects on a company in terms of certainty, growth and profit. A higher certainty allows a company to be more flexible in their marketing strategy and the feedback by the consumers is more critical because they care about the future of the company. The second effect is growth. A company can achieve the goal of growth by deeper consumer penetration. This means a company tries to increase the number of products that the loyal consumer is buying. Another way of growth is by using loyal consumers to recommend the brand to others. This is a cheap way of advertising. Another effect of customer loyalty is profitability. As mentioned before loyal consumers are more likely to accept a higher price, this can increase profitability. Furthermore, the increase of cross-buying leads to an increase in profit (T. Henning-Thurai, 2000).

2.1.1. Customer loyalty vs brand loyalty

As it comes to customer loyalty in the academic world there are several definitions for brand loyalty as well, which are similar to the one of customer loyalty (KJ. Back, 2002). The following definition has described '*[B]rand loyalty not only as the outcome of repeat purchase behavior but also the consequence of multidimensional attitudes toward a specific brand*' (Back, KJ. et al., 2002, p. 421). Brand loyalty is more than just the purchasing pattern as in customer loyalty, there is an attitudinal perspective.

The consumer identifies with the brand. When it comes to customer loyalty the price is an important tool. Either it is lower than the competitors or the consumer gains better discounts or rewards for buying a product, while with brand loyalty price is not that big influence. The consumer perceives the brand as trustworthy and qualitative in comparison to the competitors (KJ. Back, 2002).

Brand loyalty can be measured on a behavioral and an attitudinal level (G. Walker, 2020). Keller (2001) adds another two levels to brand loyalty. The first level is the sense of community. By purchasing the brand, consumers identify themselves with a specific group of people associated with the brand, the feeling of affiliation occurs. The next level and the strongest one is the active engagement in a brand of a consumer. Those consumers have the strongest bond with the brand, they are participating in any event or activity associated with the brand. Examples are chats or clubs.

Both customer and brand loyalty are important for a company because acquiring a new customer can cost a company five to seven times as much as keeping an existing customer (A. Blair, 2017). The benefits of brand loyalty are the same as customer loyalty but the maintenance is less cost-intensive (A. Tran, 2020).

2.1.2. Types of Loyalty: The Walker Loyalty Matrix

For loyalty, there are two dimensions important: behavioral and attitudinal loyalty (G. Walker, 2020). Attitudinal loyalty is the result of psychological processes which end up in the customer's opinion of a brand, wherein behavioral loyalty is the visible act from a customer, e.g. repeat purchase of a brand (R. Bennett, 2002). The Walker Loyalty Matrix describes the relationship between those two dimensions and combines it in four different styles of loyalty which are high risk, trapped, accessible and truly loyal as seen in Figure 2 below. This matrix is a practical approach to better understand the different types of loyalty implemented by Walker (2020).

Figure 2. The Walker Loyalty Matrix



Source: Walker, G., (2020). *The Walker Loyalty Matrix*. [online] Walkerinfo. Available at: <<https://www.walkerinfo.com/docs/WP-The-Walker-Loyalty-Matrix.pdf>> [Accessed 13 June 2020].

The high-risk field implements a negative level of behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. This means that the consumer is not in a long-term allegiance with the company. Their attitude towards the company is not healthy and as well their behavior does not bring a benefit for the company but rather damage it. Those consumers do not return and won't make another purchase.

If the consumer has a negative attitude towards the company but keeps buying products from it, they are called "trapped". This dimension comes up in long-term contracts, no substitutional products or it is hard to switch. If there is a better option for the consumer or the contract ends, it is more likely to change than to stay with the current company.

The accessible dimension comes up if the consumer has a positive attitude towards the company but a negative behavioral loyalty. This dimension is often one of the smallest due to the rather odd combination. Often this dimension is filled with consumers who just do not need the product anymore but still will speak about the company in a very good way.

The last field is 'truly loyal'. As the name suggests truly loyal consumers are constantly purchasing products of the company they are loyal to. They have a healthy attitude towards this company. Therefore it is tried to bring consumers into this dimension and keep them there for a longer period.

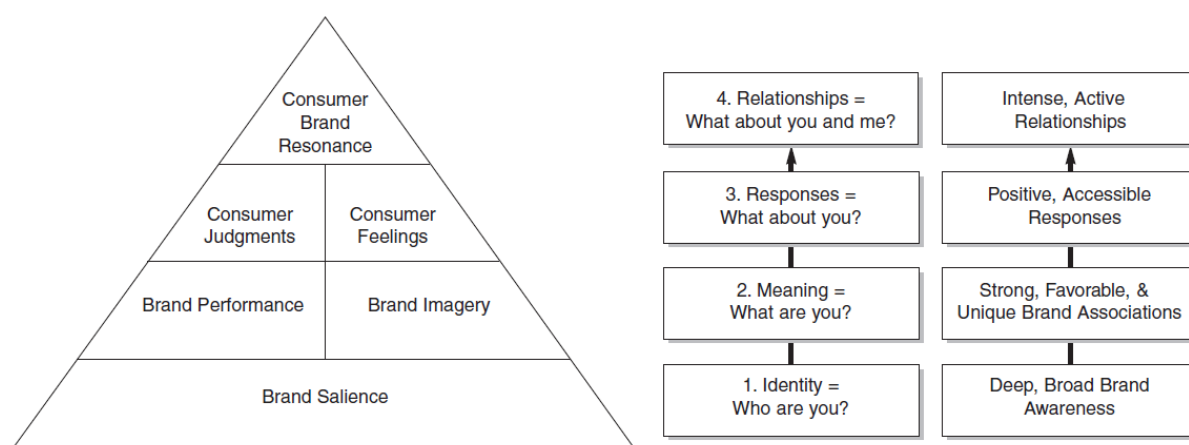
There are other models which describe the relationship between attitude and behavior towards loyalty. For example defined by Fedotova et al. (2019) in where there are nine different types of customer loyalty in regards to attitudinal-/ and behavioral loyalty. In this model there are as well fields like 'no loyalty' or 'neutral loyalty'. For the reasoning of keeping it visually simple and the practical usability, the Walker Loyalty Matrix is displayed and used in this report.

2.1.3. Determinants of brand loyalty

When it comes to the determinants or drivers of brand loyalty Keller's Brand Equity Model can be referred to. Keller (2001) describes in a theoretical way how a company should build up a successful brand. The model is in the shape of a pyramid with six blocks and four different layers as displayed in Figure 3. The ground level is the 'Brand Identity', the second one is the 'Brand Meaning', followed by the 'Brand Response'. On top of the pyramid is the 'Brand Relationship'. For this chapter, the most interesting layer is the 'Brand Response'. Keller (2001)

defines the determinants which are analyzed by consumers to create the top layer ‘Brand Relationship’. So basically the key factors of the ‘Brand Response’ create the ‘Brand Relationship’ or in other words brand loyalty.

Figure 3. Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid



Source: Keller, K. (2001). *Building Customer-Based Brand Equity: A Blueprint for Creating Strong Brands*, “Marketing Science Institute”, p.7.

Keller (2001) distinguished ‘Brand Response’ in two categories: brand judgments and brand feelings. Brand judgments arise from the ‘head’ while brand feelings’ origins are from the ‘heart’. A judgment is everything that can be evaluated by the consumer. The following four types are important to create a strong brand in terms of brand judgment:

1. Brand quality: There are many opinions that consumers can have about brands, but the most important one relates to the perceived quality of the brand.
2. Brand credibility: Besides the quality of a brand a consumer can also judge the company or organization behind the brand. This dimension describes what the ability of the company is (brand expertise), how trustworthy this organization is in terms of consumer (brand trustworthiness) and how interesting or fun this company is (brand likability).
3. Brand consideration: A brand can have good quality and positive brand credibility but this does not mean that this brand is purchased or used by people. Brand consideration describes the level of how meaningful and appropriate a brand is for a consumer to buy.
4. Brand superiority: This part of brand judgment describes in which way the brand is unique and better compared to other brands in the market. This level has an important impact to create brand loyalty.

Compared to the judgments the brand feelings are the emotional response and reactions of a consumer to a brand. In the 'heart' dimension Keller (2001) focuses on six important brand feelings:

1. Warmth: To which extent does the company make the consumer feel calm and welcomed. Adjectives consumers feel about the brand are sentimental, caring and tendering.
2. Fun: Adjectives consumers feel about the brand are happy, cheerful and joyful.
3. Excitement: This emotion describes to which extent the consumer feels energized by the brand and the feeling that the consumer experiences something special. The most adjective the consumers feel about the brand is alive.
4. Security: Feelings of security arise when the brand evokes a feeling of safety, comfort and self-confidence. The consumer associates the brand with the elimination of worries or doubts.
5. Social approval: Social approval is created when consumers feel that others positively evaluate their appearance and behavior. This approval can result from the fact that others associate the consumer directly with the brand.
6. Self-respect: Self-esteem arises when the brand gives consumers a better sense of self-worth. Consumers experience a feeling of pride and success.

In total it does not differ what part of brand response the company focuses on. The main part is that the consumer has a positive response about brand judgments and brand feelings. Based on this positive response a consumer creates loyalty towards a brand.

2.1.4. Psychological context of brand loyalty

For a better understanding of brand loyalty, it is important to understand the psychological context behind it. In psychology, brand loyalty was described by psychological commitment. As defined by Robertson (1976) psychological commitment '*refers to the strength of the individual's belief system with regard to a product or brand.*' (p. 19). Heere and Dickson (2008) further explain commitment as '*an internal psychological state of mind an individual has towards an object*' (p. 230). Psychological commitment consists of 5 different components, these are cognitive complexity, cognitive consistency, confidence, position involvement, and volitional choice (J-H. Ha, 2005).

Cognitive complexity describes how well a person can handle a specific amount of information and in which way the person processes information (J-H. Ha, 2005). Robertson (1976) described a person with a low commitment as a person with a single cognitive structure. This means if this person receives new information it is more likely to change its preferences. A high-commitment person which is described as a person with cognitive complexity does not change its opinion or preference towards an object easily. These persons rather reject information which are against their preferences or ideas.

The concept of cognitive consistency explains that individuals prefer to have accordance between their thoughts, opinions and attitudes and not a discordance. Cognitive consistency should be identical to the way people see themselves and their future behavior. Disagreement or asymmetry creates tension and people try to achieve mental balance. (S. Oskamp, 1991). A person with a high level of cognitive consistency does not quickly change their mind even if there are reasonable arguments for alternatives. Furthermore, those persons are identified to have a high psychological commitment (J-H. Ha, 2005).

Confidence comes up when a person believes that the action it does is the right one and that they know how to perform properly. Self-confident people have a structured idea about their lives and trust in themselves when it comes to decision-making (J. Florence, 2017). A person with a high level of confidence does not change their opinion easily and is resistant to change (J-H. Ha, 2005).

Position involvement describes the level of how important values and self-image are for a person and how strong this position involvement is for the decision-making process for buying a specific brand. A high level of position involvement with a specific brand increases the level of resistance to change (J-H. Ha, 2005).

The volitional choice is the freedom of choice, furthermore the freedom of obligations. The level of volitional choice influences the psychological commitment. Moreover, this means that a person chooses its brand freely and does not have any concerns about purchasing this brand. Those concerns can limit a personal mind and decrease the level of psychological commitment. Another combination is when the level of free choice is high the level of self-responsibility is high as well. This means an individual is more likely to take responsibility for their made choice. The resistance to change increases if a person has a volitional choice (J-H. Ha, 2005).

As identified in the paragraphs before the resistance to change is a consequence of psychological commitment. A person sticks to its decision of a brand and does not want to change if it is psychologically committed to this specific brand. The resistance to change can also be the first evidence of psychological commitment (J-H. Ha, 2005).

2.2. Determinants for loyalty in the football industry

2.2.1. The football industry

The primary focus of a football club is not economic success but more sporting success (Littkemann et al., 2002). Nevertheless, the economic success helps a football club to guarantee sporting success, to be competitive (N. Oettgen, 2008). Football is a business, at least the professional one. Football is the number one sport in the world, creating big revenues for the club and attracting more and more people in the world (S. Das, 2020). Therefore the world of football is the best blueprint to understand the world of the sport industry. In the first aspect, it is interesting to see how football clubs make their money. Every year, Deloitte publishes a report in which they profile the highest revenue generating clubs in the football world and identify in which areas those clubs create their revenues (T. Ajadi, 2020). To specify a value of a football club there are tangible and intangible assets. This part focuses more on tangible assets like ticket and corporate hospitality sales, broadcasts rights and commercial sources as sponsoring or merchandising. The best football clubs in terms of revenues are set up in a ranking, the so-called 'Money League' (T. Ajadi, 2020). A limitation to this research is that in the Money League no revenues from transfers are included the focus is on the core business activity. The growth of football clubs over the last two decades has been driven by an increase in funding for TV rights, both for national and international competitions. They have often outpaced GDP growth in their respective countries. They seem to be immune to prevailing market conditions and can manage this by simply participating in the top league of football in their country. The drama of football, combined with the ability of sport to unite people positively, has created a largely recession-proof industry (T. Ajadi, 2020).

The biggest source of revenue is the selling of the broadcast rights. The process of selling the rights to show the games to Pay-Tv channels is regulated uniformly. The process of the German Bundesliga can be used as an example of the European standard. The German Football League

(DFL) owns the rights to market the Bundesliga matches. It sells them to various media companies for certain contract periods. Those media companies buy the right to live broadcast the Bundesliga games. Therefore, they pay an amount of money to the DFL. The major consumer in the last years has been Sky. DAZN as a Pay-Tv channel will join in the next year (Ran, 2020a). Public broadcaster as ARD, ZDF and Sat.1 owned some rights as well. The DFL allocates the income from this commercialization to the football clubs based on a previously defined distribution key. The distribution is based on the sporting success of the clubs during the last 5 seasons (R. Leister, 2016).

The football industry is often used for advertising, this can be done in two ways. The first and the most efficient one is sponsoring. There are various types of sponsoring cooperations. The most famous one is the so-called jersey sponsoring. In this case, the sponsor (company) pays money to the sponsoring recipient (football clubs). In return for the money, the jerseys are printed with the company's logo or slogan. Experience has shown that this attracts more attention to the sponsor. For a club, it is important to find a sponsor which identifies and represents the same values as the club is doing. This creates a Win-Win situation for both parties. Another form of advertising is the equipment agreement in which a club signs a contract with a sports brand (e.g. Adidas) and agreed that all equipment like jerseys or leisure outfits are made by one company. Therefore, the sports brands are paying a big amount of money. The same agreement can be made with car brands (e.g. Audi). In this case, the players of the club are equipped with cars of this manufacturer. The stadium is another tangible asset of a football club. Not always does the stadium belong to the football club but if so the name of the stadium or advertising space inside the stadium can be sold to companies. Another commercial source of revenue is merchandising. This category bundles all revenues that arise from the sale of fan merchandise. Starting with jerseys, trousers and scarves, car flags, license plate holders, bottle openers and so forth (R. Leister, 2016).

Another tangible asset of football clubs is the revenue from ticketing or hospitality services. The supporters do not only support their clubs with an amazing atmosphere on the match days but also with their money for the tickets. The ticket prices can vary from game to game. It depends against which opponent the team is playing. For example, a Schalke supporter pays more for a game against Borussia Dortmund or Bayern Munich than for a game against TSG

Hoffenheim. Those games attract more viewers. Furthermore, during match days, the club makes revenues through food and drinks which are sold during the day (R. Leister, 2016).

In the season 2018/2019 Bayern Munich has been the leading German club in the Money League, and the leading club football-wise by winning the Double (winning league and national cup) and winning the league for the seventh consecutive win. In the Money League Bayern Munich is fourth, behind FC Barcelona, Real Madrid and Manchester United. As seen in the report Bayern Munich creates their biggest revenue in commercial activities (356 million euros) with 54 percent of their 660 million euros overall sales, followed by broadcast with 211 million euros (32%) and matchday sales of 92 million euros (14%). This percentage distribution is similar among the top 10 clubs in the Money League. Firstly the commercial revenues, secondly broadcast and at last matchday revenues except for the Premier League clubs where the broadcast revenues are on the first place. The Premier League has the highest amount of revenues created by the broadcast in the world with 3,58 billion euros (Ran, 2020b).

2.2.2. Segmentation of football supporters

The tangible assets are important for a football club because they create the countable value of a club. Those values are often created by the supporters who are coming to the match days to support their club and spend their money on merchandising. The more supporters a club has the more interesting it is for a sponsor to use the advertising space. To understand what a supporter is, it is necessary to identify the different groups of supporters and put them into relation to the Walker Loyalty Matrix.

The first group of supporters is the ‘Fanatics’. They are highly committed to the club which they are supporting. Those supporters are participating actively in the club. They express themselves by going to games or participating in other non-sport activities hold by the club. This is why their level of attitudinal loyalty is high. The ‘Fanatics’ also consume merchandise of the clubs, like scarves, flags or jerseys. This shows how high the level of behavioral loyalty is. They connect a lot of memories and a sense of themselves with the club. In a study conducted by Tapp (2003), a classified fanatic supporter was asked the following question: ‘[...] if there was a fire in your house, what would you save first?’. His answer was: ‘Oh my programmers and tapes. No question. And my wife and kids of course.’ The word fanatic describes perfectly

how the relationship to the club is (A. Tapp, 2003). On the Walker Loyalty Matrix, this group of supporters belongs to the middle of the truly loyal.

The next group of supporters is the 'Repertoire fans'. Those are supporters who go or watch games from other clubs from time to time. This does not mean that they are supporters of those clubs, they just like to watch other football matches which are interesting to watch. This is not 'brand switching' in general. This is more likely to the FMCG term of a 'repertoire buyer'. These supporters are more interested in the pleasure which they are experiencing by watching a game. In comparison, a fanatic gets pleasure from watching its club and not the football game itself. The whole club as an entity is interesting for a fanatic, for a repertoire fan the football game itself is interesting (A. Tapp, 2003).

The club's most desirable group of supporters is the 'season ticket holders'. Those supporters create the most value for a club in terms of merchandise and non-football items. They are considered to be the most loyal to a club and participating in every game, from year to year. Their loyalty does not end even if the team performance or financial situation of the club is miserable. There is often a line of people who want to be season ticket holders. Furthermore, if one season ticket holder is not renewing its tickets often a group of several people is waiting for it. In some families season tickets are inherited (A. Tapp, 2003) In Figure 4 the season ticket holders are named as 'collectors'.

The last group of supporters can be divided into two subgroups the 'committed' and 'carefree casuals'. Some supporters attend only five games a year in the stadium and do not consider having a high level of behavioral loyalty. The carefree casuals have a low level of attitudinal loyalty towards the club. This means that for them it is more important to see an entertaining game even if their club is losing. The 'carefree casuals' see football more as entertaining, therefore being a supporter of a club is not a part of their self-image. The 'committed casuals' see themselves as loyal supporters of a club but non-football activities are equally important or even greater. They see football as a part of their different lives but not the main one (A. Tapp, 2003). Figure 4 correlates the defined types of supporters to each other by the level of their attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

Figure 4. Walker Loyalty Matrix applied to football supporters

		Behavioural loyalty	
		High	Low
Attitudinal loyalty	High	Collectors Fanatics Repertoire fans	Committed casuals
	Low		Carefree casuals

Source: Tapp, A. (2003), *The loyalty of football fans – We'll support you evermore?*, "Bristol Business School", p. 208.

2.2.3. Types of motivations for football supporters

In the part above the different behavioral attitudes of a supporter are described. From the supporter who watches every game to the one who is barely interested in the club. This passage focuses more on the attitudinal side, so the motivations which supporters have to be loyal to a club. A motive is an impulse of a person to do a specific task while motivation is the internal process to achieve this goal. Motivation is not measurable, like height or weight. Instead, motivation can be experienced by observing people's behavior (Sparknotes, 2020). Achieving a specific goal, so following the internal process of motivation can either create a reaction of pleasure or pain (B. Samra, 2014).

Samra and Wos (2014) named six different types of motivations that football supporters show: group affiliation, self-identity, economic, emotional stimulation, information acquisition, group dissociation. Watching sport is often a gathering of people together, a social activity. Whether in the stadium or a bar, restaurant or at home in the media. People are looking forward to coming together in sports, this is what motivates them for participating. This dimension is defined as group affiliation. They can spend time together with family, friends or other people who are supporting the same team. Those sports events can help people to fulfill their need for social interaction within a group of people with the same interests, in this case, the supporting club. (B. Samra, 2014).

The motivation of supporting a football club can also be the opposite of the above type: group dissociation. Therefore people feel more comfortable by supporting a team in a solitary way. Their motivation is to step back from social interaction and be on their own (B. Samra, 2014).

Sport always involves emotions, therefore emotional stimulation is a motivation of a football supporter. The fun and enjoyable stress, also called euphoric stress ('eustress'), is often one of the main motivation drivers of supporters. This tension during a game not knowing what the result at the end will be. It applies to the human need to gain excitement and stimulation. During the game, there is a high tension of eustress and after the game, the supporter feels relieved and can calm down. Football can be an escape from the everyday routine (B. Samra, 2014).

Another type of motivation that people show in supporting a football club is the intention to express their loyalty to a club as a part of their self-identity. A person wants to establish a connection between self, role and society. Being a football supporter is socially visible, other people assigning the football supporter a specific role in society. Supporter behavior creates relationships with other people and through success with the team a person can achieve satisfaction in the role of being a football supporter. This creates a positive self-concept. Therefore a supporter who identifies itself with a football club will more likely attend more games than a person who does not (B. Samra, 2014).

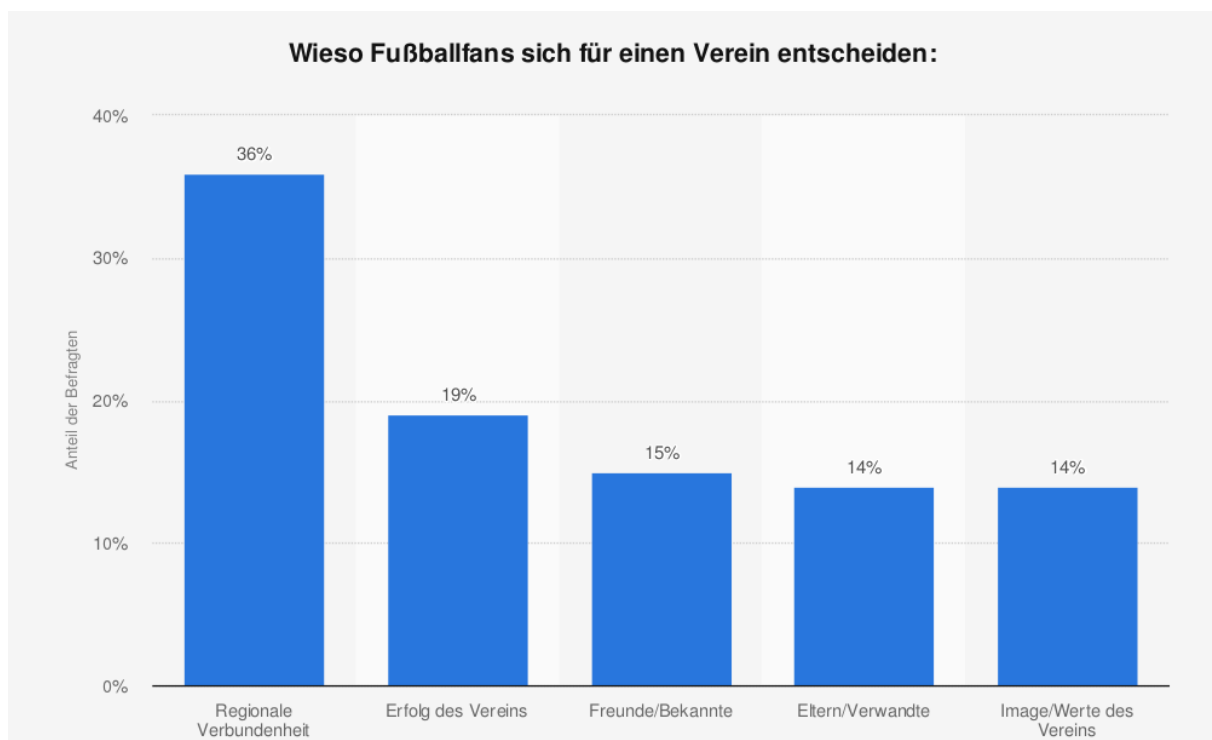
The last two factors of motivation are informational acquisition and economic motives. Information acquisition is another motivational factor of football supporters. People want to gain inside information about a sport by watching it so they will gain more experience and knowledge about this sport. In terms of economic people are interested in a game because they bet on it (B. Samra, 2014).

In the study conducted by Samra and Wos (2014) the different types of motivation were ranked. The most important motivational reason is group affiliation. Many supporters see their clubs as a big family to whom they felt they owed a certain amount of dedication. Ranked in second place is emotional stimulation. Supporters with high emotional motivation show a high degree of brand loyalty and personal commitment. The self-identity motivation follows. On this point, there is a polarization of two groups: the fanatics and the repertoire fans. An interesting point was that some supporters in this research motivated themselves through an aggression factor to fight the other team's supporters. Supporters who are not that loyal to one club but rather the

sport itself, gain their motivation more from the information acquisition. People with economic motivation did not consider themselves supporters. The least mentioned motivational factor in the survey is group dissociation.

Additionally to the theory of Samra and Wos, a German study analyzed why football supporters choose their club. In 2017, YouGov surveyed 3,000 respondents via a panel survey in Germany (YouGov, 2017). In Figure 5 the results of this survey can be seen displayed by Statista.

Figure 5. Motivations for Bundesliga supporters



Source: Statista, (2020a). Motive für Fans von Fussballvereinen in Deutschland. [online]. Statista.com. Available at: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/457174/umfrage/motive-fuer-fans-von-fussballvereinen-in-deutschland/#statisticContainer> [Accessed 01 July 2020].

The reason which has been ranked in the first place with a difference of 17 percent to the second place is the regional attachment of the club ('Regionale Verbundenheit') with 36 percent of the participants who have voted for it. This establishes a connection to the self-identity motives, discussed in the upper part. The region where someone is born or raised is a part of oneself and the club from this area represents it. The second reason to choose a club is the success of the club ('Erfolg des Vereins') with 19 percent which establishes a connection to the emotional stimulation. This factor is followed by 15 percent by the advice of friends and acquaintances

(‘Freunde/Bekannte’). The survey found that 14 percent of respondents chose a club because of a family tradition (‘Eltern/Verwandte’). The last two factors belong to the motive of group affiliation, belonging to a group or sharing the values and interests of the group. Another 14 percent can identify with the image and the values the club represents (‘Image/Werte des Vereins’). This factor again can be found in the motive of self-identity. The club which a supporter engages for mirrors their value to the society (Statista, 2020a).

This is just a brief insight into the total survey conducted by YouGov. Some factors with lower percentages cannot be found in the figure. Also if it is a multiple or single answer question is not visible. Summarizing all per cents, it ends up with a total of 98 percent, which is almost everything. So if it is a single answer question there are still 2 percent missing to have the complete table.

Chapter 3. Aims and method of research

3.1. Aims and research questions

The research aims to identify the determinants of football loyalty for Bundesliga football supporters.

The above aim was detailed into research questions, created under the guidelines of the Monash University research development guidelines (Monash, 2021). The research study was undertaken by the author aimed at answering the following questions:

1. What types of football supporters exist in the German Bundesliga?
2. How do the different types show that they are football supporters of their club?
3. What factors affect the loyalty of football supporters?
4. What are the strongest moderators of football supporters' loyalty?

3.2. Hypothesis

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1a: The greater motivation for group affiliation, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

H1b: The greater motivation for ranked emotional stimulation, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

H1c: The greater motivation for self-identity, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

H1d: The greater motivation for economic motives, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

H1f: The greater motivation for success factor, the more loyal type of football supporter the participant is.

3.3. Data gathering method

To achieve the above stated research aim and to answer the research questions, an empirical study was conducted, consisting of an online survey and in-depth interviews (in the following IDI).

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) consisted of 11 questions. All of them were closed questions with a single answer with exception of questions Q6 and Q7. The first two questions were filtering ones, probing the respondents whether they were football supporters. Those who were not were excluded from further research.

The first part of the questionnaire focused on gathering information that would allow understanding the nature of the respondent's fandom and involvement (Question 3-4). A scale of 13-items, developed by the author, was used to investigate supporters' involvement in their club. Cronbach alpha was 0.846 which allows concluding scale's validity. This scale is called Q6 in the questionnaire. Q7 probed respondents' evaluation of determinants of loyalty and included 16 items, designed by the author. Cronbach alpha was 0.858, which also allows concluding scale's validity (Kanting, 2009). Both Cronbach's alpha can be seen in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha Q6

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.846	13

Source: Football Loyalty Output

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha Q7

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.858	16

Source: Football Loyalty Output

Both itemized scales are bipolar 5-point Likert scales where 1 meant 'I strongly disagree' and was scale's minimum, and 5 'I strongly agree' was scale's maximum. Q6 identifies what type of football supporter the participant is and how the participant shows its loyalty to the club. The statements are set up to categorize the participants in the different groups which were identified in '2.2.2. Segmentation of football supporters'. The respondents were required to express their level of agreement with the statements. Based on means it was assumed that with a mean of 1-

1-9 they are categorized to the group of ‘committed/carefree casuals’, from 2-2.9 the ‘repertoire fans’, from 3-3.9 the ‘fanatics’ and from 4-5 the ‘season ticket holders’.

In the two scale questions, the statements are developed under the ABC model of attitudes by Solomon et al. (2008) since those questions address the attitude of the football supporters towards their club and their loyalty. The ABC model of attitude describes the motivation of a person towards an object in the combination of three components: affect, behavior and cognition. Affect describes the emotion or opinion of a person towards an object. Table 3 provides examples of items used to investigate supporters’ attitudes towards their involvement (Q6) and their loyalty (Q7).

Table 3. Operationalization of attitude based on ABC Model (examples)

Affect	I like to follow every home game of my club in the stadium (Q6) I like to follow my club to gain information and a better understanding of the sport itself (Q7)
Behavior	I own a lot of merchandise of my club (Q6) I always bet on my club (Q7)
Cognition	I know I support my club because it is local where I was born/grew up (Q7) I know I support my club because it is a social activity with my friends (Q7)

Source: Own elaboration based on Solomon (2013)

In the questionnaire affect questions include ‘I like..’. Cognition is the knowledge of a person towards the product. In the questionnaire cognitive questions include ‘I know...’ or ‘I believe...’. Behavior is the action of a person towards a product or object which results from affect and cognition. (M. Solomon, 2008). In the questionnaire behavioral questions include actions like ‘I own..’ or ‘I always watch..’.

Q8 identifies the most influential factor for loyalty by ranking specific factors from 1 to 6. The last questions (Q9-Q12) are demographic to understand who the participants are, how old they

are, where they are from and what educational background they have. The questionnaire ends with an expression of thanks.

The instrument to conduct the survey is an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted via the online portal Qualtrics. The participants receive a link and could complete the questionnaire via a mobile device or a computer.

In addition to the quantitative research, this report includes a qualitative method as well: in-depth interviews. IDI is a qualitative data method to collect information either in a face-to-face or over-the-phone interview with the participant who belongs to the target group and the researcher (CFR, 2020).

The tools for the in-depth interviews are open-ended questions which imply that the participants do not answer the question with 'yes' or 'no'. Those questions help to understand the participant's emotions and opinions on a subject (Guion et al., 2011). The guide for the IDI included open-ended questions for example: 'Please introduce yourself and tell us which club you support' or 'What do you think are the factors that influence your loyalty?'. The questions vary from interview to interview due to what the person has already said or what the current topic was. There are 4 interviews which were held with persons who can be identified as people which are interested in football and Bundesliga. Each one of them considers themselves as a loyal football supporter from one of the four clubs with the strongest member community: Bayern München, Borussia Dortmund, FC Schalke 04 and 1. FC Köln. The respondents had no personal connection to each other and were asked individually. They agreed to be recorded and that their interviews are transcribed. On average the interviews lasted approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The in-depth interviews were held by the author itself. The IDIs belong to qualitative research and are therefore exploratory. The statements cannot be evaluated as a statistically relevant representation for the opinion of the wider audience. The method used for the analysis of IDI was a qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2016).

3.4. Sample

The sample is a convenient sample as the data collection has been made from a population which members were conveniently available for participating in the research (M. Saunders,

2012). The sample size is a crucial part of the questionnaire. Assuming that 45.25 million people are considered as football supporters of the Bundesliga in Germany in 2019 (Statista, 2020b). This is big population size, therefore the following formula is used to calculate the minimum sample size. 'Z' describes the standard score for a specific confidence level, in this case, the confidence level is 95 percent, so $z = 1,96$. The margin error is 'e'. The margin error, in this case, is 10 percent, so $e = 0,1$. Furthermore, the standard variance is 'p', which is in a normal case is 50 percent, so $p = 0,5$. 'Q' is a different variable for $p-1$. Following this formula, the minimum sample size should be 97 participants (U. Janatzek, 2021). The calculation can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Formula minimum sample size

$$n \geq z^2 \cdot \frac{P \cdot Q}{\epsilon^2} \quad n \geq 3.8416 \cdot \frac{0.5 \cdot 0.5}{0.01}$$

Source: Janatzek, U., (2021). *Berechnung der erforderlichen Mindest-Stichprobengröße für unendliche und endliche Grundgesamtheiten*. [online]. Fledisoft.de. Available at: <http://www.fledisoft.de/stichprobengroesse_berechnen.php> [Accessed 01 February 2021].

For this report, the questionnaire has a sample size of 380 participants. Removing the ones who have not completed the questionnaire and adding the filter that these participants should be interested in football (Q1) and be interested in the Bundesliga (Q2), the questionnaire has **168 relevant participants**. The sample size fulfills the requirement of the minimum sample size for a big population. The sample is random everybody had the possibility and same chance to participate in the survey than others. Only two points are set up before. The questionnaire is only available in English and German, if a participant is not capable of understanding these languages, it is not possible to do the questionnaire. Furthermore, the questionnaire was distributed through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and Xing. Due to the online distribution channels and the online survey the people with no internet connection or digital device were excluded. The reason for this is that due to the formal aspects of the report, it is less time- and cost-intensive. The sample is constructed practically. The questions were set up simply to answer them as easily and certainly as possible.

3.5. Data analysis method

The statistical tool which was used to analyze the data was SPSS. To have an overview of the sample descriptive statistics are shown and the sample is described with means, averages and standard deviation to understand the sample completely and see the relevance for the whole population. Furthermore to identify which factors influence each segment of football supporter the Kruskal-Wallis test is used. In order to identify to what extent these factors influence loyalty the correlation coefficient 'r' and the Spearman rho's is used. The results of the in-depth interviews were analyzed to have a critical and qualitative view of the quantitative information.

3.6. Limitations to study

The validity and usefulness of the findings are limited. Due to the lack of previous research studies on the specific topic. Moreover, the results only show a correlation between loyalty and, through literature identified, factors. There is no causality or other potential factors which have not been identified yet by the literature. Furthermore, the results do not show changes over time. The survey is a momentary snapshot that can be used to support future research. Lastly, the survey is limited in time and money.

Chapter 4. Research results and analysis

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

4.1.1. Sample's demographic characteristics

To understand the sample, the following chapter includes the frequencies of each question. The percentages are rounded therefore it can happen that all percent summed up do not equal 100 percent. The following three figures 7, 8 and 9 display the demographic statistics of the questionnaire. The main amount of the participants are male. When it comes to age the main participants are between 21 and 30 years old. The origin of all of the participants is Europe.

Figure 7. Gender

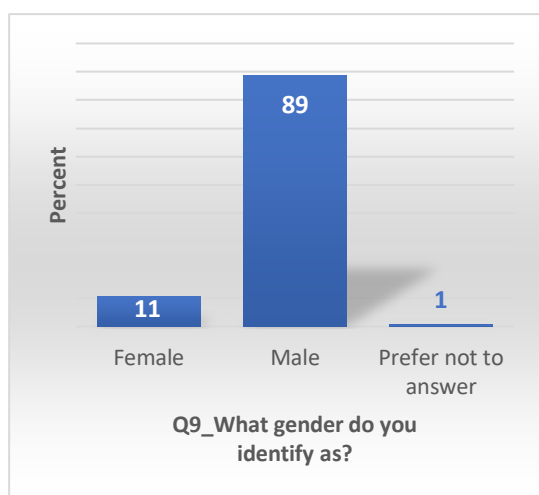
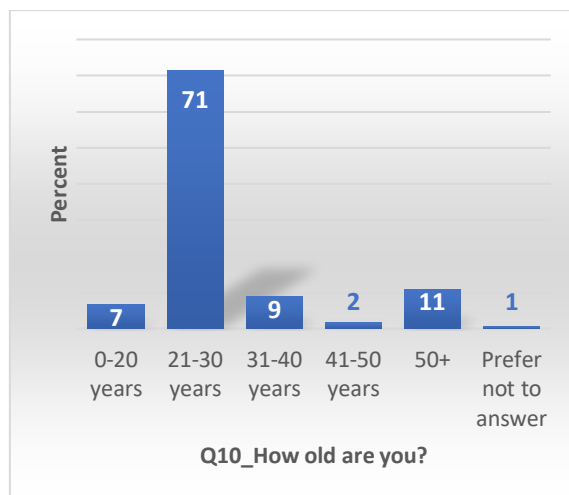
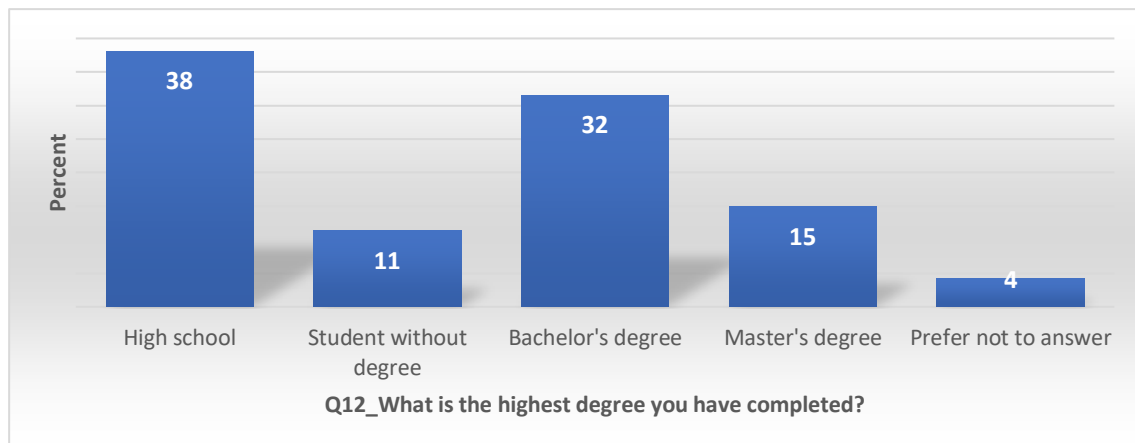


Figure 8. Age



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

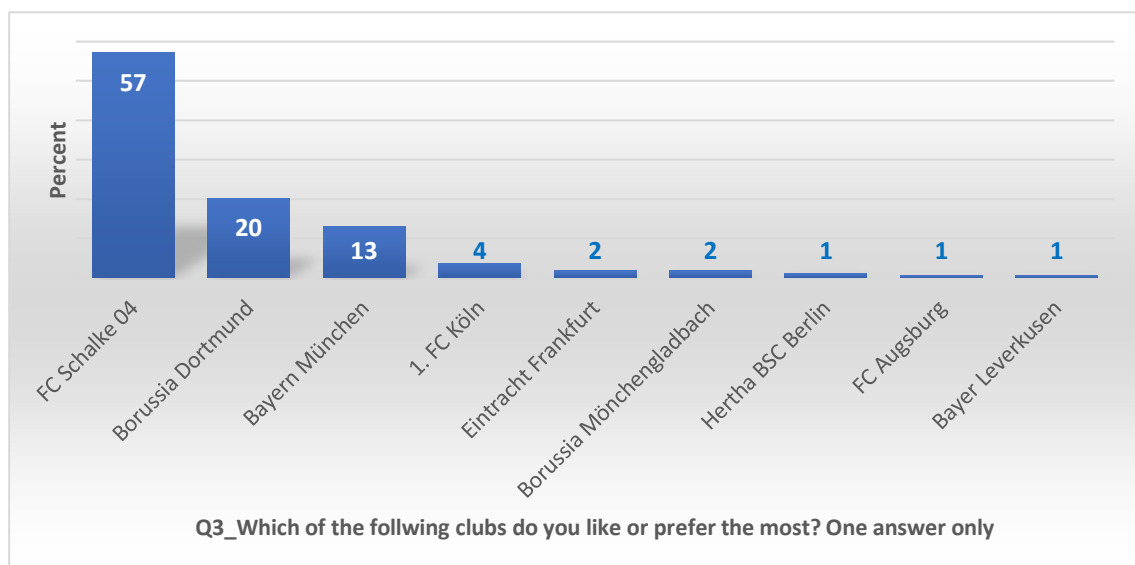
The educational background of the participants is diverse. With 38 percent of participants completing high school and 58 percent of participants who have studied.

Figure 9. Education

Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

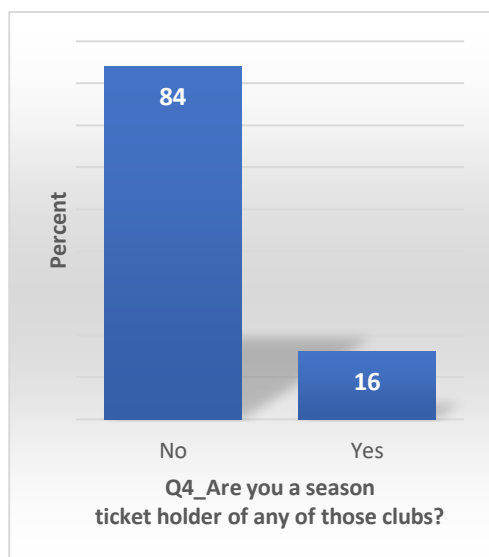
4.1.2. Sample's football characteristics

The following Figure 10 displays how many percent of the participants have seen themselves as a supporter of the picked club. As it can be seen over half of the respondents prefer FC Schalke the most, followed by 20 percent by their rivals from the Ruhr area Borussia Dortmund. Thirteen percent of the participants prefer the club from the south of Germany: FC Bayern München. 1. FC Köln is the leader of the rest with four percent. In Figure 11, it can be seen the majority of the participants are not season ticket holder of any of those clubs.

Figure 10. Club preferences

Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

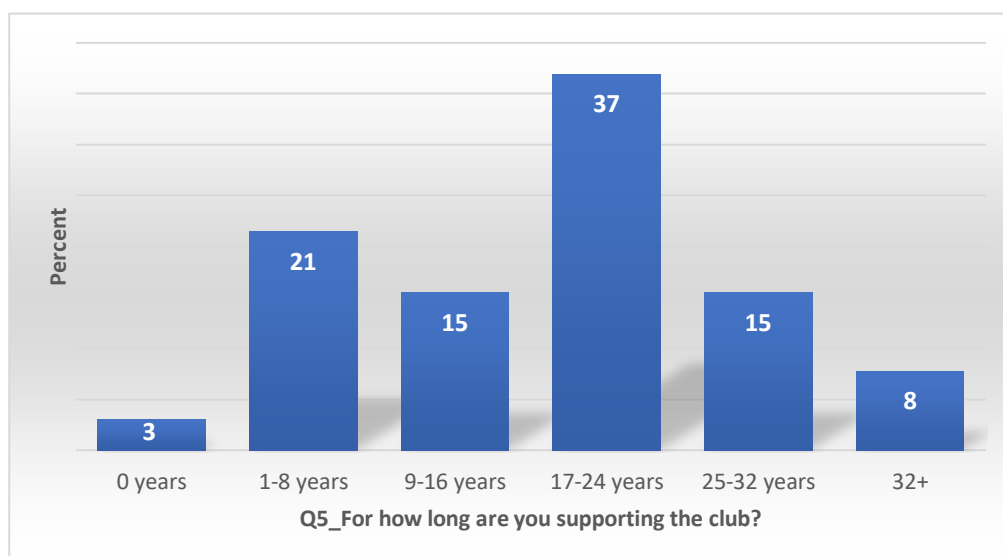
Figure 11. Ownership of tickets



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

Figure 12 displays the period the participants are supporting the club. Most participants already supporting their club for between 17 to 24 years. The mean of this question is between the variables 9 to 16 years and 17 to 24 years. 60 percent of the respondents of the sample are supporting their club for over 17 years.

Figure 12. Period of support

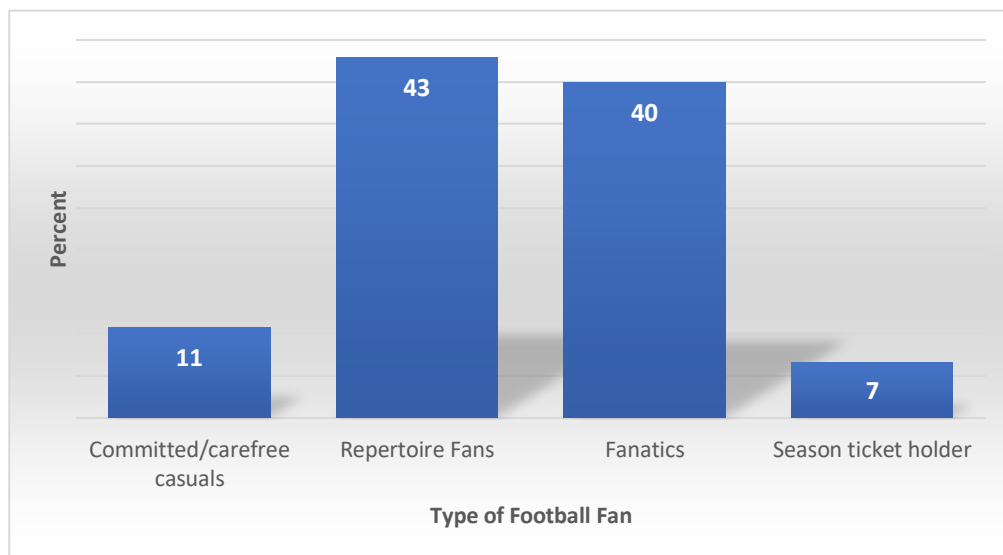


Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

In Figure 13 it can be seen that several types of football supporters have been participating in the survey. Most supporters are repertoire fans as well as fanatics. This is a solid base for further

diverse analysis on the topic of which factors that influence the loyalty of specific types of football supporters.

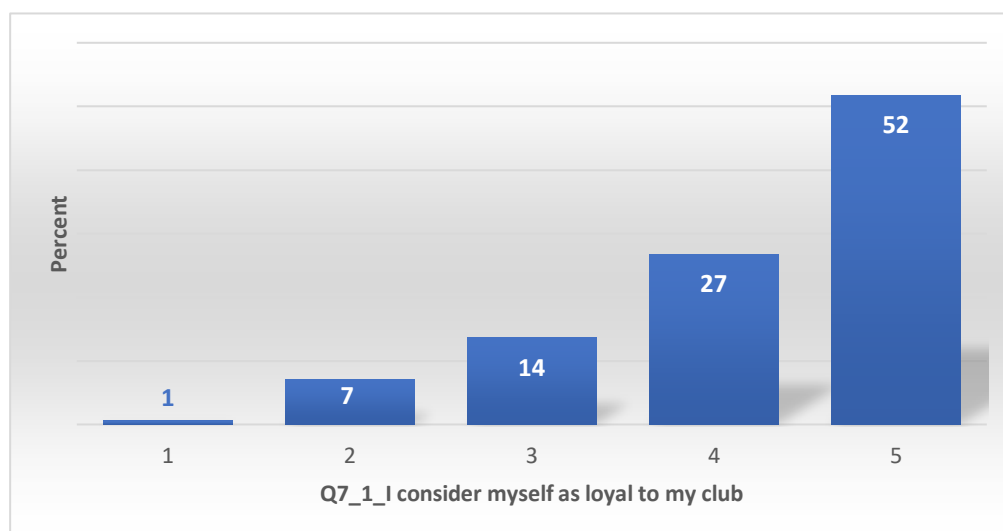
Figure 13. Type of Football Supporter



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

In the first instinct, it is interesting to take a look at how participants have seen themselves in terms of loyalty. In question 7 the participants were asked if they consider themselves loyal. This is compared with their identified type of football supporter from their answers from question 6. Figure 14 displays the answer results of the participants if they consider themselves as loyal.

Figure 14. Percentages of Question 7 Rating 1



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

The higher number the participants chosen, the more loyal they consider themselves. As seen in Figure 14 it is more right-tailed, so more than half of the participants consider themselves as loyal to the club. Taking into account the results of the segmentation to the different football types in Figure 13, it is visible that there is a different distribution. So more participants see themselves more loyal as they are.

4.1.3. Representativity of population

In Germany, there are over 45.25 million people which are considered football supporters in 2019 (Statista, 2020b). For the evaluation of qualitative results, the descriptive statistics of the sample and those of the population must have the same characteristics. Thus, the results of the sample can be interpreted as representative of the population. A study conducted by IfD Al-lensbach in 2020 provides descriptive statistics for the population. The study was visualized by Statista (Statista, 2020c).

The bigger amount of football supporters in Germany are males which is also the case for the sample (Statista, 2020c). The age of football supporters in Germany is evenly distributed across the different age decades up to 70 years (Statista, 2020c). This is also the case with the sample. The only outliers are the 21-30 year age group and the 41-50 year age group. If one looks at the distribution of the most popular clubs in the Bundesliga, FC Bayern München, Borussia Dortmund, FC Schalke 04 are represented in the first three ranks (Statista, 2020c). The first three places in the sample are also divided among these clubs. All in all the sample can be identified as relevant for further analysis.

4.2. Hypotheses Testing

4.2.1. Normal distribution of dependent variables

For the further part of the analysis, the hypotheses are tested. Firstly the relevant ratings of question 7 are set up in groups. The different groups explain the participants' attitude towards group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity, economic motives and success factors. For 'group affiliation' the ratings 4, 5 and 13 of question 7 were summed up. Ratings 11, 14 and 12 of belong to the segmentation of 'emotional stimulation'. Furthermore, the ratings of 2, 3, 8, 9 and 10 are counted in the 'self-identity' group. The ratings of 15 and 16 are summed up

in ‘economic motives’. Lastly, the ratings of 6 and 7 are counted in the group ‘success factors’. As an example, if a participant has ranked all the relevant ratings for group affiliation with 5, the score for this participant in this group is 15. Which insists that in terms of loyalty group affiliation is enormously important for the participant. The greater the mean sum score, the higher the respondent's agreement with the entire battery of questions (R. Porst, 2014).

Those segmentation groups for the different motives of loyalty are compared with the different types of football supporters to identify if a participant is considered loyal and to what extent does it effects the motive for this segment.

In order to find differences between the means of the individual groups, parametric and non-parametric tests can be applied. To use a parametric test, there have to be some requirements to the sample, for example homogeneity of variances and normal distribution of dependent variable (Laerd statistics, 2018). In the case of the dependent variables (group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity, economic motives and success factors) not all are normally distributed due to a lower p-value (Sig.) than 0.05 in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, visible in Table 4.

Table 4. Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Group_affiliation	.098	168	<.001	.973	168	.002
Emotional_stimulation	.089	168	.003	.966	168	<.001
Self_identity	.090	168	.002	.982	168	.029
Economical_motives	.123	168	<.001	.934	168	<.001
Success_factor	.213	168	<.001	.840	168	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

To establish comparable results all of those dependent variables are tested with a non-parametric test, the Kruskal-Wallis test. There are still some assumptions that must to be met using Kruskal-Wallis test (Laerd statistics, 2018):

1. The dependent variable should be ordinal or metric
2. The independent variable should have two or more categorical, independent groups

3. Observation are independent (participants of group 1 cannot be in group 2)

Through the previous analysis, all samples meet these requirements. The Kruskal-Wallis test is suitable for the analysis. The Kruskal-Wallis test only shows if there is a difference between the groups of the independent variable but not between which groups and to what extent. This question is solved by a post-hoc test, the Dunn-Bonferroni Test. This post-hoc test identifies between which of the groups of the independent variables is a significant difference. By calculating the correlation coefficient 'r', it is possible to obtain information about the effect size, according to Cohen (1988), of the individual variables in relation to each other. The formula is $r = |z \div \sqrt{n}|$, where 'z' is the standard test statistic and 'n' is the sample size. Gignac and Szodorai (2016) have set up an effect scale for r-value. A r-value of $r \geq 0.1$ corresponds to a weak effect, $r \geq 0.2$ is a moderate effect and $r \geq 0.3$ corresponds to a strong effect. The last step of the analysis is to identify if the correlation between the variables is positive or negative. This is done by the Spearman Rank Correlation (B. Walther, 2020). Due to the previous set up confidence level of 95% the p-value to reject the null hypothesis H_0 is $p \leq 0.05$.

4.2.2. Group affiliation

The first step is to establish the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis

H0a: The distribution of group affiliation is same across the categories of 'type of football supporter'.

H1a: The greater motivation for group affiliation, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

Table 5. Kruskal-Wallis Test 'group affiliation'

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The distribution of Group_affiliation is the same across categories of Typ of Football Fan.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	<.001	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.

b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.

Source: Output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

As seen in Table 5, the p-value (Sig.) for the Kruskal-Wallis Test is less than 0.05, therefore the null hypothesis H0a can be rejected. The Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test in Table 6 displays that all groups differ significantly except for "committed/carefree casuals" and "repertoire fans" ($p = 1.000$). The correlation coefficient for committed/carefree casuals and fanatics is $r = |-3.407 \div \sqrt{168}| \approx 0.26$, a moderate effect. Between committed/carefree casuals and season ticket holders $r \approx 0.37$, shows that there is a strong effect. The effect size between repertoire fans and fanatics is $r \approx 0.29$ and to season ticket holders $r \approx 0.37$. The effect size between fanatics and season ticket holders is $r \approx 0.22$. Through the correlation coefficient 'r', it can be recognized that a greater effect on group affiliation exists with a higher loyalty. Even though the effect size between repertoire fans and fanatics and season ticket holders is bigger than those two compared to committed/carefree casuals.

Table 6. Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test 'group affiliation'
Pairwise Comparisons of Typ of Football Fan

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig. ^a
Committed/carefree casuals-Repertoire Fans	-12.632	12.739	-.992	.321	1.000
Committed/carefree casuals-Fanatics	-43.726	12.834	-3.407	<.001	.004
Committed/carefree casuals-Season ticket holder	-88.803	18.501	-4.800	<.001	.000
Repertoire Fans-Fanatics	-31.094	8.206	-3.789	<.001	.001
Repertoire Fans-Season ticket holder	-76.171	15.649	-4.867	<.001	.000
Fanatics-Season ticket holder	-45.077	15.727	-2.866	.004	.025

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.

a. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

Spearman's correlation coefficient in Table 7 displays that there is a significant positive correlation between the type of football supporter and the rating for group affiliation. This shows that group affiliation positively increases the loyalty of a participant. The higher a participant ranked group affiliation the more loyal the participant is. Therefore H1a can be accepted and it can be assumed that the greater a participant feels a sense of group affiliation in their club, the more loyal they are.

Table 7. Spearman correlation coefficient ‘group affiliation’

		Correlations		
			Typ of Football Fan	Group_affiliati on
Spearman's rho	Typ of Football Fan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.454**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	168	168
	Group_affiliation	Correlation Coefficient	.454**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	168	168

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

4.2.3. Emotional stimulation

The null and alternative hypothesis for emotional stimulation are similar to the previous one:

H0b: The distribution of emotional stimulation is same across the categories of ‘type of football supporter’.

H1b: The greater motivation for ranked emotional stimulation, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

The null hypothesis H0b can be rejected due to p-value lower than 0,05 as seen in Table 8. There is a significant difference in the distribution of emotional stimulation among the categories.

Table 8. Kruskal-Wallis Test ‘emotional stimulation’

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The distribution of Emotional_stimulation is the same across categories of Typ of Football Fan.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	<.001	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.

b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

As seen in Table 9, between the categories itself there are significant differences to all categories except between committed/carefree casuals and repertoire fans and between fanatics and season ticket holders.

Table 9. Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test ‘emotional stimulation’

Pairwise Comparisons of Typ of Football Fan

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig. ^a
Committed/carefree casuals-Repertoire Fans	-17.937	12.760	-1.406	.160	.959
Committed/carefree casuals-Fanatics	-65.963	12.855	-5.131	<.001	.000
Committed/carefree casuals-Season ticket holder	-84.091	18.532	-4.538	<.001	.000
Repertoire Fans-Fanatics	-48.025	8.220	-5.843	<.001	.000
Repertoire Fans-Season ticket holder	-66.153	15.676	-4.220	<.001	.000
Fanatics-Season ticket holder	-18.128	15.753	-1.151	.250	1.000

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.

a. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

With the correlation coefficient, it is visible that the effect size of committed/carefree casuals and repertoire fans to fanatics ($r \approx 0.4$; $r \approx 0.45$) is higher than to the season ticket holders ($r \approx 0.35$; $r \approx 0.33$). Therefore, it can be said that the effect size of emotional stimulation is greater for fanatics in comparison to committed/carefree casuals and repertoire fans than for the season ticket holders. Additionally, it is mentionable that the effect size between fanatics and repertoire fans is higher than the one between committed/carefree casuals and fanatics. All effect sizes are strong.

Table 10. Spearman correlation coefficient ‘emotional stimulation’

		Correlations		
			Typ of Football Fan	Emotional_stimulation
Spearman's rho	Typ of Football Fan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.573**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	168	168
	Emotional_stimulation	Correlation Coefficient	.573**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	168	168

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

Spearman’s correlation coefficient in Table 10 displays that there is a significant positive correlation between the type of football supporter and the rating for emotional stimulation. This means that emotional stimulation positively increases the loyalty of a participant. Therefore H1b can be accepted and it can be assumed that the greater the emotional stimulation a participant feels in their club, the more loyal they are.

4.2.4. Self-Identity

The hypothesis for self-identity are the following:

H0c: The distribution of self-identity is across the categories of ‘type of football supporter’.

H1c: The greater motivation for self-identity, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

The Kruskal-Wallis test in Table 11 shows that the null hypothesis can be rejected through a p-value that is less than 0.05.

Table 11. Kruskal-Wallis Test ‘self-identity’

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The distribution of Self_identity is the same across categories of Typ of Football Fan.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	<.001	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.

b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

In this case, all categories differ from each other in a significant way except between fanatics and season ticket holders ($p\text{-value} \geq 0.05$). The numbers are marked in red in Table 12. As well as in the case with ‘emotional stimulation’, the correlation coefficient ‘ r ’ is higher between fanatics and committed/carefree casuals and repertoire fans ($r \approx 0.49$; $r \approx 0.42$) than between season ticket holders and those two groups ($r \approx 0.47$; $r \approx 0.38$). Nevertheless, all the effect sizes are strong for both groups. The effect size between committed/carefree casuals and repertoire fans is moderate ($r \approx 0.22$).

Table 12. Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test ‘self-identity’

Pairwise Comparisons of Typ of Football Fan					
Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig. ^a
Committed/carefree casuals-Repertoire Fans	-36.535	12.782	-2.858	.004	.026
Committed/carefree casuals-Fanatics	-81.276	12.877	-6.312	<.001	.000
Committed/carefree casuals-Season ticket holder	-113.455	18.563	-6.112	<.001	.000
Repertoire Fans-Fanatics	-44.741	8.233	-5.434	<.001	.000
Repertoire Fans-Season ticket holder	-76.920	15.702	-4.899	<.001	.000
Fanatics-Season ticket holder	-32.178	15.779	-2.039	.041	.249

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.

a. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

Spearman correlation coefficient shows that there is a significant positive correlation between self-identity and the type of football supporter (Table 13). Therefore H1c can be accepted and it can be assumed that the greater a participant finds self-identity in their club, the more loyal they are.

Table 13. Spearman correlation coefficient ‘self-identity’

			Typ of Football Fan	Self_identity
Spearman's rho	Typ of Football Fan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.642**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	168	168
	Self_identity	Correlation Coefficient	.642**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	168	168

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

4.2.5. Economic motives

The hypothesis for economic motives are the following:

H0d: The distribution of economic motives is across the categories of ‘type of football supporter’.

H1d: The greater motivation for economic motives, the more loyal type of football supporter the respondent is.

Table 14 below shows that between the categories there is a significant difference. Therefore the null hypothesis H0d can be rejected.

Table 14. Kruskal-Wallis Test ‘economic motives’

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The distribution of Economical_motives is the same across categories of Typ of Football Fan.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	<.001	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.

b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

The Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test in Table 15 displays that there are only significant differences between the committed/carefree casuals and fanatics ($r \approx 0.28$) and between repertoire fans and fanatics ($r \approx 0.22$). Both effect sizes are moderate.

Table 15. Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test ‘economic motives’

Pairwise Comparisons of Typ of Football Fan

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig. ^a
Committed/carefree casuals-Repertoire Fans	-22.882	12.680	-1.805	.071	.427
Committed/carefree casuals-Season ticket holder	-36.250	18.415	-1.969	.049	.294
Committed/carefree casuals-Fanatics	-46.563	12.774	-3.645	<.001	.002
Repertoire Fans-Season ticket holder	-13.368	15.577	-.858	.391	1.000
Repertoire Fans-Fanatics	-23.681	8.168	-2.899	.004	.022
Season ticket holder-Fanatics	10.313	15.653	.659	.510	1.000

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .050.

a. Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

There is a significant positive correlation between the economic motives and the type of football supporter which can be proved since p-value in Spearman’s correlation coefficient is greater than 0.05 (Table 16). Therefore, it can be assumed that the greater a participant has an economic motive in their club, the more loyal they are towards it.

Table 16. Spearman correlation coefficient ‘economic motives’

Correlations

		Typ of Football Fan	Economical_motives
Spearman's rho	Typ of Football Fan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.291**
		N	168
Economical_motives		Correlation Coefficient	.291**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	<.001
		N	168

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

4.2.6. Success factor

The hypothesis for success factor are the following:

H0f: The distribution of success factor is across the categories of 'type of football supporter'.

H1f: The greater motivation for success factor, the more loyal type of football supporter the participant is.

The p-value of the Kruskal Wallis Test for success factor, visible in Table 17, is greater than 0.05, therefore it is not possible to reject H0f. In this case, it is not necessary to perform a Dunn-Bonferroni post-hoc test because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples.

Table 17. Kruskal-Wallis Test 'success factor'

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The distribution of Success_factor is the same across categories of Typ of Football Fan.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.668	Retain the null hypothesis.

a. The significance level is .050.

b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.

Source: Output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

In Table 18, Spearman's correlation also shows that there is no significant correlation between the success factor and the type of football fan. It cannot be assumed that the more a participant considers the success factor in their club as important, the more loyal they are.

Table 18. Spearman correlation coefficient 'success factor'

Correlations			Typ of Football Fan	Success_factor
Spearman's rho	Typ of Football Fan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.010
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.450
		N	168	168
	Success_factor	Correlation Coefficient	.010	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.450	.
		N	168	168

Source: Output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

4.3. Ranking of motives

The respondents ranked between different motives which is their most influential for being loyal to their club (Question 8). In the following figures, the results are displayed. A low number means it is more important for the respondent than a higher number. As 1 is the most important factor and 6 is the least important one.

A score list was created for the evaluation of the rankings. If motivation was ranked 1, it receives a score of 6. Rank 2 is evaluated with 5 points and so forth. The last rank 6 gets one point. Thus each motivation receives several points, these are then sorted by size. Therefore, the motivation with the most points is ranked first and is thus considered the most important influence factor for loyalty among the given motivations. This evaluation can be seen in Table 19. The table shows that local proximity is the most important influence on loyalty, followed by friends. In third place is the image/values of the club. Close to each other on rank 4 and 5 are the performance of the club and the family as an influencing factor. In last place, far behind, is the success of the club.

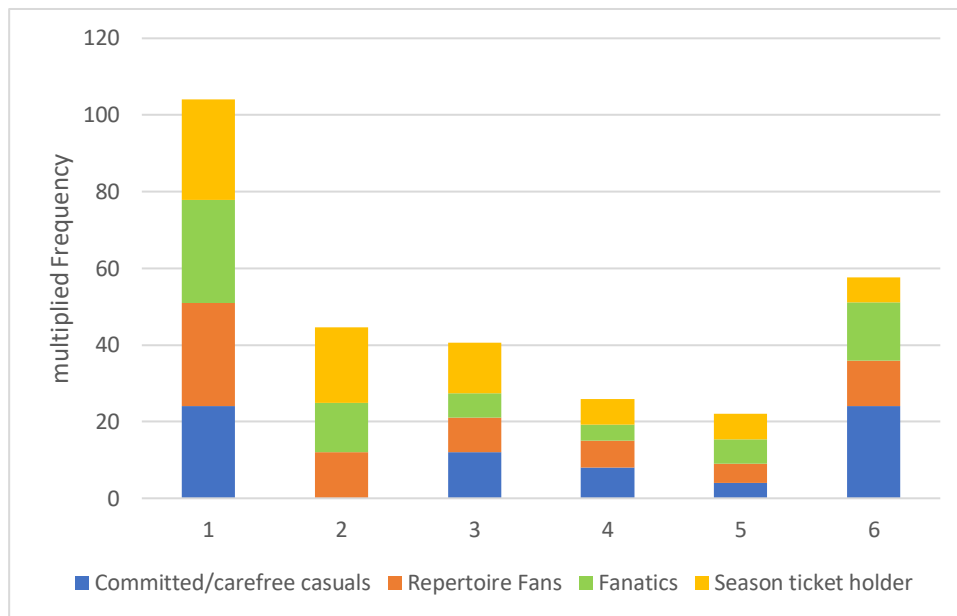
Table 19. Ranking of motivations

Motivation	Overall	Rank
Local Proximity	685	1
Success of the club	476	6
Performance of the club	559	4
Family	552	5
Friends	634	2
Image/Values of the club	622	3

Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

The following diagrams allowing a deeper insight into the distribution of the motivation between each rank and the different types of football supporters. To have a visible comparison of the results, each type of football supporter sample is multiple with a factor to generate a common n of 72 respondents per sample. This is the maximum factor of the respondent in one sample (repertoire fans). The n of committed/carefree casuals is multiple by factor 4. The Fanatics are multiple by 1.07 and the season ticket holders by 6.54.

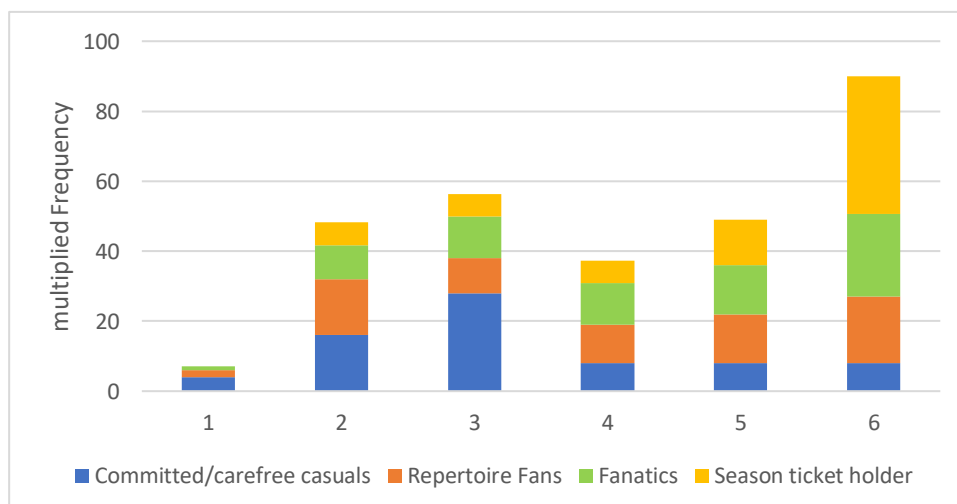
Figure 15. Importance of ‘local proximity’



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

Most respondents of the survey have ranked local proximity as one the most important factors for their loyalty with 62 votes in total for rank 1. As seen in Figure 15 the votes for rank 1 between the different types of football supporters are equally distributed at roundabout 33 percent to 38 percent. The distribution of votes on the other ranks goes down and has another peak at the end on rank 6. Especially the committed/carefree casuals created this peak. They have voted local proximity on the least rank with 24 percent of their votes. The least of the respondents with only 8 percent have voted local proximity on rank 4 and 5.

Figure 16. Importance of ‘success of the club’

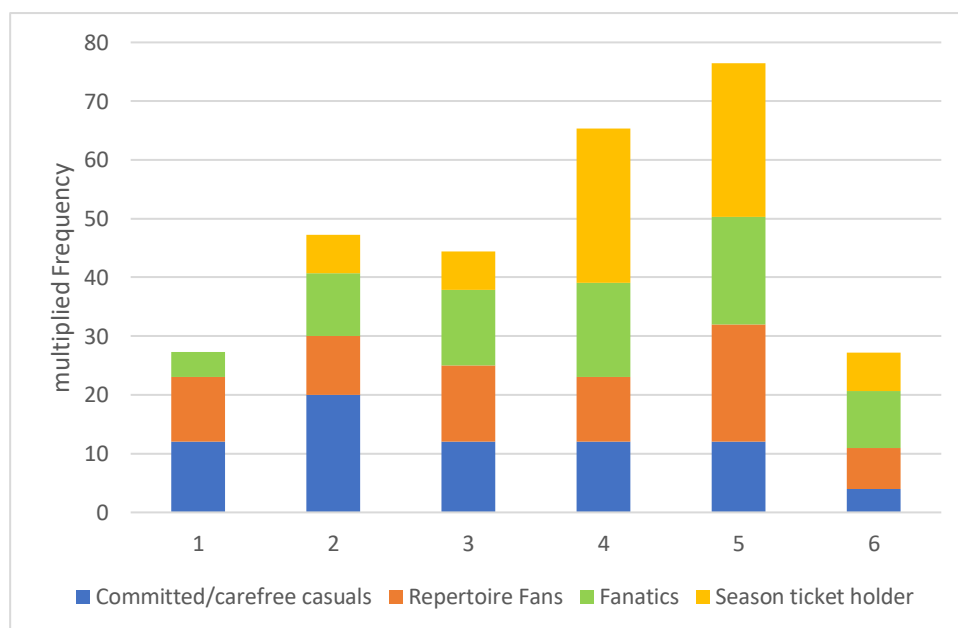


Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

The success of the club doesn't seem to be as important for the supports, as almost a third of all respondents have ranked this motive on the rank 6 for their loyalty (Figure 16). Especially the season ticket holders with 55 percent of their group. In addition, not only is rank 6, the one with the most votes, but rank 1 with an amount of only 4 votes in total is also the one with the least votes. The other ranks are more or less the same distributed with around 25 to 31 votes for each position. Among repertoire fans, there was a consistent distribution of about 10 to 16 percent between ranks 2 to 5. The same applies to the fanatics with 9 to 13 percent.

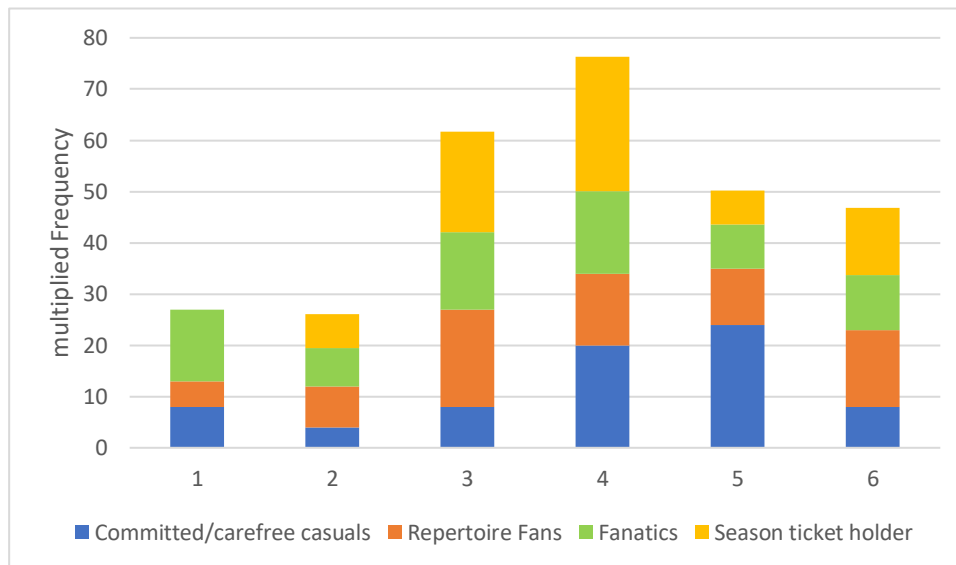
In this case, success means the final result of the matches and the seasons. In contrast to performance, which describes the playing effort of the team during the game. The ranking results of the performance of the club can be seen in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Importance of 'performance of the club'



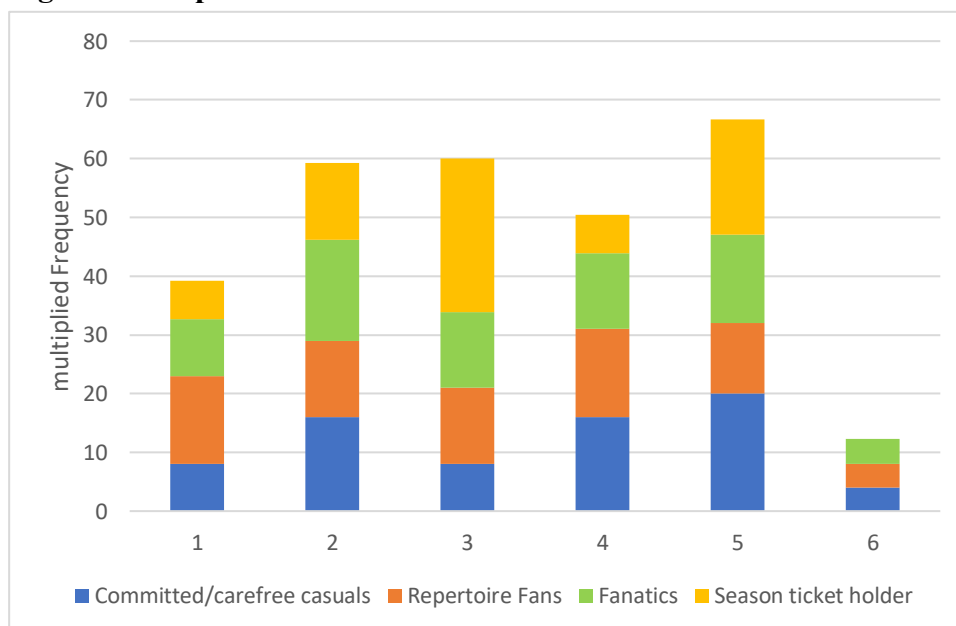
Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

In this diagram, it can be seen that the 4th and 5th ranks received the most votes. The 'season ticket holders' in particular account for a considerable proportion of this, with 36 percent of the group in each case. The remaining groups are evenly distributed. Repertoire fans voted for the performance the most at rank 5 with 28 percent of their votes, as well as the fanatics with 25 percent. The committed/carefree casuals cast most of their votes for rank 2 with 28 percent.

Figure 18. Importance of ‘family’

Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

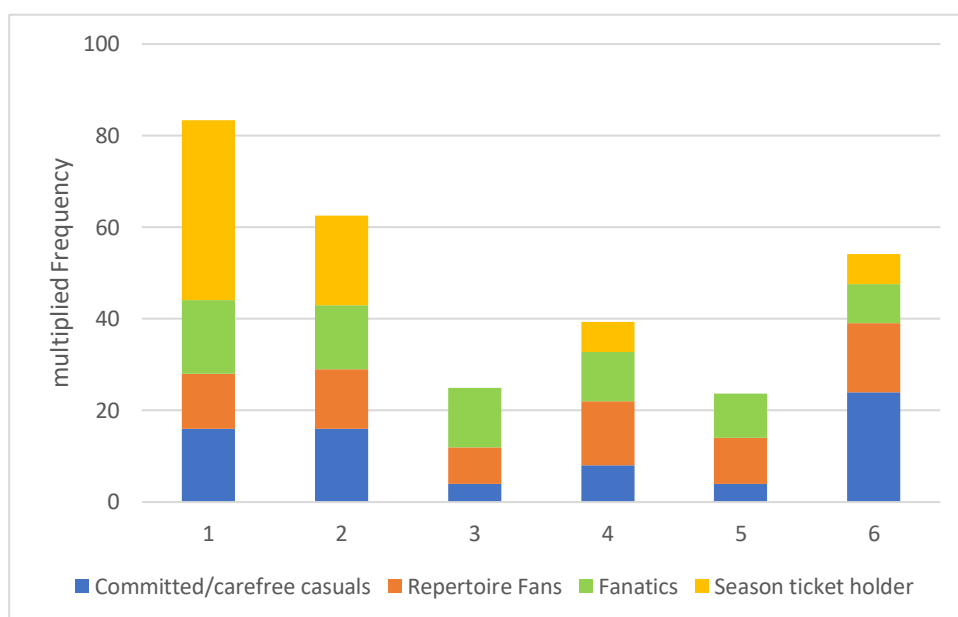
The family tended to be ranked at the lower end, as shown in Figure 18. Most participants ranked family 4th in terms of its influence on their loyalty. Only the committed/carefree casuals gave most of their votes for rank 5, at 33 percent. Furthermore, 19 percent of fanatics placed the family in the first place. Most of the repertoire fans voted it in third place and a full 21 percent of them voted the family in the last place.

Figure 19. Importance of ‘friends’

Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file ‘Football Loyalty’

Overall, almost 20 percent of all respondents chose 'friends' in rank 5 in terms of its influence on their loyalty. 28 percent of committed/carefree casuals voted for this ranking. More than a third of 'season ticket holders' placed the influence of 'friends' slightly better, at rank 3. 'Repertoire fans' were the most likely to place 'friends' at rank 1 with 21 percent. Friends' was the least voted for among all groups, in rank 6 (Figure 19).

Figure 20. Importance of 'images/values of the club'



Source: Own elaboration based output of SPSS file 'Football Loyalty'

In Figure 20, it can be seen that the distribution of the 'image/values of a club' tends to be in the upper ranks, especially ranks 1 and 2. These two ranks account for over 40 percent of the distribution. The 'season ticket holders' in particular contributed a significant share at rank 1. More than half of this group perceive 'values and image' as the most influential factor for their loyalty. In addition to the high distribution between ranks 1 and 2, the middle ranks 3 to 5 are more evenly distributed. Rank 6 interestingly shows an increase in the distribution. This is particularly due to the 'committed/carefree casuals', of whom 33 percent chose this ranking.

4.4. Qualitative analysis

4.4.1. Qualitative content analysis

The in-depth interviews are analyzed based on the category system in the qualitative content analysis defined by Mayring (2016). This method is as well assisted by the linguistic condensation by Kuckartz (2014). Both data analysis methods are used to provide a systematic step-by-step analysis of the in-depth interviews, with regards to the research questions.

The first step of the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2016) should describe what type of material is analyzed. The second step describes the situation in which those interviews were conducted. The third step clarifies the physical form of the material. All those three steps are described in *Chapter 3.2.* and *3.4.* The fourth step of the content analysis is the direction of the analysis. As described in *Chapter 3.1* this research aims is to identify which factors influence a football supporter in terms of loyalty, especially for the Bundesliga supporters. Step five is the theoretical differentiation because the analysis by Mayring (2016) is a rule- and theory-guided. It follows a systematic approach with theory-based categories which are formed with regards to the research question. Kuckartz (2014) additionally described that those categories are formed based on the questions which were asked in the IDI. The names of the different interview partners are not mentioned here but are differentiated in IP1, IP2, IP3 and IP4. The abbreviation IP stands for interview partner. The guideline for the IDI can be found in Appendix 2. Based on the research question and the guideline of the IDI the following categories are formed:

1. Type of football supporter
2. Group affiliation
3. Emotional stimulation
4. Self-identity
5. Success factors

Due to the non-structured nature of the IDI, the point of ‘economic motives’ did not come up in the responses of the interviewees and is thereby not included in the category systems. The next step is to assign statements in the interviews to the five main categories. The results of this process step are still unclear and do not generate much insight. Therefore, in the next step, the text modules are paraphrased and filler words are excluded. The result is a shortened form that

focuses only on the content. Subsequently, this form is generalized and subcategories are created which raise the quotations to a uniform scientific, linguistic level (P. Mayring, 2016). These subcategories are created inductively (U. Kuckartz, 2014). The table in which the quotes are allocated to the categories and subcategories can be found in Appendix 3.

For the category 'Type of Football supporter' the following subcategories could be identified:

1. Expression of loyalty
2. Active participation

For the category 'Group affiliation' following subcategories were created:

1. Family as an influence on loyalty
2. Friends as an influence on loyalty
3. Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty

Subcategories for 'Emotional stimulation' are:

1. Emotions as an influence on loyalty
2. Memories as an influence on loyalty
3. Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty

For the category 'Self-identity' following subcategories were created:

1. Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
2. Values as an influence on loyalty
3. Expression of loyalty to others

The last category is the 'Success factor'. Following subcategories were assigned:

1. Success as an influence on loyalty
2. Failure as an influence on loyalty
3. Players as an influence on loyalty

4.4.2. Category system by Mayring

The qualitative content analysis helped to structure the interviews based on the research question and the guideline for the IDI. The category system according to Mayring (2016) is used to design the process of qualitative content analysis in a theory-and rule-guided manner. The category system is displayed in the following Table 20. The first left column defines the theory-based categories. The second column contains the subcategories that were inductively derived based on the summarized content of the interviewees' answers. The third column contains a quote that can be assigned to the specific subcategories, a so-called 'anchor sample'. The last column contains the coding rules on which the quotes were assigned to the respective subcategories (P. Mayring, 2016).

Table 20. Category system of Mayring

Categories (deductive)	Subcategories (inductive)	Anchor sample	Coding rules
Type of football	Statement	I'm a big fan of 1. FC Köln. (IP1)	A clear statement of being a supporter of a club
	Active participation	Well, I often go to home games, so as often as I can I try to make time for them and get tickets. I also try to go to away games more often, but it's actually difficult to get tickets	The level of participation in the club's activities (football and non-football related)
Group affiliation	Family as an influence	but I don't think my loyalty is due to my family (IP4)	A statement or the extent to which the family has an influence on loyalty
	Friends as an influence	This great power of attraction. That you actually have a good circle of friends. That you spend a lot of time with them. (IP3)	A statement or the extent to which the friends have an influence on loyalty
	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty	I think when you start to get involved with the club and find your group, it creates an affiliation and a sense of community because you have a common value, in this case a football club, where you see a shared identity with others. (IP2)	A statement or the extent to which being a part of a greater community has an influence on loyalty
Emotional stimulation	Emotions as an influence on loyalty	This magic in the mixture of the fan scene and the city of Cologne and these emotions that you have. That was my biggest motivation. (IP1)	A statement or the extent to which the emotions have an influence on loyalty
	Memories as an influence on loyalty	Then as well the main drivers on loyalty are memories. (IP1)	A statement or the extent to which the memories have an influence on loyalty
	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty	Of course, it's a huge balance to the rest of the week. (IP3)	A statement or the extent to which the release of daily stress has an influence on loyalty
Self-identity	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty	But then there's also the proximity to the club, because it's a club from the neighborhood. (IP2)	A statement or the extent to which the closeness to the club has an influence on loyalty

	Values as an influence on loyalty	I think that's unbelievably good and you can take something away from it for your own life. Always stay ambitious and always strive for the best. (IP4)	A statement or the extent to which the values of the club have an influence on loyalty
	Expression of loyalty to others	So when you're asked, you shouldn't hide your opinion. (IP2)	A statement or the extent to which the participant express their opinion about the club to others
Success factors	Success as an influence on loyalty	I would still describe myself as loyal, because the whole thing is not only based on sporting success. (IP4)	A statement or the extent to which the success of the club has an influence on loyalty
	Failure as an influence on loyalty	It's an expression like in good times as well as in bad. It's just like in a marriage. But you stick with it. (IP3)	A statement or the extent to which the failure of the club has an influence on loyalty
	Players as an influence on loyalty	I think these players make it easier to be loyal when you have such star players and the sporting success is so high.	A statement or the extent to which the players of the club have an influence on loyalty

Source: Own elaboration based on the qualitative analysis by Maring (2016)

4.4.3. Type of football supporter

The first deductive category is 'Type of football supporter' with the three subcategories in which the participants showed which type they belong to. On one side the 'Expression of loyalty' and on the other the 'Active participation'. To begin, the researcher wanted to create a portrayal of the interviewees in terms of their loyalty towards their club. The participants IP1 and IP3 can be identified as season ticket holders, as they stated their loyalty: *'I'm a big fan of 1. FC Köln'* (IP1), *'I've been a Schalke member since I was born.'*, (IP3) and additionally, they are constantly participating in the club's events, whether it is matches or non-football related activities: *'I went more and more to 1. FC Köln. That meant going to all the home games and every second away game.'* (IP1). *'I missed a game last season, when you still were allowed to attend the stadium, for the first time in five years. I attended every game, home and away, for five years. Also every friendly match'* (IP3).

Participants IP2 and IP4 stated their loyalty as well: *'That means I follow at least 50 percent of the games in the stadium, if not more. That's why you can call me a real supporter'* (IP2), *'I am a Bayern Munich fan'* (IP4). In terms of active participation in the club, they were less likely to fulfill this, therefore they are classified as repertoire fans: *'Rarely. Maybe once a year, but then only here in the region and once every two years, when I have to travel a bit further, with an overnight stay. I don't take part in non-football-related activities'* (IP2), *'Well, I often go to home games, so as often as I can I try to make time for them and get tickets. I also try to go to*

away games more often, but it's actually difficult to get tickets', 'Other than that, I don't really take part in a lot of events away from the football pitch.' (IP4).

4.4.4. Group affiliation

The deductive category 'group affiliation' consists of three inductive subcategories: 'Family as an influence', 'Friends as an influence' and 'Belonging to a community as an influence'. Group affiliation was previously identified in *Chapter 2.2.3.* as one of the main factors which influence the loyalty of football supporters. Therefore this motivation factor is interesting to analyze and get a deeper insight.

Especially for the more loyal participant IP1 and IP2 of the IDI the belonging to a community had an immense impact on their loyalty: *'For me, loyalty has developed through the points of affiliation and community.'* (IP1), *'And that no matter where you go or what you do, you have other like-minded people everywhere.'* (IP3). All the participants stress out that it is important for them to belong to a community where they have the same thoughts, same habits or values which they can share: *'[I]t creates an affiliation and a sense of community because you have a common value, in this case a football club, where you see a shared identity with others.'* (IP2). Furthermore, not only the good times but especially the bad times create a stronger feeling of community: *'Solidarity in good times and bad is what bonds us together and makes this loyalty so strong.'* (IP1).

Friends play an important role in influencing loyalty for all participants: *'This great power of attraction. That you actually have a good circle of friends. That you spend a lot of time with them.'* (IP3). One of the main reasons for going to games and be an active supporter is *'the experience in the stadium with friends'* (IP4). In some acquaintances *'[i]t doesn't always have to be about supporting your club, but rather about seeing the lads again.'* (IP2). Friends have a strong influence on the participants as those are the people with *'whom you've experienced so much and still want to experience a lot'* (IP1).

Family does not seem to be a strong influence on the participants: *'My loyalty wasn't really transferred in the family, only the love for the city. But the active life as a fan, no.'* (IP1); *'My family had no influence because my father is a Borussia Mönchengladbach fan'* (IP2) But the

whole process of football rather started with a family member introducing the sport to the interviewees: *'It all started like this: my grandfather, who was a big 1860 Munich supporter, took me to a game'* (IP4); *'First with my father, then without him,'* (IP2); *'To elaborate a bit, my mother is also very enthusiastic about 1. FC Köln, so that's where the connection to the club came from. She took me to the stadium early on.'* (IP1). In total, group affiliation has a strong impact on the influence of loyalty for all the participants and especially the subcategories friends and belonging to a community. The family rather marks the start point of this whole concept of loyalty.

4.4.5. Emotional stimulation

The deductive category emotional stimulation, can be allocated in three subcategories, which were mentioned as an influence on loyalty: emotions, memories and relief of daily stress. The distribution of the subcategories among the participants is even. No clear tendency can be discerned.

The participant could identify that their loyalty occurs from memories they had with the club: *'Then as well the main drivers on loyalty are memories.'* (IP1). Moreover, not only good memories have an influence but the bad ones as well. They can even create an even stronger bond: *'There are moments when you have doubts, but in the end the positive ones outweigh them.'* (IP2); *'When you've been through 5/6 years of ups and downs and have been on away trips to Aue or London with your colleagues. Crazy things like that bond you and will always be associated with 1. FC Köln. Even if the active role of the club is limited in these memories.'* (IP1). The last quote shows that the club itself sometimes does not play a central role in the memories. The clubs and their games are often the basis on which memories are created. A memory which almost all participants stressed out is the first time they went to the stadium: *'But it's also simply a feeling you get when you're in the stadium for the first time. I think that's the decisive factor.'* (IP4); *'I can still remember the first time I went to the stadium very well. Of course, we had the worst tickets in the whole stadium. Under the roof, in the last corner. That moment when you walk up the 10 million stairs and have a view of the whole stadium, how the balls are crossed from left to right, I definitely won't forget that moment. That was also a key moment for my love of the club.'* (IP1).

Memories and emotions are often closely connected but this subcategory rather develops the expression of emotions and to what extent does this emotion influence loyalty. Emotions can be good and bad: *'As a FC Köln fan, you also suffer a lot.'* (IP1); *'Even when things are going badly, you still watch the games. Which is not so much fun at the moment, because of Corona, because the emotions are missing.'* (IP2). In some cases the participants like to romanticize their bond with the club and create scenarios in their minds: *'In a way, it's also daydreaming. When you hear players say, I'm coming to Schalke to help them to stay in the league. That's a kind of football romance.'* (IP3). Emotions play an essential role in loyalty. They often develop a strong bond *'just like in a marriage'* (IP3) because *'[e]very game is always something special'* (IP2) that makes a change undiscussable: *'You're simply fascinated by everything that has to do with this one club and then you don't change your club.'* (IP4).

Next to the emotions and memories, the matchday causes relief of daily stress and creates *'a huge balance to the rest of the week.'* (IP3). The relief of daily stress was less mentioned by the interviewees as an important influence on loyalty but it assists it positively. Either it is about having an aim for the work week *'You knew on Mondays in the office, I'm going to work all week so I can give myself the balance on Saturdays. Sometimes even taking leave on Fridays to go to Berlin because that's what you lived for. It's very emotional.'* (IP3) or it is the relief of all negative thoughts during a game *'At that moment, I'm free of all the other worries and fears that I had. Your focus is completely on this game.'* (IP4).

4.4.6. Self-identity

'Local proximity' and 'values' as an influence and 'expression of loyalty' form the three sub-categories of the self-identity section. Local proximity to their club is for all participants a starting in their life as loyal supporters. It seems like a given fact that they are supporters of their club because they were born or grown up in the club's region: *'Of course, there's also the local proximity, because I'm from Munich.'* (IP4); *'Well, I'm from Cologne and therefore, very obviously, I'm a big fan of 1. FC Köln.'* (IP1). Other than that, it is possible that they would be supporters of other clubs *'if [they were] born in the north, [they] would be a fan of Werder Bremen or Hamburg'* (IP1). Furthermore one of the participants stresses out that *'[e]very club*

is different and is related to the region in which the club is located' (IP1). This clear identification of a club with the region is a strong part of the self-identity and builds upon the next subcategory 'values'.

Values are a central key aspect of self-identity (B. Samra, 2014). Especially for IP1 and IP4, the values of a club are the fundament why they are loyal: *'Loyalty is a concept that is very much related to values.'* (IP1); *'You don't really choose the club yourself, but somehow the club, with all its values and traditions, with all the trappings, chooses you and totally absorbs you and occupies you.'* (IP4). Values seem to be a driver to be active in the club: *'The more you identify with the club, the more games you want to watch and the more years you want to be a member.'* (IP1). Further, the supporters do not only share the same values with the club but as well adopt some of those values to their own life: *'I think that's unbelievably good and you can take something away from it for your own life. Always stay ambitious and always strive for the best.'* (IP4). For the participants, it is also important that a club does not change its values but sticks to them constantly: *'There are certain basic values that you commit to in football or as a club and which you then follow through in your agenda.'* (IP1); *'It's a lifestyle, a decision for life.'* (IP4).

The values of a club create a strong connection to self-identity. To express themselves, the participants develop their opinions about this in the 'expression of loyalty to others'. Especially for participant IP2 and IP3, the expression was a key aspect of their self-identity with the club. This can be through merchandise: *'I identify very much with Schalke. If you look in my wardrobe, there's quite a lot of Schalke in it', 'When it comes to my external appearance, there's never a week when I'm not wearing anything from Schalke.'* (IP3) *'For example, I have a sweatband that I wear regularly at home games, and it says "German Champion 1995" on it.'* (IP2). But as well through the expression of their opinion about the club to others: *'If you're standing in a group of 8 Schalke supporters and you're the only Dortmund supporter, you should openly state that you're a Dortmund supporter and contribute your opinion.'*, *'So when you're asked, you shouldn't hide your opinion.'* (IP2).

4.4.7. Success factors

As identified earlier success factors can be one of the main drivers why football supporters develop an attitude of loyalty towards their club. Two subcategories directly address the ‘success’ and ‘players’ as an influence on loyalty. But it is interesting to see that in this research also the factor of ‘failure’ creates a subcategory and plays a role as an influence on loyalty.

When it comes to success only one participant mentioned that the start to become a supporter was due to the success of the club at a specific time when the interests in football increased: *‘I don't know exactly how it happened, but it's probably because Borussia's two championship successes at the time awakened my interest.’* (IP2). Moreover, all of the participants want their clubs to be successful and achieve the most possible in sports but there in a more realistic way, it seems to be an add-on. In regards to the influence on their loyalty, it does not seem to decrease but rather becomes less emotionally: *‘[I]f you don't succeed, maybe you'll stop going completely crazy. Then at some point you become more detached.’* (IP2); *‘Not at all, actually. Of course you have a bad feeling when Schalke loses. That's no fun either, but why should I turn my back on the club because of that? Why should I then show an act of resistance and say we're not going to Munich because I know we're losing?’* (IP3); *‘Nevertheless, I never questioned the big picture or stopped being loyal. I still went to the stadium, I still took an interest in it. You can see from such phases that sporting success is not completely unimportant to me, but apart from that I remain loyal to my Bayern.’* (IP4). Furthermore, if the success is missing, there is no point of return or choosing another team which is more likely to be successful: *‘There's also no question that I wouldn't rather be a fan of Borussia Dortmund, just because they play better and that might be more fun because you can celebrate a win there more often. But that's never an option’* (IP1); *‘Part of loyalty is not looking for a new club in such phases just because they play better.’* (IP2).

When it comes to success often the players of the club have an impact and can be idolized. Especially the repertoire fans IP2 and IP4 identified the value. Players *‘make it easier to be loyal when you have such star players and the sporting success is so high.’* (IP4). Players are more a part of the entertainment and have some kind of influence on the emotionality of the participants: *‘If the players weren't there, it would turn into such a grind. As I described it, you're still a fan, but the emotionality would be missing. That's what players like that are good for. Maybe even necessary.’* (IP2). The participants IP 1 and IP3 either did not mentioned the

players as an influence or made a statement that they are not important for them: *'I am a fan of this club and not a fan of player XY or the eleven who are on the pitch now.'* (IP3).

Being loyal means for supporters *'that you stick with the club through thick and thin'* (IP3). Failure is nothing a supporter wants to have for their club but those times of failure strengthen the bond between the club and its supporters, even when it means fighting to get better: *'I think loyalty means standing up for your club, even when things aren't going well. In the long run, that also means standing behind something like the near insolvency.'* (IP2); *'That means I go with Schalke into the Second League and fight for it to get better again.'* (IP3).

Chapter 5. Discussion of findings

The following chapter will be segmented into six different parts. First, the results for the different types of football supporters from the research are compared with the available theory. As the next point of discussion, the different forms of motivations can be compared for their influence on loyalty and whether and how strong these motivations are.

The present research started with the identification of football supporters in the different categories: season ticket holders, fanatics, repertoire fans and committed/carefree casuals. The separation between those different types is based on behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. The season ticket holders were the most loyal participants of the research. As defined in the theory the success is not the relevant factor for this group and this can be seen in the ranking results for 'success of the club'. More than half of the season ticket holders have identified the success on the least important rank, followed by the performance of the club. This is consistent with the theory.

The group of fanatics especially have a high sense of self-identity with the club, this is consistent with the results of the questionnaire. In there the fanatics ranked the values of the club as the highest. The qualitative research developed that for fanatics the memories they are having with the club increase their loyalty immensely, this is also stated in the existing theory. Often those memories are made with friends, which is one of the highest-ranked motivations for this group of supporters.

The repertoire fans are theoretically seen as overall football interested group of supporters but not so attached to one club. They are more likely to see football as a way of pleasure. This group was unable to produce a clear favorite in any ranking category. The performance of the club, which can be seen as enhancing pleasure, was ranked equally by them, and the remaining motivations did not yield any clear findings either. Only local proximity was ranked by the repertoire fans as the most important factor for loyalty. Since there were no clear preferences of the repertoire fans and their loyalty is moderate, the results of the analyses can be matched with the existing theory.

The group of committed/carefree casuals is theoretically seen as a group that sees football as entertainment. They can identify with a club but the club is seen as a part of a second life that

does not present themselves, this tendency is also identified in the ranking of motives where the values and images of a club has been voted as the least important factor. The importance of entertainment (performance of the club) as a factor could also be identified as they voted this factor on the upper positions of the ranking.

Overall it can be said that with regards to the different types of supporters the results of the analysis have been consistent with the theory and can build upon that. A mentionable factor is that people have an understanding of what loyalty means but they see themselves as more loyal as they actually are. In the questionnaire more than half have considered themselves as the most loyal with their club but more than half of the participants were allocated to the repertoire fans or lower.

The main aim of this research was to identify the determinants that influence the loyalty of supporters. The current state of research identified five factors: group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity, economic motives and success factors. With regards to group affiliation, the analysis has shown that this is a factor that influences the loyalty of football supporters. The hypothesis testing has shown that there is a positive correlation between group affiliation and loyalty, which means the greater a supporter is considered loyal, the more the supporter values the impact of group affiliation as a factor for loyalty. As seen in the results of the questionnaire and the IDI, especially through the factors of friends, family and belonging to a community, which is consistent with the theory. The families are often the start for becoming a supporter but on the lifecycle of a supporter, they become less important for influencing loyalty, as shown in the IDI. The affiliation with friends has a greater impact. In the rankings, friends had been voted on the second most important factor for loyalty. In the IDI the participants mentioned that spending time with their friends. Especially in those modern times with the COVID-19 pandemic, where the social interaction with others is limited, the group affiliation aspects shows its impact as one of the participants in the IDI mentioned. Another finding is that in the theory the group affiliation was ranked as the most important influence on loyalty, the hypothesis test has shown that it is self-identity instead, as it had the greatest positive correlation.

The hypothesis testing for the factor of emotional stimulation has shown that there is a positive correlation towards loyalty. This is as well identified in the theory of Samra and Wos (2014).

Especially in the IDI, it could be identified how important emotional stimulation is for the supporters. Samra and Wos (2014) used the term of 'euphoric stress' as one of the main drivers, in other words the relief of daily stress. During the game, the supporters can forget about the fears and concerns they have. This factor influences loyalty but has a moderate impact. More importantly, it is the memories and associated emotions that supporters mentioned as a factor influencing their loyalty. The theory focused more on the emotional stimulation during the game but the research has shown that this goes way beyond than just the game itself. It is the time and trappings before and after a game that establish a deep connection between supporters and the club.

Another factor mentioned in the theory is self-identity. The expression of oneself to society. The results of the research agree on this. The hypothesis test proves that self-identity and loyalty correlate positively. Another insight is that self-identity has the greatest positive correlation which means that between the different groups the effects are stronger. This agrees with the assumption that a supporter who identifies itself with a football club will more likely attend more games than a person who does not. The IDIs identified that supporters are more likely to include merchandise of their clubs into their external appearance towards others, which is also stated in the theory. The research could, additionally to the theory, identify that values and images of a club influence loyalty. Especially by the season ticket holders and fanatics has this factor been ranked in the first place as the most important. Furthermore was the matching of values and images between the supporters and the club frequently mentioned and highlighted in the IDIs.

The factor of economic motives had been proven by the hypothesis testing as a positive correlation towards loyalty, this is shared with the existing theory. The correlation is the lowest one compared with the results of the previous factors. As an interesting factor, the economic motives were not mentioned in the results of the IDI.

Another factor that caused the research question of why people are loyal to a club is the success factor. In an earlier study, the success factor was ranked as the third most important motivation for being loyal to a club. In this research, it was proven by the hypothesis testing that there is no significant relation between success factor and loyalty. In particular, the ranking showed clear differences from previous studies. The success of the club was ranked on the last spot, as the least important factor mostly by season ticket holders and fanatics. Almost no participant

has voted success on the first rank. Furthermore, the IDIs have proven that, with regards to loyalty, success does not influence this. As it was mentioned, it can start to develop interests in a club, but it does not create a bond between the supporters and club.

All in all, this research has proven and verified most of the existing theory. It further developed deeper insights and a better understanding of the supporters and their motivations behind being loyal to a club. The only factor, contrary to the prevailing research, which does not have a significant influence on the loyalty of supporters is the sporting success of a team.

Chapter 6. Conclusion and future outlook

6.1. Conclusion

The following chapter includes the key findings of the research and as well recommendations for managerial implications. One of the main key findings is that the existing theory and the research are consistent in various points. The hypothesis testing has proven that factors as group affiliation, emotional stimulation, self-identity and economic motives are influencing the loyalty of supporters in a positive way. Only the factor of success does not appear to be a relevant factor for the supporter's loyalty.

The in-depth interviews added a deeper understanding to all those factors. The motivation of group affiliation is precisely driven by the motivation of common activities with friends and belonging to a community with same-minded people. The family in this factor rather deals as a starting point for loyalty. The factor of emotional stimulation is influenced by the emotions a person has during a game and the gathered memories, which are associated with the club. Furthermore, the club serves as a balance to everyday stress. The factor of self-identity is the strongest influence on loyalty for the supporters. This factor is driven by the values and image of the club with which the supporters can identify and the local proximity of the club. In some case, the supporters like to express to others their loyalty to the club through merchandise which they are wearing in daily life, as an expression of themselves. The in-depth interviews also developed that the success or the players of a club are not relevant for the supporter's loyalty. They can serve as a starting point to begin the interests of a club. In some cases, failure can influence loyalty because as it becomes an experience that a supporter goes through good and bad times with a club and this can create a bonding effect. In the rankings of motivations for being loyal to a club, the most important ones are the local proximity followed by friends and image/values of the club in the second and third place. Local proximity and values as a part of self-identity and friends as a part of group affiliation. Interesting to mention is that also in this ranking success was in the least important place.

6.2. Recommendations

This research was also conducted to implement the results in the related industry. The industry is the football business, especially the Bundesliga. The business area is marketing, especially in the area of creating brand loyalty. The customers in this case are the supporters. The companies are the Bundesliga clubs. The plan is to create a more loyal customer base. This can increase the sales of tickets and merchandise, as people are more likely to attend games and buy merchandise when they are more loyal. Additionally, it reduces costs on customer retention and new customers are more likely to join. The research results are combined with the different categories of 'Brand response' by Keller (2001).

The brand quality in this case is not that important as it would be the overall performance and success of the club, which is identified as not important for the supporters. Logically a club should focus on the overall success but this should not be tackled as a part of marketing activities to create brand loyalty. The marketing of the Bundesliga clubs should focus in advertisement on the messages of self-identity to create strong brand credibility. In here especially on the motivations of local proximity and the values of the region. Additionally, the marketing message of the clubs should be about group affiliation, especially about spending time together with friends and like-minded people, this further creates a stronger brand consideration. In here the club can act as a sponsor of family events or social gatherings. The combination of all creates a clear brand superiority of the company in the head of the supporters.

To create a purchase or repurchase pattern for the customer, the club can focus on addressing the value of being a family-friendly club that would focus on the target groups of young families with children. This creates awareness in the target group and, as identified in the results, can be a start of creating loyal customers.

This strategy for creating brand loyalty is more likely to work with clubs that are from regions with a high population and a low level of other competitor clubs. Due to the focus on local proximity and values of the region, it attracts more people from the region than from others. Furthermore, if there are other Bundesliga clubs in the region and they would follow the same strategy there would be no differentiation towards them.

6.3. Limitations

It is important to analyze the research and identify limitations so that the results are put into the context of critical evaluation. One limitation is based on the statistical method. The study is based on non-parametric tests as the Kruskal-Wallis test or the Spearman's correlation coefficient. The Kruskal Wallis test was used because not in all samples a normal distribution existed. A two-way-ANOVA test can create more valuable and statistically relevant insight. Still the results are significant and relevant. Another limitation is the representativity of the sample that could be closer to the total population, as it can show a small difference in the categories of gender, age and preference of football clubs.

6.4. Future research

The research serves as a contribution to the scientific process as preliminary work for meta-regression. The results have shown that locality is important for the supporters in order to create loyalty, in a modern world where everything is coming closer due to the new technologies and transportation possibilities it may be a start for future research to concentrate on the development of creating loyalty towards an international audience from different countries or continents This thesis as well focused only on the German Bundesliga. For future research an insight of other European top leagues can create a value.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire

T1 The following questionnaire should clarify which factors are influencing the loyalty of football fans, especially for the German Bundesliga. The survey is anonymous and your data will be treated in accordance with data protection regulations. Thank you for helping me with my Master Thesis!

Page Break

Q1 Are you interested in football?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q2 Are you interested in the Bundesliga?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you interested in the Bundesliga? = 2

Page Break

Q3 Which of the following clubs do you like or prefer the most? One answer only

- Bayern München (1)
- Borussia Dortmund (2)
- RB Leipzig (3)
- Bayer Leverkusen (4)
- FC Schalke 04 (5)
- SC Freiburg (6)
- Eintracht Frankfurt (7)
- Arminia Bielefeld (8)
- TSG Hoffenheim (9)
- Borussia Mönchengladbach (10)
- Werder Bremen (11)
- VfB Stuttgart (12)
- FSV Mainz 05 (13)
- 1. FC Köln (14)
- Union Berlin (15)
- Hertha BSC Berlin (16)
- FC Augsburg (17)

VfL Wolfsburg (18)

None (19)

Skip To: End of Block If Which of the following clubs do you like or prefer the most? One answer only = 19

Q4 Are you a season ticket holder of any of those clubs?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q5 For how long are you supporting the club?

0 years (1)

1-8 years (2)

9-16 years (3)














17-24 years (4)

25-32 years (5)

32+ (6)

Page Break

Q6 Please, state how you agree or disagree with the below statements. Choose your answer where 1 means "I strongly disagree" and 5 means "I strongly agree"

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I like to follow every home game of my club in the stadium ()					
I like to follow every away game of my club in the stadium ()					
I like to follow every game of my club in the TV ()					
I like to follow every non-football related event of my club ()					
I always watch football because of seeing my club ()					
I am not interested in other football matches except those of my club ()					
I consider myself informed about what is happening inside my club (football-related) ()					
I know what is happening around my club (non-football related) ()					
For me it doesn't matter if the game is interesting at least my club wins ()					
For me the most important is that my club wins ()					
I always buy new merchandise of my club ()					
I own a lot of merchandise of my club ()					
My club is one of the most important parts of my life ()					

Q7 Please, state how you agree or disagree with the below statements. Choose your answer where 1 means "I strongly disagree" and 5 means "I strongly agree"

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I consider myself as loyal to my club ()					
I know I support my club because it is local where I was born/grew up ()					
I know I support my club because I identify with the values it represents ()					
I know I support my club because it is a social activity with my friends ()					
I know I support my club because it is a social activity with my family ()					
I know I support my club because the performance is really good ()					
I know I support my club because there are a lot of star players ()					
I know I support my club because it makes me feel unique ()					
I know I always express to others that I am a supporter of my club ()					
I believe that supporting my club is part of my identity ()					
I know that supporting my club is fun for me ()					
I believe that supporting my club let me forget about the daily stress ()					
I like to consider the people of my club as a big family to me ()					
I feel relieved after an intense game ()					
I like to follow my club to gain information and a better understanding of the sport itself ()					
I always bet on my club ()					

Q8 What makes you loyal to the club? Rank from 1 as "Most important factor" to 6 as "Least important factor"

- _____ Local proximity of the club (1)
- _____ Success of the club (2)
- _____ Performance of the club (3)
- _____ Family (4)
- _____ Friends (5)
- _____ Image/Values of the club (6)

End of Block: Loyalty

Start of Block: Demographic

Q9 What gender do you identify as?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Other (3)
 - Prefer not to answer (4)
-

Q10 How old are you?

- 0-20 years (1)
- 21-30 years (2)
- 31-40 years (3)
- 41-50 years (4)
- 50+ (5)
- Prefer not to answer (6)

Q11 Where are you from?

- Europe (1)
 - North America/Central America (2)
 - South America (3)
 - Africa (4)
 - Asia (5)
 - Australia (6)
 - Prefer not to answer (7)
-

Q12 What is the highest degree you have completed?

- High school (1)
- Student without degree (2)
- Bachelor's degree (3)
- Master's degree (4)
- Ph.D. or higher (5)
- Prefer not to answer (6)

Appendix 2. In-depth interviews discussion guide

Opening question: Please introduce yourself and tell us which club you support.

Main questions:

Type of football supporter:

- Do you also take part in away games and non-football related activities?

General for loyalty:

- What do you think are the factors that influence your loyalty?
- How did your loyalty to the club begin?
- Why have you stayed loyal?
- In your opinion, what is loyalty among football fans?

Group affiliation:

- How strong do you feel the influence of your family is on your loyalty?

Emotional Stimulation:

- To what extent do you feel that emotional satisfaction is an influence on your loyalty?
- To what extent do you feel that timeout from everyday life has an influence on your loyalty?
- Does football help you forget your daily stress?

Self-identity:

- To what extent do you feel that the possibility of your self-expression through the club is an influence on your loyalty?

Success:

- To what extent do you feel that star players are an influence on your loyalty?
- To what extent do you feel that performance is an influence on your loyalty?

Would you consider yourself a loyal fan even if the sporting success is gone?

Appendix 3. Linguistic condensation by Kuckartz (2014)

Category (deductive)	Citation	IP	Subcategories (inductive)
Type of football fan	I'm a big fan of 1. FC Köln.	1	Statement
	I went more and more to 1. FC Köln. That meant going to all the home games and every second away game. At that time, I also had a season ticket for 2 to 3 years.	1	Active participation
	But official dates of the association were also attended, such as the members' meeting. I am also a member of 1. FC Köln since 5 to 6 years.	1	Active participation
	Besides my biggest hobby, actively playing football, I also passively support a team. The passive support refers to Borussia Dortmund, where I also share a season ticket with a friend	2	Active participation
	That means I follow at least 50 percent of the games in the stadium, if not more. That's why you can call me a real supporter	2	Statement
	Rarely. Maybe once a year, but then only here in the region and once every two years, when I have to travel a bit further, with an overnight stay. I don't take part in non-football-related activities.	2	Active participation
	I've been a Schalke member since I was born.	3	Statement
	When I was 12/13 we got two season tickets through an acquaintance and from then on we went to every home game. It continued to develop in this way, so that at some point I went to every game.	3	Active participation

	I missed a game last season, when you still were allowed to attend the stadium, for the first time in five years. I attended every game, home and away, for five years. Also every friendly match	3	Active participation
	In 2017, Schalke organized a memorial trip to Auschwitz, where 30 Schalke members were able to travel there at a subsidized price. We were there for 4 days and visited everything over several days. This led to the founding of an anti-racism circle at Schalke, of which I am a co-initiator.	3	Active participation
	I am a Bayern Munich fan	4	Statement
	I've been supporting the club since I was 6 years old	4	Statement
	Well, I often go to home games, so as often as I can I try to make time for them and get tickets. I also try to go to away games more often, but it's actually difficult to get tickets	4	Active participation
	Personally, some trips are too far away for me. But I try to go to 4 or 5 away games per season. I usually manage to do that every season.	4	Active participation
	I also like to attend events around the stadium, if anything happens there. I also like to donate money to the ultra-scene, for example.	4	Active participation
	Other than that, I don't really take part in a lot of events away from the football pitch.	4	Active participation
Group affiliation	To elaborate a bit, my mother is also very enthusiastic about 1. FC Köln, so that's where the connection to the club came from. She took me to the stadium early on.	1	Family as an influence on loyalty
	It was then a matter of bringing the connection between the city, the people and the club onto the streets.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty

	You don't go to the stadium because it's great football, because the superstars are playing there, but because you clearly connect the club with the city and with the people. That was my motivation	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	As I said, the connection to the fan scene was very appealing and very interesting to me	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	There's a lot going on and it's also very diverse. There is this strong connection to the club and the different people, which is also connected to the city.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	For me, 1. FC Köln is a fascination, but at its core it's somehow about community, which you also build up a lot through actions outside the stadium. Like, for example, with your friends before and after the game	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	My loyalty wasn't really transferred in the family, only the love for the city. But the active life as a fan, no.	1	Family as an influence on loyalty
	For me, loyalty has developed through the points of affiliation and community.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	Solidarity in good times and bad is what bonds us together and makes this loyalty so strong.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	You can learn a lot from the people you're regularly around there, and that also has a strong influence on you.	1	Friends as an influence on loyalty

	because you have your core at your club and that's where the people are with whom you've experienced so much and still want to experience a lot	1	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	That which is passed on, via family, friends or acquaintances, with the region, with the cohesion.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	It's not the strikers, the defenders, the goalkeepers or the captains who make a club, but the people on the outside.	1	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	My family had no influence because my father is a Borussia Mönchengladbach fan	2	Family as an influence on loyalty
	I think then you just stick with it. Especially at that age, a group has been formed	2	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	When you realize that there are others in your circle of friends or in your social environment who support their club, it makes it easier.	2	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	I think when you start to get involved with the club and find your group, it creates an affiliation and a sense of community because you have a common value, in this case a football club, where you see a shared identity with others.	2	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	In our group, we have 7 season tickets, some of which are shared, so there are 12 of us. You look forward to going out together every two weeks.	2	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	It doesn't always have to be about supporting your club, but rather about seeing the lads again.	2	Friends as an influence on loyalty

	First with my father, then without him,	3	Family as an influence on loyalty
	and then with a large circle of friends.	3	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	This great power of attraction. That you actually have a good circle of friends. That you spend a lot of time with them.	3	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	And that no matter where you go or what you do, you have other like-minded people everywhere.		Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	Be it that we go to the game with 5 people in some car and then we also meet 8 thousand crazy people in Munich who have travelled from Gelsenkirchen. That also shows how loyal Schalke supporters are.	3	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	But if only my friends stopped going, I would still go see Schalke. Because you know enough other people in the Schalke universe with whom you can then spend the 90 minutes. Group affiliation is essential for me	3	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	When it comes to the topic of family, there was a time when it was quite clear that when Schalke plays, there is no family birthday party. Or the family birthday would take place without me.	3	Family as an influence on loyalty
	It all started like this: my grandfather, who was a big 1860 Munich supporter, took me to a game	4	Family as an influence on loyalty
	Actually, my grandfather wanted me to become an 1860 supporter	4	Family as an influence on loyalty

	Because other things matter to me, like the experience in the stadium with friends	4	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	Football is a big topic in our family, but I wouldn't say that it was the deciding factor that made me choose Bayern Munich	4	Family as an influence on loyalty
	but I don't think my loyalty is due to my family	4	Family as an influence on loyalty
	More my friends, that's something else again, but family not so much	4	Family as an influence on loyalty
	I think such points as group affiliation,	4	Belonging to a community as an influence on loyalty
	time with friends	4	Friends as an influence on loyalty
	It's partly an experience with friends	4	Friends as an influence on loyalty
Emotional stimulation	I discovered my love for football very early	1	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	I can still remember the first time I went to the stadium very well. Of course, we had the worst tickets in the whole stadium. Under the roof, in the last corner. That moment when you walk up the 10 million stairs and have a view of the whole stadium, how the balls are crossed from left to right, I definitely won't	1	Memories as an influence on loyalty

	forget that moment. That was also a key moment for my love of the club.		
	As a FC Köln fan, you also suffer a lot.	1	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	This magic in the mixture of the fan scene and the city of Cologne and these emotions that you have. That was my biggest motivation.	1	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	You're still on the road, upset about the game or still wondering how you managed to beat Bayern in the end. Those are moments that I remember with pleasure.	1	Memories as an influence on loyalty
	Then as well the main drivers on loyalty are memories.	1	Memories as an influence on loyalty
	When you've been through 5/6 years of ups and downs and have been on away trips to Aue or London with your colleagues. Crazy things like that bond you and will always be associated with 1. FC Köln. Even if the active role of the club is limited in these memories.	1	Memories as an influence on loyalty
	There are moments when you have doubts, but in the end the positive ones outweigh them.	1	Memories as an influence on loyalty
	Even when things are going badly, you still watch the games. Which is not so much fun at the moment, because of Corona, because the emotions are missing.	2	Emotions as an influence on loyalty

	Every game is always something special.	2	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	It's an expression like in good times as well as in bad. It's just like in a marriage. But you stick with it.	3	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	Of course, it's a huge balance to the rest of the week.	3	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty
	I watched every game of Schalke and knew who it was against and where they were playing, because it was just a balance.	3	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty
	You knew on Mondays in the office, I'm going to work all week so I can give myself the balance on Saturdays. Sometimes even taking leave on Fridays to go to Berlin because that's what you lived for. It's very emotional.	3	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty
	In a way, it's also daydreaming. When you hear players say, I'm coming to Schalke to help them to stay in the league. That's a kind of football romance.	3	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	but the mood of the Bayern supporters, the whole atmosphere and then the victory of FC Bayern at that time convinced me so much that from that moment on I said: "This is such a great club with so much emotion that I would like to support it".	4	Emotions as an influence on loyalty
	But it's also simply a feeling you get when you're in the stadium for the first time. I think that's the decisive factor.	4	Memories as an influence on loyalty
	You're simply fascinated by everything that has to do with this one club and then you don't change your club.	4	Emotions as an influence on loyalty

	That is of course a very positive side effect. As soon as I enter the stadium, I don't think about anything else but the upcoming match and the club.	4	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty
	At that moment, I'm free of all the other worries and fears that I had. Your focus is completely on this game.	4	Relief of daily stress as an influence on loyalty
Self-identity	Well, I'm from Cologne and therefore, very obviously, I'm a big fan of 1. FC Köln.	1	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	Every club is different and is related to the region in which the club is located.	1	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	Probably if I was born in the north, I would be a fan of Werder Bremen or Hamburg.	1	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	I am convinced that you can learn many values very strongly and firmly in football.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	Loyalty is a concept that is very much related to values.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	It means that you say to yourself: "Okay, this club, this city stands for certain values and I stand behind these values 100 per cent, in everything I think, do or say".	1	Values as an influence on loyalty

	There are certain basic values that you commit to in football or as a club and which you then follow through in your agenda.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	These are values that the club stands for and identifies with. If you manage to build this bridge, you are a loyal fan.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	The more you identify with the club, the more games you want to watch and the more years you want to be a member.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	Of course, the club and the players serve as representatives who also have to take on this role and represent these values. That is also where I can identify with my club as the strongest.	1	Values as an influence on loyalty
	But then there's also the proximity to the club, because it's a club from the neighborhood.	2	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	For example, I have a sweatband that I wear regularly at home games, and it says "German Champion 1995" on it.	2	Expression of loyalty to others
	So when you're asked, you shouldn't hide your opinion.	2	Expression of loyalty to others
	If you're standing in a group of 8 Schalke supporters and you're the only Dortmund supporter, you should openly state that you're a Dortmund supporter and contribute your opinion.	2	Expression of loyalty to others
	I identify very much with Schalke. If you look in my wardrobe, there's quite a lot of Schalke in it	3	Expression of loyalty to others

	When it comes to my external appearance, there's never a week when I'm not wearing anything from Schalke.	3	Expression of loyalty to others
	Of course, there's also the local proximity, because I'm from Munich.	4	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	The values that the club also represents outside of this sporting success.	4	Values as an influence on loyalty
	I think that's unbelievably good and you can take something away from it for your own life. Always stay ambitious and always strive for the best.	4	Values as an influence on loyalty
	self-identity with the club ensure that you are loyal. It's part regionality.	4	Local proximity as an influence on loyalty
	You don't really choose the club yourself, but somehow the club, with all its values and traditions, with all the trappings, chooses you and totally absorbs you and occupies you.	4	Values as an influence on loyalty
	It's a lifestyle, a decision for life.	4	Values as an influence on loyalty
Success factors	There's also no question that I wouldn't rather be a fan of Borussia Dortmund, just because they play better and that might be more fun because you can celebrate a win there more often. But that's never an option	1	Success as an influence on loyalty
	I don't know exactly how it happened, but it's probably because Borussia's two championship successes at the time awakened my interest.	2	Success as an influence on loyalty

	In other words, it just kind of happened that way. I suppose it was the successes at the time that brought me closer to Borussia Dortmund, but I don't know if you can say that about a 7-year-old.	2	Success as an influence on loyalty
	At the time with 16/17, we were worried when things looked bad, but we never went so far as to say that we were going to quit now.	2	Failure as an influence on loyalty
	Part of loyalty is not looking for a new club in such phases just because they play better.	2	Success as an influence on loyalty
	I think loyalty means standing up for your club, even when things aren't going well. In the long run, that also means standing behind something like the near insolvency.	2	Failure as an influence on loyalty
	Loyalty means standing behind something, whether it's going well or badly	2	Failure as an influence on loyalty
	Success is an immensely important factor in sport. I think if Dortmund only played for positions 8 to 10 in the next few years, the loyalty would fade.	2	Success as an influence on loyalty
	As a Dortmund supporter, it's a different story, because if you don't succeed, maybe you'll stop going completely crazy. Then at some point you become more detached.	2	Success as an influence on loyalty
	I wouldn't say that you stop watching the games or going to the stadium. People would still be loyal to the club, but probably with less emotion. I suppose.	2	Failure as an influence on loyalty
	At least it helps to keep you entertained as a fan. Especially players like Sancho or Haaland.	2	Players as an influence on loyalty

	My loyalty is influenced a bit by that, because you're kept happy.	2	Players as an influence on loyalty
	It's a cycle, through players like that the team gets better, you have the success to have fun in the end.	2	Players as an influence on loyalty
	If the players weren't there, it would turn into such a grind. As I described it, you're still a fan, but the emotionality would be missing. That's what players like that are good for. Maybe even necessary.	2	Players as an influence on loyalty
	I think the loyalty of the fans is that you stick with the club through thick and thin. That means I go with Schalke into the Second League and fight for it to get better again.	3	Failure as an influence on loyalty
	I already want Schalke to have the greatest possible success and win the games, but you still have to be realistic that you can't always win the games either.	3	Success as an influence on loyalty
	Not at all, actually. Of course you have a bad feeling when Schalke loses. That's no fun either, but why should I turn my back on the club because of that? Why should I then show an act of resistance and say we're not going to Munich because I know we're losing?	3	Success as an influence on loyalty
	I am a fan of this club and not a fan of player XY or the eleven who are on the pitch now.	3	Players as an influence on loyalty
	I would still describe myself as loyal, because the whole thing is not only based on sporting success.	4	Success as an influence on loyalty
	but I'm pretty sure I'd remain a fan even if the sporting success wasn't quite as great.	4	Success as an influence on loyalty

	I think these players make it easier to be loyal when you have such star players and the sporting success is so high.	4	Players as an influence on loyalty
	Nevertheless, I never questioned the big picture or stopped being loyal. I still went to the stadium, I still took an interest in it. You can see from such phases that sporting success is not completely unimportant to me, but apart from that I remain loyal to my Bayern.	4	Success as an influence on loyalty

Statement of Authorship

I hereby declare that:

1. The master's dissertation has been written by me alone, unassisted, and has never served as the basis for any official procedure involving taking steps leading to obtaining a higher education diploma confirming the conferment of an academic degree;
2. My master's dissertation does not infringe any copyright within the meaning of the act of 4 February 1994 on copyright and related rights or moral rights protected under the law.

Place, date: Lisbon, 31.05.21

Signature: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Núñez', is written over a horizontal line.