

**Cardiff School of Sport**  
**DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT PROFORMA:**

<b>Student name:</b>	<input type="text" value="Reece Jones"/>	<b>Student ID:</b>	<input type="text" value="St10001782"/>
<b>Programme:</b>	<input type="text" value="SM"/>		
<b>Dissertation title:</b>	<input type="text" value="Identification and Critical Analysis of Factors Affecting Consumer loyalty to Sportswear Brands: A Focus on undergraduate sport students"/>		
<b>Supervisor:</b>	<input type="text" value="Chris Jennings"/>		
<b>Comments</b>	<b>Section</b>		
	<p><b>Title and Abstract</b></p> <p>Title to include: A concise indication of the research question/problem. Abstract to include: A concise summary of the empirical study undertaken.</p>		
	<p><b>Introduction and literature review</b></p> <p>To include: outline of context (theoretical/conceptual/applied) for the question; analysis of findings of previous related research including gaps in the literature and relevant contributions; logical flow to, and clear presentation of the research problem/ question; an indication of any research expectations, (i.e., hypotheses if applicable).</p>		
	<p><b>Methods and Research Design</b></p> <p>To include: details of the research design and justification for the methods applied; participant details; comprehensive replicable protocol.</p>		
	<p><b>Results and Analysis <sup>2</sup></b></p> <p>To include: description and justification of data treatment/ data analysis procedures; appropriate presentation of analysed data within text and in tables or figures; description of critical findings.</p>		
	<p><b>Discussion and Conclusions <sup>1</sup></b></p> <p>To include: collation of information and ideas and evaluation of those ideas relative to the extant literature/concept/theory and research question/problem; adoption of a personal position on the study by linking and combining different elements of the data reported; discussion of the real-life impact of your research findings for coaches and/or practitioners (i.e. practical implications); discussion of the limitations and a critical reflection of the approach/process adopted; and indication of potential improvements and future developments building on the study; and a conclusion which summarises the relationship between the research question and the major findings.</p>		
	<p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p>To include: academic writing style; depth, scope and accuracy of referencing in the text and final reference list; clarity in organisation, formatting and visual presentation</p>		

<sup>1</sup> There is scope within qualitative dissertations for the RESULTS and DISCUSSION sections to be presented as a combined section followed by an appropriate CONCLUSION. The mark distribution and criteria across these two sections should be aggregated in those circumstances.



**CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**  
**Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd**

**CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT**

**DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS)**

**SPORT MANAGEMENT**

**Identification and Critical Analysis of Factors**  
**Affecting Consumer loyalty to Sportswear Brands: A**  
**Focus on undergraduate sport students**

**(Dissertation submitted under the discipline of**  
**Management & Development)**

**Reece Jones**

**ST10001782**



**Reece Jones**

**ST10001782**

**SCHOOL OF SPORT**

**CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

**Identification and Critical Analysis of Factors  
Affecting Consumer loyalty to Sportswear Brands: A  
Focus on undergraduate sport students.**

Cardiff Metropolitan University  
Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd

**Certificate of student**

I certify that the whole of this work is the result of my individual effort, that all quotations from books and journals have been acknowledged, and that the word count given below is a true and accurate record of the words contained (omitting contents pages, acknowledgements, indexes, figures, reference list and appendices).

Word count: 10,198  
Signed: Reece Jones  
Date: 20/03/12

**Certificate of Dissertation Tutor responsible**

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the student's own effort.  
I have received a dissertation verification file from this student

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**

The University owns the right to reprint all or part of this document.

# Table of Contents

<b>Contents Page</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>List of Appendices</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of figures</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>12</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

1.0 Literature Review	15
1.1 The sportswear market	16
1.2 What are brands and what do they do?	17
1.3 What is consumer loyalty and why is it important?	18
1.4 Factors Affecting Consumer Loyalty	20
1.5 Contextual Factors in the marketplace	25

## **CHAPTER TWO –METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN.**

2.1 Choice of sample population	30
2.2 Choice of Methodology	31
2.3 Research Design	32

## **CHAPTER THREE – RESULTS and ANALYSIS**

3.1 Findings	37
--------------	----

## **CHAPTER FOUR– DISCUSSION of FINDINGS**

4.1 Are undergraduate Sports students loyal to sportswear brands?	50
4.2 What factors affect Undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands?	51
4.3 Why do these factors affect Undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty?	52
4.4 Significant Contextual Factors	56
4.5 Do the findings have an implications for future practice	62

## **CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSION**

<b>5.0 Conclusion</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>76</b>

## **List of Appendices**

	Page
Appendix 1 – Participant Questionnaire	78
Appendix 2 – Focus Group Transcript	81
Appendix 3 – Focus Group Consent Form	101

## **List of Tables/Graphs**

	Page
Table 1- Q4: Types of Brand Loyalty	37
Graph 1: Q6-12: influencing factors of Brand Loyalty	38
Graph 2: Q6-12: influencing factors in descending order (%)	39
Table 2: Q7/Q-13: Price and Internet usage	40
Table 3 – Q8: Style.	41
Table 4- Q6: Quality	41
Table 5 –Q9: Brand Name.	42
Table 6– Q10: Promotion and Advertising.	42
Table 7– Q13/14: Frequency and use of internet	43
Table 8- Q13/15: Influencing Factor: the Internet	44
Table 9- Q16/17: The effect of student finances.	45
Table 10- Q18/19. The effect of sport participation	46
Table 11-: Q20/21: Loyal to brands associated with their	47
Table 12- Q20/21: Loyal to brands associated with their major sports	48
Table 13- Projected student costs	63
Table 14- Average cost of university regionally.	64

## **Acknowledgements**

Firstly I would like to thank my research supervisor Chris Jennings for his guidance, motivation, support and management throughout the process. I would also like to thank members of the sport management department for helping me in various parts of the conducted research.

Finally I would like to thank my parents and friends for giving me motivation by encouraging me throughout the dissertation process.

## **Abstract.**

The purpose of this research is to identify and critically analyse factors affecting consumer loyalty to sportswear brands, amongst undergraduate sports student in a University in Wales. The study uses a mixed methodology approach (Denscombe ,2007). A questionnaire was used to identify relevant factors affecting undergraduate student customer loyalty. It was formulated using both open and closed questions in order to collect both Quantitative and Qualitative data. Qualitative data was then categorised for ease of analysis. Additionally, a focus group was used to further explore the reasons behind undergraduate student consumer loyalty in more depth. The results from this study suggest that most students are not loyal to one brand but do move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand. Additionally, the key factors which affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands are: Price, Style, Quality, Brand Name and Promotion/Advertising. Significantly, contextual factors such as, student finances, the use of the internet and wearing the required University sportswear brand have an effect on undergraduate student consumer loyalty to sportswear brands.

## **Chapter One.**

### **Introduction and Literature review**

## **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this research is to identify and critically analyse factors affecting consumer loyalty to sportswear brands, amongst undergraduate sports student in a University in Wales. The study seeks to answer the following four questions:

1. Are undergraduate Sports students loyal to sportswear brands?
2. What factors affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands?
3. Why do these factors affect undergraduate sports student consumer loyalty?
4. Does this have any implications for practice?

Thus, it is the intention within this chapter to examine the literature concerned with consumer loyalty to sportswear brands. In order to do this firstly, the sportswear market will be briefly discussed in order to contextualise the literature review.

Secondly, the definition of 'branding' and its role in the market will be investigated in order to clarify the concept. Thirdly, the concept and the importance of consumer loyalty will be explored. Fourthly, using previous studies, factors which effect consumer loyalty will be identified and analysed. Finally, relevant additional contextual factors affecting consumer loyalty will be discussed in order to inform the on-going research.

## **1.1 The Sportswear Market.**

The sportswear market is defined by Sparks (2007) as the interaction amongst three components: sport, retailing and consumers. The industry in the UK comprises sports equipment, clothing and footwear. The industry is also divided between items used for sports activity and for fashion and leisurewear. For the purpose of this study the focus will be upon sportswear, defined as clothing.

There has been a transformation in the structure and composition of the UK sports goods market over the past two decades (Mintel 2010a). Sportswear has developed from being a functional requirement of participation, into a globally branded fashion statement i.e. there has been an increased movement from 'activewear' to 'casualwear' (Sparks, 2007. P.365). Consequently, there has been an increase in consumer purchasing of sportswear.

A research of recent literature suggests that two main trends have occurred. They are:

- The market as a whole has expanded enormously. In 2010, the UK sportswear market was estimated to be worth 4.5bn (Mintel 2010b), with sales of clothing making up the majority of the market (72%). This is the third largest sportswear market in Europe (Mintel, 2010a)
- In the UK, although growth has occurred in all three sectors, growth in sportswear clothing has been by far the most significant (Mintel, 2012)

Although clothing is needed to play sport, many sports clothing items have become fashion orientated (Mintel, 2012). This might be because of practicality, fashion

consciousness, comfort or just because everyone else does! Replica shirts and sportswear brands are worn by all ages. Sparks (2007, p368) argues that this reflects the, 'casual, fashion and associative dimensions of sportswear'.

## **1.2 What are Brands and what do they do?**

Kotler and Armstrong (2008. p.115) define brand as, 'a name, term, sign, symbol or a combination of these, which is used to identify the products in order to differentiate them from their competitors'. When applied to sport, this definition suggests that a sport, an event, a person, an institution or make of sportswear can be perceived as a brand (Pedersen, 2004). In the society in which we live we are surrounded by sportswear brands (e.g Adidas, Nike ).

Sportswear brands have become popular in today's society with the current leading sports brand, 'NIKE' (Parker, 2011) as the world's leading supplier (value: approximately 10 billion pounds). Blakey, (2011) argues that, these brands trigger many images in the consumers' mind. They help the consumer identify with the product on offer. This suggests that successful branding of sportswear leads to it being more memorable to the consumer. Similarly Randall (2000) suggests that a brand must always deliver value.

An effective brand conveys a distinctive message. Its image is both a label and an identity (Kotler et al. 2008). However a successful brand not only relies on its image. Mcdonald (2000) states that, 'a brand is not just a physical product, but a relationship with the customer'. This suggests that a brand-customer relationship needs to be developed and maintained. In order to achieve an effective brand-customer relationship Randall, (2000, p.151) argues that a product must offer, 'consistent

service and product quality, equal to or better than competitors; supported by heavy investment and marketing; and have adapted to changes in consumer tastes’.

There are many different aspects of a brand-customer relationship. These include, ‘brand image, brand equity, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand trust and brand loyalty’ (Phau, I., & Prendergast, G. (2000); Vigneron, F. & Johnson, L. W. (1999)). Reichheld and Sasser, (1990) argue that of all of the components within the brand-customer relationship, customer loyalty is the ultimate goal of marketing. This is supported by Kotler and Keller (2006) who suggests that, brand loyalty is most important as firms can spend more than five times as much to obtain a new customer than to retain an existing one. This suggests that developing loyal customers can be financially worthwhile for a brand.

### **1.3 What is consumer loyalty and why is it important?**

There are many definitions of consumer loyalty. Chaudhuri and Holbrook, (2001) suggest that, consumer loyalty involves a customer’s allegiance to re-purchase a brand when frequently buying a product or service. This decision is based upon the recognition of positive attributes. This indicates that the re-purchase decision depends on such things as trust and the quality performance of the product or service.

Wilkie (1994) defines consumer loyalty as a favourable attitude toward, and consistent purchase of a particular brand. Similarly, Blakey (2011) suggests that

consumer loyalty involves repeat purchases which establish the habitual behaviour pattern of consistent and preferential choice among competing sports brands.

If we explore the range of definitions of consumer loyalty there appears to be six necessary conditions. These conditions were introduced by Jacoby and Chestnut (1978). They describe customer/brand loyalty as biased choice; a behavioural response (i.e. purchase); continued over time; by a consumer or independent purchaser; of the same nature; and, a function of a cognitive process. This definition is still widely recognised in the branding literature. However, Kotler et al. (2009) argued consumer/brand loyalty had a psychological basis. They identified four patterns of behaviour commitment to a brand. These were hard-core loyals, (those who buy the brand all the time), split loyals, (those who are loyal to two or three brands), shifting loyals, (those who move from brand to brand) and switchers, (those who exhibit no loyalty).

The importance of consumer loyalty lies in the fact that it plays a vital role in an organisations marketing strategy. If a brand has consumer loyalty, then an organisation can finance the attraction of new customers knowing that they have a strong, loyal consumer base. However if brand loyalty is weak then organisations tend to keep advertising at a steady pace in order to attract new consumers (Loudon 2001, p.567). Organisations can spend more than five times as much to gain new customers than to retain existing ones, thus making the concept and process, financially beneficial.

Maintaining consumer loyalty can be challenging. However, once a consumer is loyal he/she would pay higher prices, incur less cost to serve, and bring new customers to the organisation (Agrawal and Siddharth, 2010). This suggests that

effective marketing strategies should be adopted in order to build a loyal consumer base. Aaker (1996) summarises the importance of consumer loyalty to organisations as: enhanced price premium (the amount a consumer will spend on the brand); consumers' level of satisfaction with the brand (their intention to repurchase the brand) and their willingness to recommend the brand to other consumers.

As identified above the literature suggests that consumer/brand loyalty, is 'an important concept in understanding consumer behaviour' (Wood, 2004, p.9-24). Mahony, Madrigal and Howard, (2000, p.22) argue that, 'ultimately, the goal should be to develop a true loyalty with the product so that it becomes part of a consumer's lifestyle'. Similarly, Keller (2003) suggests that a strong brand name can reduce price related switching behaviours. The financial return of promoting brand loyalty is clearly an incentive.

#### **1.4 Factors Affecting Consumer Loyalty**

Previous research into factors affecting consumer loyalty to brand, (Lau et.al. 2006; Yee and Sidek, 2008; Taleghani and Jourshari, 2012) has tended to focus upon the seven factors of brand loyalty identified below:

##### *Brand Name:*

Kohli and Thakor (1997), suggest that a brand name is the establishment of an image or a brand identity. They argue that consumers associate the brand name with the attributes and feelings of satisfaction and the purchase and use of the product. The market usually provides alternatives. However, prestigious brand names and

their images can attract consumers to purchase the brand and lead towards consumer loyalty. Cadogan and Foster, (2000) argue that a strong sportswear brand name can reduce behavioural changes associated with rising prices. A strong brand name is therefore important to an organisation in influencing re-purchasing behaviour. Similarly, Keller (1998, p.49) suggests that a, 'brand name offers a link to the brand's emotional and self-expressive benefits for differentiation'. This is significant for brands in the sportswear sector which have only slight physical differences and are often used in a social setting where the brand can create an image of the consumer

#### *Product Quality:*

Many consumers frequently buy a brand because of the perceived quality of that brand. Russell and Taylor (2006) suggest that product quality comprises the features and characteristics of a product that includes its capacity to satisfy stated or implied needs. Put in simple terms, it can be defined as meeting the requirement of, "fitness for purpose". Sparks (2007) recognises that consumers re-purchase a sportswear brand or change brands because of the quality of the product. Frings (2005) argues that important aspects of product quality include size, colour, material, cut, function and performance of the brand. Garvin (1988) suggests that the functional qualities of sportswear are particularly important. These include such things as being waterproof, breathable, lightweight and durable. McCormick and Scorpio, (2000) argue that quality characteristics are often related to performance.

### *Price:*

De Chernatony and McDonald, (2002) suggest that price indicates the organisation's intended value point of its brand. However, Dann and Dann (2004) recognise that, 'setting a price is a complex decision based in part on ensuring costs are met as well as achieving specific marketing goals' (p.313). However, price consciousness, is defined as finding the best value (Kotler, 2004).

The literature suggests that price is probably the most important consideration of the typical consumer (Wale and Phoenix, 2009; Dale, 2009). Additionally, purchasers who are brand loyal are more likely to pay a premium price for their preferred brand (Ryan et. al.1999; Dale, 2009). Thus, their intent to purchase is not as easily affected by the price. Additionally, Meir and Arthur (2000) argue that a long-term loyal consumer is more price-tolerant, since loyalty will dishearten them from making price comparisons. Similarly, Kotler and Armstrong (2008) suggest that consumers who have confidence in the price would not compare alternative brand prices.

### *Style:*

Kotler and Armstrong (2008) suggest that a product should have a combination of distinctive features. Sparks (2007, p.367) argues that 'sportswear has ceased to be a functional need and, in some cases has become leisure-related casual wear. Thus style has become as important as function'. The UK market is biased towards casual wear and spectator leisurewear rather than activewear (Intel Report, 2010). Frings (2005, p.83) defines style as, 'a visual appearance, which includes line, silhouette and details affecting consumer perception towards a brand'. Abraham and

Littrell (1995) generated a list of apparel attributes. One of their identified attributes was style.

Sportswear has become fashionable in the UK. As sportswear sales are fashion orientated, therefore 'style is an important aspect' (Sparks 2007, p.368). Thus it might be argued that a consumers' intent to buy is influenced by their opinion of what is currently fashionable. Brands that supply stylish sportswear will attract loyal consumers (Sparks, 2007).

### *Store Environment.*

Huddleston et al. (2004) acknowledged that 'store environment' was an important aspect of consumer loyalty and stressed that customer loyalty could yield a favourable operating cost advantage for retailers. Similarly, Evans et al., (1996) acknowledged that a store's atmosphere could influence consumer decision making.

There are many different types of sportswear retailers in the United Kingdom. Mintel (2011b) estimates that there are about 4000 sports shops in the UK, although definitional issues make accurate figures impossible. However, sportswear is now sold through many different types of retail outlets. Sparks (2010) recognises that leading brands such as Nike and Adidas have product presence in retailers but also have outlets of their own. These stores create a particular environment. Additionally, store location and number of outlets are crucial in altering sportswear consumer shopping and purchasing patterns (Trenberth and Garland, 2006). Wale and Pheonix, (2008) suggest that aspects which include store layout, attitude of salespeople, colours and signage affect consumer experience and may affect consumer buying decisions and brand loyalty. Mao, (2010) argued that fashion

followers usually repurchase garments in stores that have a store environment that is fashionable.

#### *Promotion:*

Arthur (2007, p.412) defines sales promotion as, 'short-term incentives that encourage immediate purchase'. He argues that the major objective of any marketing strategy is the integration of the various elements of the promotional mix. He suggests that the promotional mix includes such elements as advertising, sales promotions, sponsorship, direct marketing and the internet (p.413). This, in turn, affects the consumers' attitudes towards brands, and thus, influences repeat purchase behaviours (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Wale and Pheonix, (2009), recognise promotion as a form of communication and a key element in determining brand loyalty.

#### *Service Quality:*

Harness and Harness (2007) suggest that service quality is an interaction between an organisations employees and the consumer. They further argue that, 'the concept is a critical activity in which ultimately, the consumer decides if the service they receive meets their expectations' (p.172). Service quality involves interactions between salespeople and consumers. A measure of service quality was developed by Parasurnam, Zeithaml and Berry in 1988, (Cited by Harness and Harness, 2007). They suggest that it includes five key dimensions: Tangibles; Reliability; Responsiveness; Assurance and Empathy. The positive outcomes to these five key

elements are likely to lead to long-term orientation of consumers towards the sportswear store or sportswear brand.

### **1.5 Contextual Factors in the marketplace.**

The literature suggests that the above factors have an effect on consumer loyalty. However there are a number of contextual factors which have an effect on 'decision to buy' and consumer loyalty. However, when conducting a literature review to explore additional factors which effect sports students' loyalty, it became clear that there is limited research in this area. It is therefore the intention to explore some of these factors further in my study.

#### *Economic factors:*

An important external factor which clearly affects customer spending and therefore consumer loyalty is the economic context in which the research is set. Early in 2012 the UK was in the midst of a double-dip recession. The economy shrank 0.4 per cent in the final quarter of 2011 and then another 0.3 per cent in the first quarter of 2012 (Associated Newspapers limited, 2012). This harsh economic climate has led to sportswear retailers feeling the effects due to a decrease in consumer spending. Interestingly, the sportswear retailing market reached a value of £3.7 billion in 2011, which was only 2.4% higher than in 2006 (Intel, 2011). Oliver (2009, p215) argued that, 'in a harsh economic climate, consumers will increasingly seek to buy clothing which can be worn across a wide range of sporting activities'. This suggests that a consumer might change brand because of affordability. However the sportswear brands aim, during the recession is to retain the customer as a loyal consumer. A

Marketing Metrics survey (2009) argued that, 'selling goods to a prospective customer is only about 5-20% probable. However, the probability of selling goods to an existing customer is 60-70%. This strengthens the need to be effective in developing a brand/customer relationship in a harsh financial climate.

Recently sales have increased and consumers have begun to spend more due to the influence of sporting events such as the Olympics. However, at the time of writing, there are fears that the UK is heading towards a further recession. The economic squeeze on students and their parents is highlighted by the increase in student fees and the cost of attending University. On a more positive note, Mintel (2012) forecasts a future upward mobility of the population. This is positive for the sportswear retailing market because participation rates are higher amongst the upper socio-economic groups and higher-earning households. These consumers tend to spend the most on clothing and footwear (Mintel, 2012). An additional, factor which has affected the current market is the increase in the price of sportswear in the U.K. This is due to a global shortage of cotton which has led to a rise in the price of the raw materials. Additionally, rising transportation costs, import and labour costs have also influenced price (Key note, 2010). As a result of the harsh economic context, brands will have to work harder in order to maintain consumer loyalty.

### *The Internet:*

The internet today is the biggest medium of trade. Over the last ten years consumer shopping online has increased in popularity. When asked, 90% of internet users answered that they had shopped online in the preceding three months (Mintel, 2012). This sudden growth has led sportswear retailers and sportswear brands to create their own websites. Seven in ten adult internet users have now bought sports

clothing and footwear, on the internet, in the past 12 months. They also had an intention to repurchase on line (Mintel, 2012). This suggests that online shoppers have emerged and loyal behaviour can build once the consumer is satisfied. Mainspring (2000) suggests that consumers prefer to shop online because of the ease of the process, broad selection and price comparisons. He further suggests that tools such as bookmarks and 'favourites', can lead to consumer loyalty. One way a sportswear brand could gain customer loyalty would be through focused e-marketing. Harden and Heyman (2009) suggest that, 'an e-marketer can increase sales by capitalizing on brand loyalists of other companies by creating relationships on other brand loyalty websites. However, Mainspring (2000) recognises that the internet can have negative effects on consumer loyalty. These include, 'a lack of customer service' and a, 'lack of intangibility'. However, Siddarth and Agrarwal (2011) argue that, a consumer can still achieve loyalty to a brand through having a positive mind-set and by the website demonstrating positivity towards the brand. Additionally, they suggest that sportswear retailers and sportswear brands can encourage loyal behaviour by offering rewards or gifts. Similarly, sportswear brand consumer loyalty can be encouraged by maintaining contact through focused marketing once consumer details have been captured.

### *Sport participation:*

Certain aspects of sport participation do have an effect on consumer loyalty. The first is: the proportion of population who participate in sport in relation to the population of the UK. For example: the proposed 'legacy' of the London (2012) Olympics has seen an increase in sport participation and to higher consumer spending on sportswear (DCMS, 2012). This has been associated with the success

of the event. A brand which has been associated with a high profile event (Adidas - Athletics) or athlete (Jessica Ennis – Lucozade) can acquire loyal consumers. The second aspect which is worth highlighting is: the sport, consumers participate in. This aspect deserves mention as some brands are more associated with certain sports. For example: Fred Perry as a brand is associated with tennis, even though his Wimbledon success was in 1936. The biggest number of sportswear products associated with one sport is swimwear. This reflects its position as one of the most popular participation sports (Intel, 2009). Lydia et al. (2012) studied student consumer loyalty to swimwear. The results demonstrated that 'speedo' was the most purchased brand because of the brand reputation and exposure in association with the sport. This suggests that consumer loyalty can be due to the perception of the brand in relation to the sport. However, people who participate in a number of sports may be loyal to one sportswear brand. This brand could be worn for a variety of sporting activities. For example: Nike running shorts could be used for cycling or racquet sports as they are, 'fit for purpose' for both.

It should be noted that, University undergraduate sports students are generally aged between 18 and 25. However, there is very limited literature focused on this specific demographic.

This chapter has examined the literature concerned with consumer loyalty to sportswear brands. The following chapter discusses the research design and the choice of methodology.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Methods and Research Design.**

This chapter examines the rationales for the choice of sample population, the chosen methodology and the research design. It will also consider ethical, validity and reliability issues that are raised by the approach. For ease of understanding, the chapter is divided into three sections.

## **2.1 Choice of Sample Population.**

The targeted sample population was selected proportionally, as a representative sample from each of the range of six undergraduate sports degree programs within the University. Year three students were chosen because of their experience of university undergraduate life as sports students and their developed academic understanding in the sector. Denscombe (2007) and Thomas (2009) describe this as a 'purposeful sampling strategy'. Bill (2009 p.42) suggests that, undertaking the research with a sample population such as this, is likely to be advantageous as, 'participants who understand the environment around them can articulate the values of similar organisations'.

The rationale for the choice of sample population was based upon a number of assumptions:

- Participants are deemed to be representative of a general sport student body.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year students will have a more developed learning background in the subject. (It is assumed that responses might be better informed).
- As participants are recruited from the range of 'Sports programmes', it is assumed that they are likely to participate in sport and therefore they are likely to be consumers of sportswear.

- As participants are representative of a wider community of 3<sup>rd</sup> year sports students they are likely to have a cultural identity. (Greater generalisation might therefore be claimed).
- Each programme of study is not gender specific. (Responses were sought from both genders)
- Accessibility to the researcher. (As a current 3<sup>rd</sup> year Sports Management student, it is assumed that participants would be accessible and predisposed towards responding to the enquiry)

## **2.2 Choice of Methodology**

Because of the nature of the selected group and its similarity to other undergraduate sports degree groups in Higher Education, it could be argued that a stronger case for generalisation could be made (Wilson & Stutchbury, 2009). With this in mind, the reviewed literature suggested that a mixed methodology approach would be appropriate. Sharp (2009) and Punch (2009) do not describe this mix of paradigms as a traditional grouping of strategies. However, McIntosh (2010) and Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) describe such technique combinations as 'creative'. Walliman & Buckler (2008) suggest that, the choice of a mixed methodology approach has gained credibility in educational settings in the past 10 years.

A questionnaire will be used to identify relevant factors affecting undergraduate student customer loyalty. Additionally, a focus group will be used to further explore and analyse the reasons behind undergraduate student consumer loyalty in more depth. Bell (2005) suggests that questionnaires can be designed as unique tools for a particular purpose and are useful tools for measuring or identifying trends.

However a qualitative approach is needed in order to explore the reasons behind the trends. They require descriptive answers that express the groups' and the individuals' opinions. The methodological choice in gathering the data has been influenced by the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Specifically, the choice of methodology was governed by the concept of 'fitness for purpose' (Punch, 2009).

### **2.3 Research Design**

The study was undertaken in a systematic, rigorous, ethically appropriate fashion (Sharp 2009; BERA 2011). All methodological aspects of the research were fully explained to the participants before the start of the research.

#### *Ethical Considerations:*

The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) recommend voluntary informed consent be gained from all participants. Participants could withdraw their consent at any time. Cohen et. al. (2007) argues that the conscience of the researcher must act as a guide in justifying ethical decisions. Walliman (2006) discusses two aspects relevant to this study:

1. The honesty and personal integrity of the researcher
2. Consideration given to the participants of the research, such as consent, courtesy and confidentiality

The responsibilities of the researcher included a commitment to courtesy and to protect participant's anonymity by keeping the research data confidential.

#### *Questionnaire:*

Sharp (2009) argues that, small scale surveys are perfectly suited to individual research projects. Denscombe (2007) recognise them as a means of collecting data from a proportion of a community. The style of questionnaire can range from simple Likert scale style, to open ended questions requiring detailed qualitative answers. In this case, the design of the questionnaire was influenced by the required data i.e. opinions, biographical information and behavioural information. Walliman and Buckler (2008) advise the use of questionnaires as a relatively simple, direct and appropriate means of gathering anonymous material that would attract open, honest and full answers. However, the use of questionnaires does have some negative connotations. For example: Punch (2009) considers a low response rate of data will not be sufficient to be representative of the community to which the research is aimed.

The questionnaire, was designed with succinct questions: closed questions to collect quantitative information and open questions to collect qualitative information (Punch, 2009). Some data was categorised according to status and opinion, and if deemed appropriate, presented as quantitative data.

The questionnaire was piloted with a small group in order to identify any problems (Denscombe, 2007).

In order to gain a depth of understanding, a focus group was included as part of the research design.

*Focus Group:*

Adopting a purposeful sampling strategy Denscombe (2007), one member of each sports programme was invited to participate in a focus group. The participants were selected as a representative of their program.

Focus groups rely more on the interaction of the participants to discuss a topic, giving a collective rather than individual view (Cohen et al. 2007). This reduced the chance that only personal opinions were offered. Robson (2002) suggests that power struggles may arise within a focus group. However, this was minimised by the researcher chairing the focus group. Additionally a semi-structured interview approach was adopted within the focus group. This had the advantage that when participants were questioned they had the opportunity to develop related points as topics arose (Thomas, 2009). The interview schedule re-considered questions posed in the questionnaire.

#### *Validity and Reliability.*

Reliability is the notion of independent repeatability. Evans (2009) argues that reliability comes from the rigour and ultimate trustworthiness of the researcher. Both aspects have been addressed.

Walliman (2006) and Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that subjectivity is a possible limitation of research. Attempts have been made to negate this in the interpretation of data. Evans (2009) argues that external validity, or the transferability of findings, is always difficult, as the approach is regarded as compartmentalized by the context. However, internal validity is achieved by the researcher's attempt to understand the complexity of the topic and by ensuring the research objectives are matched to appropriate data collection. Similarly, 'triangulation' of methods (Bassegy, 1999), i.e. questionnaires, focus group interview, and/or sources will strengthen the internal

validity of the findings by gaining confirmation through different perspectives (Meijer et al. 2002).

Attempts have been made to:

- Be systematic and critical.
- Open the research process to scrutiny.
- Remain as objective as possible

## **Chapter Three**

### **Results and Analysis.**

This chapter presents an analysis and description of the critical findings of the research. A blank questionnaire is included in Appendix 1 (p78). Completed questionnaires were returned from 120 participants. These were analysed using ‘SNAP’ software. Qualitative answers were categorised and the findings are presented as quantitative data. Graphs and other visual representations are included in order to aid discussion.

The focus group responses were recorded so analysis and transcription could take place (Cohen et al. 2007). A simple transcription system was devised and adapted from Evans (2009). The transcription is referenced in the discussion chapter by code and line number as follows:

Code	Description	Example	Meaning
P1SM	Participant 1 Sport Management	P1SM.14	Line 14 of the FG transcript
P2 SES	Participant 2 Sport and Exercise Science	P2SES. 20-25	Line 20-25 of the FG transcript

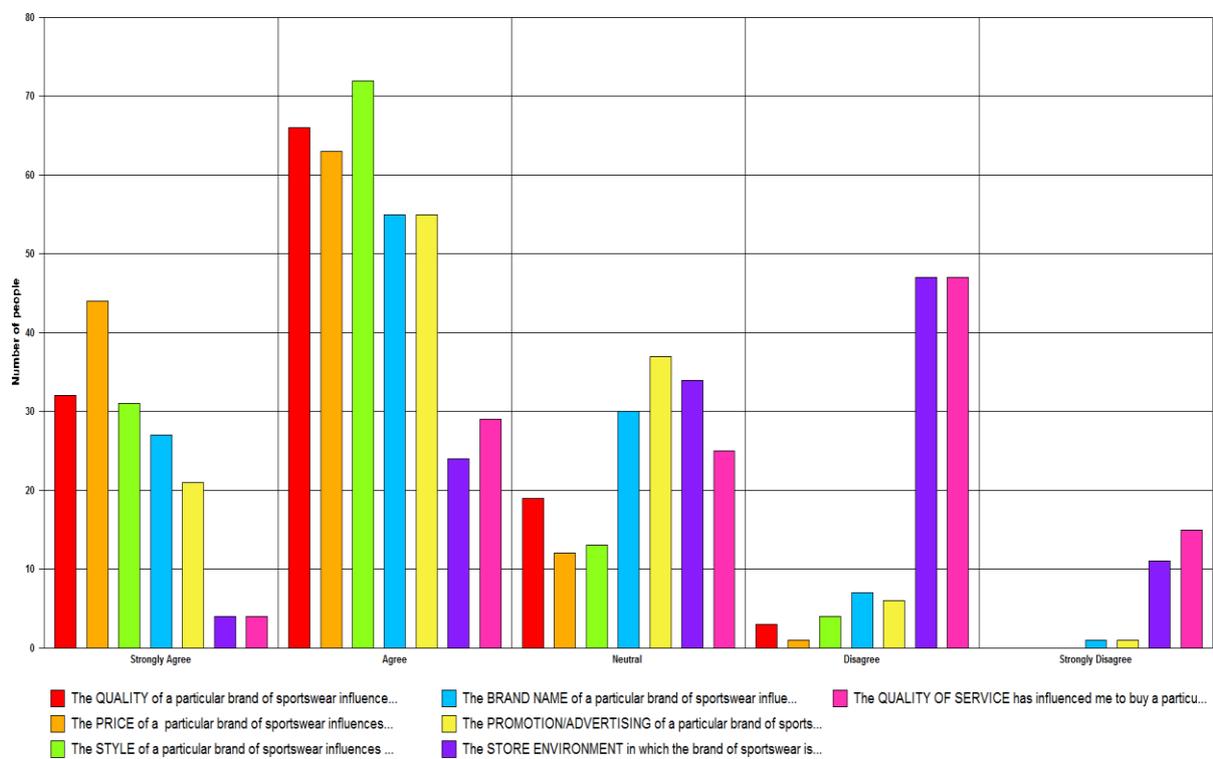
A sample of the transcription is included as Appendix 2 (p71)

### **3.1 Findings:**

*Table 1: Q4, Types of Brand Loyalty*

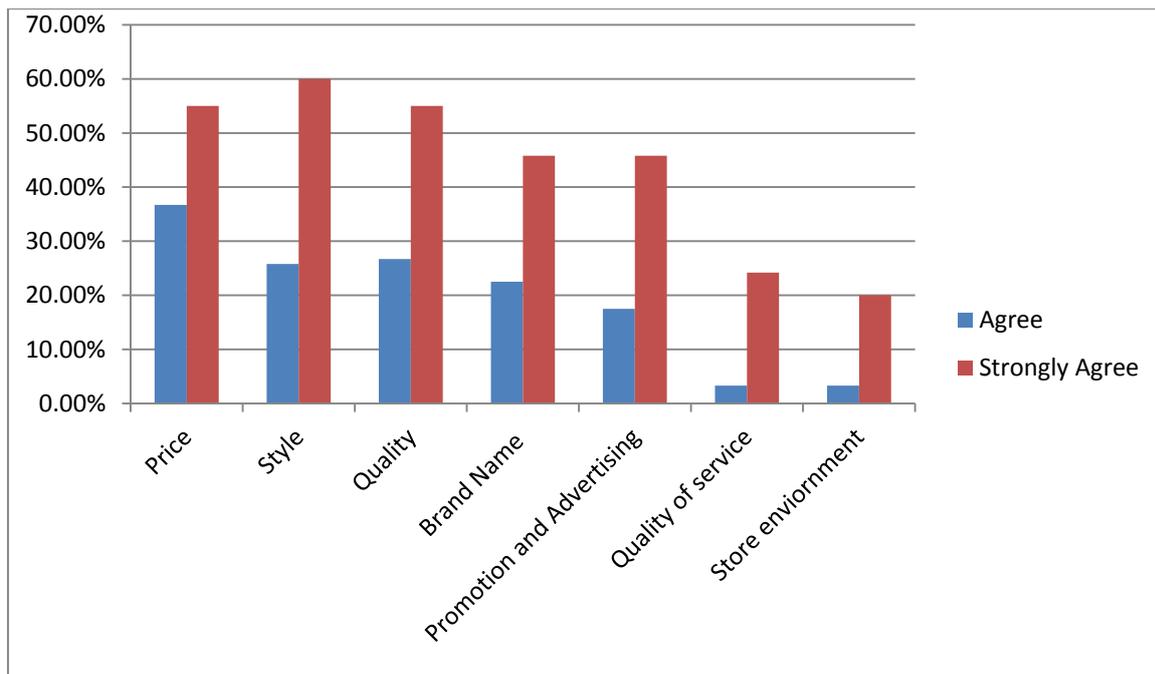
<b>Absolute Analysis % Respondents</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>120 100.0%</b>
<b>Please tick the description which describes you best.</b>	
<b>I move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand.</b>	59 49.2%
<b>I buy two or three brands of sportswear only.</b>	27 22.5%
<b>I buy one brand of sportswear all the time.</b>	17 14.2%
<b>I exhibit no loyalty to a sportswear brand.</b>	17 14.2%

As observed from the results the largest number of participants (49.2%) exhibited shifting loyal behaviour (those who move from brand to brand). The second largest group (22.5%) are split loyals (those who are loyal to two or three brands). By far the lowest groups were those who exhibit no loyalty to a brand (brand switchers) and those who buy the brand all the time, (hard-core loyals).



Graph 1: Q6-12, influencing factors of Brand Loyalty

When analysing the results of Questions 6 – 12, the results demonstrate that there is a strong distinction between five factors (Quality, Price, Style, Brand Name, and Promotion) and the Store Environment and the Quality of Service.



Graph 2: Q6-12, influencing factors in descending order (%)

The results suggest that the strongest influences to buy in descending order are: Price, Style, Quality, Brand Name, Promotion and Advertising, Quality of service and Store environment.

These results were corroborated by the responses of the focus group. The responses of the participants stated that the 5 identified factors had a higher significance to them. “I do believe the five factors identified are the most important, especially price” (P3 SES, L36). “students are really concerned about price aren’t they. They need to make it cheap and good quality” (P3 SES, L38); “If it was cheaper students would rather go there” (P3 SES, L44).

Price:

Table 2: Q7/Q-13, Price and Internet usage

Absolute Analysis % Base % Respondents	Base	Have you used the internet	
		Yes (go to Q14)	No (go to Q16)
Base	120	110 91.7%	10 8.3%
The PRICE of a particular brand of sportswear influences...			
Strongly Agree	44 36.7%	41 93.2% 34.2%	3 6.8% 2.5%
Agree	63 52.5%	60 95.2% 50.0%	3 4.8% 2.5%
Neutral	12 10.0%	8 66.7% 6.7%	4 33.3% 3.3%
Disagree	1 0.8%	1 100.0% 0.8%	- - -

Question 7: 66% 'Agree or Strongly Agree', that the price of a brand of sportswear influences them to buy the product. There was also a correlation identified from the above results in relation to the high percentage of people influenced by quality and the use of the internet.

**Style:**

*Table 3: Q8: Style*

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	
Base	120 100.0%
<b>The STYLE of a particular brand of sportswear influences ...</b>	
Strongly Agree	31 25.8%
Agree	72 60.0%
Neutral	13 10.8%
Disagree	4 3.3%
Strongly Disagree	- -

*Question 8:* 85.8% agreed or strongly agreed that the style of a brand of sportswear influences them to buy the product. It was also the second strongest influence to buy the product.

**Quality:**

*Table 4: Q6: Quality*

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	
Base	120 100.0%
<b>The QUALITY of a particular brand of sportswear influence...</b>	
Strongly Agree	32 26.7%
Agree	66 55.0%
Neutral	19 15.8%
Disagree	3 2.5%
Strongly Disagree	- -

*Question 6:* 81.7% agreed or strongly agreed that the quality of a brand of sportswear influences them to buy the product. It was the third strongest influence to buy the product.

*Brand Name:*

*Table 5: Q9: Brand Name*

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	
Base	120 100.0%
<b>The BRAND NAME of a particular brand of sportswear influe...</b>	
Strongly Agree	27 22.5%
Agree	55 45.8%
Neutral	30 25.0%
Disagree	7 5.8%
Strongly Disagree	1 0.8%

*Question 9:* 68.3% agreed or strongly agreed that the ‘Brand Name’ of sportswear influences them to buy the product. It was the fourth strongest influence to buy the product.

*Promotion/Advertising.*

*Table 6: Q10, Promotion and Advertising*

Absolute Analysis % Respondents	
Base	120 100.0%
<b>The PROMOTION/ADVERTISING of a particular brand of sports...</b>	
Strongly Agree	21 17.5%
Agree	55 45.8%
Neutral	37 30.8%
Disagree	6 5.0%
Strongly Disagree	1 0.8%

*Question 10:* 63.3% agreed or strongly agreed that the Promotion/advertising of sportswear influences them to buy the product. It was the fifth strongest influence to buy the product.

*The Use of the Internet:*

*Table7: Q13/14 Frequency and use of internet*

Absolute Analysis % Break % Respondents	Base	If es How many times		
		Once	Three times	More
<b>Base</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>16</b> <b>14.7%</b>	<b>31</b> <b>28.4%</b>	<b>62</b> <b>56.9%</b>
<b>Have you used the internet to purchase any sportswear in...</b>				
<b>Yes (go to Q14)</b>	<b>109</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>16</b> <b>14.7%</b>	<b>31</b> <b>28.4%</b>	<b>62</b> <b>56.9%</b>
<b>No (go to Q16)</b>	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Questions 13, 14:*

As seen from the above results 109 students replied YES to the question, '*Have you used the internet to purchase sportswear since you have been at University*'. Of those who replied YES, 56.9% replied that they had used the internet more than three times to purchase sportswear.

Question 15:

Table 8: Q13/15, Influencing Factor: the Internet.

Absolute Analysis % Base % Respondents	Base					
		Quicker	Online Discounts	Online Advertising	Increased availability on stock	Easily accessible
Base	105	29 27.6%	29 27.6%	5 4.8%	13 12.4%	50 47.6%
Have you used the internet to purchase any sportswear sin...						
Yes (go to Q14)	105 100.0%	29 27.6%	29 27.6%	5 4.8%	13 12.4%	50 47.6%
No (go to Q16)	-	-	-	-	-	-

When qualitative responses to the open question, '*Briefly explain why the internet has influenced your decision to buy a particular brand of sportswear*', were categorised and analysed: of those who said 'Yes' to using the internet to purchase sportswear:

27.6 % of respondents said it was *Quicker*;

27.6% of the students said that '*Online Discounts*' influenced their decisions;

4.8% of the participants reported that '*Online Advertising*' influenced their decision;

12.4% cited '*Increased Availability of Stock*' and

47.6% cited the '*Ease of availability*',

## Student Finances:

Table 9: Q16/17, The effect of student finances.

Absolute Analysis % Break % Respondents	Base	If you answered yes to the above question briefly explain how and why your student finances influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.			
		I Have to Budget my money thus budget what i spend	Lack of finances to buy preferred brands	Student loan leads to increased spending on preferred brands	
	Base	108	48 44.4%	49 45.4%	11 10.2%
	Do your student finances influence your decision to buy a...				
	Yes (go to Q17)	108 100.0%	48 44.4%	49 45.4%	11 10.2%
	No (go to Q18)	-	-	-	-

### Questions 16: 17

108 students replied YES to the question, '*Do your student finances influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand*'. 12 students answered NO.

When qualitative responses to the open question, '*Briefly explain how and why your student finances influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand*', were categorised and analysed the results suggest that:

- 44.4% said, 'I have to budget my money and budget what I have to spend';
- 45.4% said, 'I have a lack of finances to buy preferred brands';
- 10.2 % reported that, 'I increase my spending when my student loan arrives'.

## Sport Participation

Table 10: Q18/19. The effect of sport participation

Absolute Analysis % Break % Respondents	Base	If you answered 'Yes' to the above question briefly explain how and why playing sport at University has influenced your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.				
		The right brands aid my performance	Conform with others wearing the brand	Buying the most stylish brand as I am representing my university	Buy the brand which possesses the most comfort when playing sport	
	Base	16	4 25.0%	9 56.3%	1 6.3%	4 25.0%
Does your participation in sport at university influence ...						
Yes (go to Q19)		16 100.0%	4 25.0%	9 56.3%	1 6.3%	4 25.0%
No (go to Q20)		-	-	-	-	-

### Questions 18: 19

16 students replied YES to the question, *'Does your participation in sport at University influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand'*. 114 students answered NO. Only those that answered YES to Question 18 were asked to, *'Briefly explain how and why playing sport at university has influenced your decision to buy a particular brand of sportswear'*. When qualitative responses to this open question were categorised and analysed, the results suggest that:

- 25% of said, *'the right brands aid my performance'*;
- 56.3% said, *'I like to conform with others wearing the brand'*;
- 6.3 % reported , *'I buy the most stylish brand as I am representing my University'*;
- 25% cited *'I buy the brand which is most comfortable when playing my sport'*.

Table 11: Q20/21. Loyal to brands associated with their

Absolute Analysis % Break % Respondents	Base	If you answered 'yes' to the above question briefly explain how and why you are loyal to sportswear brands associated with your sport.			
		Aspire to be like my role model(s) who wear the brand	I Believe it can improve my performance	Sponsors pay for me to wear the sports brand	Increased comfort when playing.
Base	17	7 41.2%	6 35.3%	1 5.9%	4 23.5%
Are you Loyal to sportswear brands associated with your m...					
Yes (go to Q21)	17 100.0%	7 41.2% 100.0%	6 35.3% 100.0%	1 5.9% 100.0%	4 23.5% 100.0%
No (go to Q22)	-	-	-	-	-

Question 20:

113 students replied NO to the question, 'Are you loyal to sportswear brands associated with your sports'. 17 answered 'Yes'. Only those that answered YES to Question 20 were asked, 'briefly explain how and why you are loyal to sportswear associated to your sport. Qualitative responses to this open question were categorised and analysed: The results suggest,

- 41.2% said, 'I aspire to be like my role model(s) who wear the brand';
- 35.3% said, 'I believe it can improve my performance';
- 5.9% reported that, 'Sponsors pay for me to wear the brand'; and
- 23.5% replied 'Increased comfort when playing'.

## The University brand

Table 12: Q20/21. Loyal to brands associated with their major sports

Absolute Analysis % Break % Respondents	Base	If you answered 'Yes' to the above question please briefly explain how and why wearing the university sportsbrand influences the number of times you buy alternative sportswear brands. ?			
		Its Compulsory to wear at lectures	The Cardiff Met sportswear can be worn across a number of sports	Its Good Quality and efficient meaning i	spend less on my preferred brands.
Base	96	44 45.8%	45 46.9%	8 8.3%	-
Does wearing the university sportswear brand (Cardiff Met...					
Yes (go to Q23)	96 100.0%	44 45.8%	45 46.9%	8 8.3%	-
No (Finished)	-	-	-	-	-

Questions 22: 96 students replied 'Yes' to the question, 'Does wearing the university brand influence the number of times you buy alternative sports brands. 14 answered 'No'. Only those students that answered YES to Question 22 were asked to, 'Briefly explain how and why wearing the university sportswear brand has influenced the number of times you buy alternative sportswear brands?'

When qualitative responses to this open question were categorised and analysed, the results suggest:

- 45.8 % said, 'It is compulsory to wear the brand at lectures';
- 46.9 % said, 'The Cardiff Met sportswear brand can be worn across a number of sports';
- 8.3 % reported that, 'It is good quality; I therefore spend less on my preferred brands'.

## **Chapter Four.**

### **Discussion of Findings.**

This chapter discusses the findings which were outlined in the previous chapter. It is organised in four sections. These sections address four questions which were outlined as the objectives of this study in the introduction to this research.

#### **4.1 Are undergraduate Sports students loyal to sportswear brands?**

After analysis the results suggest that most students are not loyal to one brand. Most students move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand.

The results suggest that, of the four patterns of behaviour commitment to a brand identified by Kotler et al. (2009), by far the smallest group is those who buy the brand all the time, (hard-core loyals). The small number of students who are brand loyal is surprising. If we accept Reichheld and Sasser's, (1990) argument that customer loyalty is the ultimate goal of marketing, it could be argued that marketers are failing in their task with a group like this. This is especially surprising as students who have chosen to study sports related degrees are seeking to find a career in this sector. It could be argued that, if sportswear brands could establish consumer loyalty with this group they might, as Agrawal and Siddharth, (2010) suggest, pay higher prices and incur less cost to serve in the future. Additionally, through their future influence in the sector and their willingness to recommend the brand to other consumers, they might bring new customers to the brand. It could be argued therefore that marketing strategies need to be re-evaluated and contextual influenced need to be considered, in order to build a loyal consumer base with consumers of this nature.

## **4.2 What factors affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands?**

After analysis the results suggest that the factors which affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands are: Price, Style, Quality, Brand Name and Promotion/Advertising. Additionally, significant contextual factors such as, the use of the internet, student finances and wearing the required University sportswear brand are significant factors which affect student consumer loyalty. The results also suggest that the Store Environment, Quality of Service, Participation in a particular sport and brand loyalty to sportswear brands associated with their major sport(s), did not appear to be significant factors that affected undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands.

When considering the influences upon the participants' decision to buy a brand of sportswear, the results indicate that there is a strong distinction between five of the factors (Quality, Price, Style, Brand Name, and Promotion) and the Store Environment and the Quality of Service. The results suggest that these two factors have little influence upon the student decision.

Interestingly, the results demonstrate that most students have used the internet to buy sportswear since they have been at University (over the last two and a half years). A vast majority of these participants have used the internet to buy sportswear more than three times. This suggests that a trend towards the use of the web for purchasing sportswear might have been established amongst this group. This therefore has an effect upon purchasing behaviour. This result might go some

way towards explaining why, 'The Store Environment' and 'Quality of Service', have little influence upon brand loyalty amongst this group.

Similarly, after analysis, the results indicate that student finances do influence the decision to buy a particular sportswear brand?'

However contrary to this, the results suggest that:

- a). Participation in a particular sport at University did NOT influence their decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.
- b). Students did NOT demonstrate brand loyalty to sportswear brands associated with their major sport(s) and
- c). Wearing the required University Sportswear influenced did influence the number of times they bought alternative sportswear brands.

These elements are discussed later in the section below.

### **4.3 Why do these factors affect undergraduate sports student consumer loyalty?**

After analysis the results indicate that different factors have different influences upon consumer loyalty. These are discussed below:

#### *Price:*

The results indicate that price was the strongest influence to buy the product. Dale (2009) argues that price is probably the most important consideration of the typical consumer. This element is highlighted when the consumer's budget is limited i.e. the student has to make a small budget last longer and 'go further'. Therefore, 'shopping around' for best value becomes a priority. The results indicated that most

participants exhibited a shifting loyal behaviour (those who move from brand to brand). This might be because of a heightened price consciousness. Kotler (2002), argues that price consciousness is recognised as finding the best value. Most students have a limited budget, “Because we have to think about paying rent, bills and going out every other Friday umm..... So we might not have enough money spare to buy the most expensive brands” (P5 SC, L180). The results indicate that the participants seek to find value in their purchases. “I try and get the best value”(P4 SD, L116).

Dale (2009) would argue that purchasers who are brand loyal are more likely to pay a premium price for their preferred brand. However, this study tends to indicate that the participants are not brand loyal therefore switching behaviours allow them to make price comparisons (Meir and Arthur, 2000). “if you walk past and see a good style at the right price, you are going to want to buy it no matter what the brand is or what the store looks like” (P1 SM, L64,65).

#### *Style:*

The results indicate that style was an important influence. Sparks (2007, p.367) argues that, ‘style has becomes as important as function’. Data collected from the focus group tends to suggest that because of the participants limited budget their purchases need to be multi-functional “I wear a lot of my sportswear out”. ‘It has got to look good if I use it for sport and then wear it when I go out’ (P1 SM, L64,65). Thus it might be argued that, the student’s intent to buy is influenced by price and their opinion of what is currently fashionable. Brands that supply fashionable sportswear will attract loyal consumers (Sparks, 2007).

### *Quality:*

Analysis of the results indicated that quality was the third strongest influence to buy the product. Russell and Taylor's (2006) suggestion that product quality i.e. "fitness for purpose", is influential within this study. The results indicate that the students' perception that a product has to meet numerous needs influences the idea of what is meant by 'fitness for purpose' and thus their intention to re-purchase. "We had to buy 'Errea' in the first year, but its sh\*t" (P2 Scram, 221), "I wouldn't buy it in the future" (P5 SC, L355). Functional qualities of sportswear are particularly important (Garvin, 1988). These functional qualities are often related to performance (McCormick and Scorpio, 2000). However the focus group wanted the sportswear to be both functional and fashionable. Fashion, by definition is changeable, and therefore has an influence upon re-purchasing behaviour. "If you see a good quality style you are going to want to buy it no matter what the brand is or what the store looks like because I wear a lot of my sportswear out" (P1 SM, L63-65). This suggests that the balance between fashion and functionality is important.

### *Brand Name:*

Analysis of the results indicated that brand name was the fourth strongest influence to buy the product.

It is interesting to note that throughout the focus group discussion, brand names were used consistently. Strong brand names were used fluently, "Because 'Nike' and 'Adidas' are like top brands" (P5 SC, L268) and weaker brand names were recognised as such, "We had to buy 'Errea' in the first year, but its sh\*t" (P2 Scram, 221). Kohli and Thakor (1997), argue that consumers associate the brand name

with the attributes and feelings of satisfaction and the purchase and use of the product. Clearly, if the brand name is described as s\*\*t this will affect any repurchasing decision. This said, the brand described as s\*\*t has been replaced by a brand (Under Armour) which is perceived as better quality and is priced lower price “It was only like £200.”(P1 SM, L407) “Yeah, I would definitely buy the ‘Under Armour’ gear.”(P1 SM, L413).

Participants within the focus group argued that they would not wear the ‘weaker’ brand names ‘out’. “I only wear it if I’m told to. I would never wear it out” (P3 SES, L252). This re-enforces Keller’s (1998, p.49) view that a, ‘brand name offers a link to the brand’s emotional and self-expressive benefits for differentiation’. Brands in the sportswear sector are often used in a social setting where the brand can create an image of the consumer. Prestigious brand names and their images attract consumers to purchase the brand and lead towards consumer loyalty. *It is worthy of note:* The University sportswear was recognised by the provider of the sportswear rather than the Cardiff Met Brand.

#### *Promotion/Advertising.*

The results indicated that promotion/advertising was the fifth strongest influence to buy the product.

The focus group suggested that, “the only reason you buy something is because of role models promoting the brand isn’t it “(P5 SC, L347, 348). Arthur (2007, p.412) recognises that the promotional mix includes such elements as advertising, sales promotions, sponsorship, direct marketing and the internet (p.413). Today the internet is a major vehicle for advertising, sales promotions, sponsorship and direct

marketing. The focus group clearly recognised the power and use of the internet as being relevant to their purchasing behaviour. “ I use the internet all the time, it is so easy to access” (P1 SM, L124). The groups’ exposure to, and ability to access advertising information quickly and easily, in turn, affects their attitudes towards brands, and thus, influences repeat purchase behaviours (Summers and Johnson, 2000). “Yeah, it’s easy use. Plus you might go into a shop and what you want might not be in there, it’s just better” (P2 Scram, L138-139). Similarly, the research tends to support Wale and Pheonix’s, (2009) argument that the ease of access to promotional materials through the net is a key element in determining brand loyalty and market success.

#### **4.4. Significant Contextual factors.**

Analyses of the results indicate that contextual factors appear to have a significant impact upon undergraduate sports student consumer loyalty.

##### *The Use of the Internet:*

The results indicate that most students have used the internet to purchase sportswear more than three times since they had been at University’.

These results tend firstly, to support the research that suggests that over the last ten years consumer shopping online has increased in popularity (Intel 2012); Secondly, that seven in ten adult internet users have now bought sports clothing and footwear, on the internet, in the past 12 months (Intel, 2012) and thirdly, that they also had an intention to repurchase on line (Intel, 2012). It could be argued therefore that in order to improve Brand loyalty, Sports Brands should focus upon the

virtual store environment and the quality of internet service and provision. Elements such as, ease of purchase, speed of delivery, ease of return, if goods are faulty or do not fit, could be important factors. Members of the focus group agreed that there were difficulties in returning goods if inappropriate, "I have bought a lot of stuff of the internet but like.... I've bought stuff before and it's never really fit" (P4 SD, L145-146). Mainspring (2000) recognises that the internet can have negative effects on consumer loyalty, the ease with which consumers can return goods being one of them. It also goes some way to explaining why the students did not recognise the Store environment and the quality of Service as being influential in a decision to buy a particular brand.

Analysis of the results also indicated that the internet was quicker and online discounts, online advertising, increased availability of stock and 'ease of availability' had influenced the students' decision to buy a particular brand of sportswear online. Results from the Focus Group transcript supported the explanation of why the internet had influenced the students decisions to buy a particular Sportswear Brand. "There are a lot of different sizes" (P3 SES, L141), "There is more variety" (P5 SC, L161) "It's cheaper."(P3 SES, 163).

Analysis of the data supports the view that online shoppers have emerged over recent years. Blakey (2011) argues that loyal behaviour can build once the consumer is satisfied. Whilst this research does not indicate any level of satisfaction with a brand or brands, it does indicate a level of satisfaction with the internet as a means of shopping for sportswear. "Yes I always buy stuff of the internet if I've previously owned it or tried it on in the shop like... in real life." (P3 SES, L153)

Although the results indicate that quality of service was not seen as important, it would seem sensible to argue that the quality of service that the internet marketer could provide would be relevant to a consumer's decision to repurchase firstly from the internet retailer and secondly from the brand.

The results from the focus group suggest that, "You can also customize" (P1 SM, L135) "there's online discount" (P1 SM, L135) "You can't do that in a shop." (P5 SC, L172). The data also supports Mainspring's (2000) point of view that consumers prefer to shop online because of the ease of the process, broad selection and price comparisons. "The main reason I buy stuff off the internet is that it is so easy to access" (P1 SM, L130). It could therefore be a sensible strategy for a brand to encourage the use of internet tools, such as bookmarks and 'favourites', in order to encourage consumer loyalty. As various authors have noted, strategies such as, focused e-marketing (Harden and Heyman, 2009), offering rewards or gifts (Siddarth and Agrarwal, 2011) and maintaining contact through focused marketing, once consumer details have been captured, can encourage consumer loyalty. Therefore it is argued that a brand's focus on these strategic tools should be encouraged.

#### *Student Finances:*

Analysis of the results indicates that student finances do influence the participants' decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.

Here context plays an important part. At the time of writing UK consumers are in the midst of a, 'double dip recession' (Oxlade, 2012). There are also fears that the UK is heading towards a 'triple dip recession' (Smith, 2012).

This economic squeeze on students and their parents is highlighted by the increase in student fees and the cost of attending University. Essentials such as household bills, books, and travel expenses, estimated to be around £9,000 (Push, 2012) also escalate the total cost of attending university. “It costs me and my family a fortune to be at university” (P1 SM, L419).

The average student taking part in this study, graduating in July this year, will owe probably around £23,000 (Push,2012). In 2011/2012 the maximum universities charged for tuition was £3,375. Add to this, the student’s cost of living: the pressures on student finances become clearly recognisable. Ultimately, these pressures are likely to have an effect upon the student choice of sportswear brand. “Because we have to think about paying rent, bills and going out every other Friday umm..... So we might not have enough money spare to buy the most expensive brands” (P5 SC ,L184).

Significantly, analysis of the results suggests that a majority of students have financial constraints. They have to budget what they spend. They also have a lack of finances to buy their preferred brands and they only increase their spending when their student loan arrives. Data from the Focus Group transcript supports this analysis. “I have to think about paying back, so I mean... I have not really bought many new clothes or kit or anything like that recently.”(P4 SD, L203-205). Additionally, the harsh economic climate has led to the participants decreasing their consumer spending (thisismoney.co.uk). The general consensus that, ‘I have a lack of finances to buy a preferred brand’ (P3 SES, L271-272) supports Oliver’s (2009, p215) argument that, ‘in a harsh economic climate, consumers will increasingly seek to buy clothing which can be worn across a wide range of sporting activities’. The

focus group again supports this view, “Uni. stuff can be worn across a variety of sports” (P1 SM, 271)

Hence, it is argued that participants change brands because of affordability.

#### *Participation in Sport:*

The results indicate that participation in sport at University does not influence a decision to buy a particular brand. Analysis also indicates that that a significant majority of students are not loyal to sportswear brands associated with their sports. These results also corroborate the view that most students are not loyal to one brand.

However, these results are somewhat surprising as the influence of the media, the aftermath of a very successful Olympic Games, a number of very high profile sporting events and the fact that a high proportion of participants (results: *Question 4*) are involved in university sport, are powerful leaders towards brand loyalty. A brand which has been associated with a high profile event (Adidas - Athletics) or athlete, and the sport of preference of the consumer can all lead to consumer loyalty. However, this does not appear to be the case in this instance. These results might be influenced by the discussions already outlined above in the section on finance or perhaps in the section outlined below on the requirement to wear the University Sportswear brand.

The results from the small group of students who were influenced by playing sport at university ally themselves with three of the seven factors (Quality, Style and Brand Name) identified in previous research into factors affecting consumer loyalty (Lau et.al. 2006; Yee and Sidek, 2008; Taleghani and Jourshari, 2012).

Again when this small group were asked to explain how and why they were loyal to sportswear associated with their major sport, the analysis of results suggested that they allied themselves with three of the seven factors that previous research into factors affecting consumer loyalty to brand has identified i.e. Quality, Style and Brand Name.

*Wearing the Required University Sportswear Brand.*

Analysis of the results indicate that wearing the University sportswear brand (Cardiff MET) does influence the number of times students bought alternative sportswear brands'. The data suggests that significant reasons for this are that, it is compulsory to wear the brand at lectures; The Cardiff Met sportswear can be worn across a number of sports; and the brand is of good quality. Because of this the students spent less on preferred brands.

A significant number of the students who took part in this research cited the above answers as being significant. It could be argued therefore, that these answers have a considerable impact upon the results of the study which were compiled in order to ascertain the level of the participants' brand loyalty. Analysis of results indicated that most students are not loyal to one brand but do move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand. If wearing the University brand is compulsory at lectures, and it can be worn across a number of different sports and is of good quality, the students are likely to, spend less on other preferred brands. The results from the focus group support this view. "Because I have it and have to wear it, I do spend less on other brands" (P2 Scram, L 321).

Analysis of the results therefore indicate that contextual factors do affect decisions to buy and therefore student consumer loyalty.

#### **4.5 Do the findings have implications for future practice?**

This section addresses the fourth research question. It interprets and summarises the possible impact of the results upon future practice. It is always difficult to predict what is likely to happen in the future, however the University of Sheffield, (2013) recognise that context does have an impact upon practice.

Analysis of results from this study this far, suggest that most students are not loyal to one brand but contextual factors such as, student finances, the use of the internet and wearing the required University sportswear brand are significant when considering undergraduate student consumer loyalty to sportswear brands. However, the research was undertaken when the Year three student costs were much lower than the costs of the current intake of students. In the future the cost of attending University is likely to grow, therefore the pressure upon students finances will increase. Davies, (2012) argues that, 'university students starting degrees this September will be saddled with £53,330 of debts by the time they leave university'. Thompson (2012) states that, 'An average student will pay £8,770 a year in tuition fees'. Additionally, approximately £12,500 will be spent on accommodation and approximately £4,300 will be spent on food (thisismoney.co.uk). Fig: \*\*\* . The typical spend in a University in Wales is calculated at almost £52,000. Fig. \*\*

As identified earlier, the UK is in the midst of recession (Smith, 2012). Financial implications increase pressure upon students to, 'shop around for value'. This

supports Oliver's (2009, p215) argument that, 'in a harsh economic climate, consumers will increasingly seek to buy clothing which can be worn across a wide range of sporting activities' and the student view that ' I have to budget my money and what I spend'. The results also confirm that 'Price', is a significant factor in student choice of brand.

: *Table 13 Projected student costs*

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Average spend per year</b>	<b>Average per three year course</b>
Tuition Fees	£8,770	£26,310
Accommodation	£4,159	£12,478
Food	£1,440	£4,319
Leisure (social activities; music/films; includes alcohol consumption)	£1,311	£3,933
Gas/Electricity/Water	£616	£1,233
Clothes	£396	£1,189
Books, equipment	£344	£1,032
Travel	£332	£996
Laundry/toiletries	£241	£724
Travel home	£151	£454
Household goods	£135	£405
Insurance	£129	£258
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18,024</b>	<b>£53,330</b>

**Source:** *www.thisismoney.co.uk*

Table 14: Average cost of university regionally

Region	Average cost of university for three years based on categories in table 1
London	£65,504
South East	£56,653
South West	£54,625
West Midlands	£53,969
North West	£53,812
East	£53,589
Yorkshire and Humberside	£52,672
East Midlands	£52,376
Wales	£51,764
North East	£50,324
Northern Ireland	£48,349
Scotland (non-Scottish students)	£47,516
<b>Total average</b>	<b>£53,330</b>

*Average cost of university regionally*

**Source:** [www.thisismoney.co.uk](http://www.thisismoney.co.uk)

The results confirm that the ability to ‘shop around’, on the internet, appears to be an attractive option for students. The findings support previous research that seven in ten adult internet users have now bought sports clothing, on the internet, in the past 12 months (Intel, 2012). The results also recognise that consumer shopping online has increased in popularity. This might become the norm in the future. If this were to be the case there is an argument that in order to improve ‘Brand Loyalty’ in the future, Sports Brands should focus upon the virtual store environment and the quality of internet service and provision. In the future, elements such as, ease of purchase, speed of delivery and ease of return if goods, could be important factors. This is supported by the focus group view, “I’ve bought stuff before and it’s never really fits..... then it’s just awkward sending it back...this needs to improve” (SD P4, L146).

The results infer that, in the future, strategies such as, focused e-marketing (Harden and Heyman, 2009), offering rewards or gifts (Siddarth and Agrarwal, 2011) and maintaining contact once consumer details have been captured, might encourage consumer loyalty. Indeed, the move towards virtual stores and their service provision might have longer term effects on consumer culture, and the way consumer loyalty is encouraged.

The results recognise that if wearing the University brand is compulsory at lectures; can be worn across a number of different sports; is of good quality, the students will buy it and 'spend less on other preferred brands. This could relieve some of the pressures that stretch student finances. It could also be argued, that a focus upon building consumer loyalty to the University brand might be appropriate. Additionally, if loyalty to this brand is strong, future marketing to the University alumni might be worth exploring.

As noted earlier, it is always difficult to predict what is likely to happen. However, the University of Sheffield, (2013) recognize that such elements as the social-economic situation of the participants and the culture and living conditions of the participants are important considerations. In this particular case, the results indicate that contextual factors appear to be significant. In the future, they are likely to have a significant effect upon 'decisions to buy' and therefore, consumer loyalty.

## **Chapter Five**

**Conclusion: Overall summary of  
findings**

This study has sought to identify and critically analyse factors affecting consumer loyalty to Sportswear Brands. The research was designed to address four questions. Analysis of the results indicates the following:

**Question 1:** Are undergraduate Sports students loyal to sportswear brands?

The results indicate that:

- Most students are not loyal to one brand but do move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand.

**Question 2:** What factors affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands?

The results indicate that:

- The factors which affect undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands are: Price, Style, Quality, Brand Name and Promotion/Advertising.
- Significant contextual factors such as, the use of the internet, student finances and wearing the required University sportswear brand are significant factors which affect student consumer loyalty to sportswear brands.
- The Store Environment, Quality of Service, Participation in a particular sport and brand loyalty to sportswear brands associated with their major sport(s), did not appear to be significant factors that affected undergraduate Sports students' consumer loyalty to sportswear brands

**Question 3:** Why and how do these factors affect undergraduate sports student consumer loyalty?

The results indicate that:

- Contextual factors have an effect upon 'decision to buy'.
- Contextual factors such as the use of the internet, student finances and wearing the required University sportswear brand affect undergraduate student 'decision to buy' and therefore consumer loyalty to sportswear brands.

**Question 4:** Do the findings have implications for future practice?

The results indicate that:

- Contextual factors are significant and are likely to have implications for future practice.

## References

- Aaker, D.A, 1996, Managing Brand Equity, (The Free Press, New York).
- Abraham, M. L. and Littrell, M. A. (1995) Consumers' Conceptualization of Apparel Attributes, Clothing and Textile Research Journal, 13, 65-74.
- Agrawal, A .Siddharth S. (2010). Retaining Brand Loyalty . Available: <http://www.tutorialspoint.com/white-papers/146.pdf>. Last accessed 20th Nov 2012.
- Associated Newspapers Limited . (2011). The recession. Available: <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/index.html>. Last accessed 13th December 2013.
- Bell, J (2005) Doing your Research Project. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Berkshire, Open University Press.
- Bill, K. (2009) Sport Management. Exeter. Learning matters, p41
- Blakey, P (2011). Sport Marketing. Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd. p68-73
- British Educational Research Association (2012) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. [Online] Available from <http://www.bera.ac.uk> [accessed 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013].
- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2003), Business Research Methods. New York. Oxford University Press.
- Cadogan, J. W. and Foster, B. D. (2000) Relationship Selling and Customer Loyalty: An Empirical Investigation, Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 18, 185-199.
- Chaudhuri A. Holbrook M.B. The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. Journal of Marketing 2001; 65 (April): 81-93.
- Chermatony, L,D. Mcdonald, M (2003). Creating Powerful Brands. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann. p36.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K (2007) Research Methods in Education. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Abingdon, Routledge.
- Creswell. J.W., and Plano Clark, V. (2011) Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods research. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dale, C. (2009). strategic management. In: Bill, K Sports Marketing. London: Learning matters. p72-75.
- Dann & Dann (2004), Strategic Internet Marketing 2nd edition, Brisbane: Wiley
- Davies. (2012). Students charged £325,000 a year to call revenue-generating Student Loans Company phone number. Available:

<http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-2059351/Students-charged-325-000-year-revenue-generating-Student-Loans-Company-phone-number.html>. Last accessed 29th Feb 2013.

Denscombe, M (2007) *The Good Research Guide; for small-scale social research projects*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Berkshire, Open University Press.

Department of Culture media and sport. (2010). *Plans for the legacy from the 2012 Olympicgames*. Available:[http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/201210\\_Legacy\\_Publication.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/201210_Legacy_Publication.pdf). Last accessed 1st December 2012.

Duff, M. (1999) *Niche Marketing in Fashion in Women's Sportswear*. *DSN Retailing Today*, 38, 29-35

Evans, M (2009) *Reliability and validity in qualitative research*. London, Sage Publications Limited, p 112-124.

Evans, M., Moutinho, L. and Raaij, W. F. V. (1996) *Applied Consumer Behavior*. Addison-Wesley: Harlow.

Frings, G. S. (2005) *Fashion: From Concept to Consumer* (8th Ed.). Pearson/Prentice Hall: New Jersey.

Garvin, D. A. (1988) *Managing Quality: The Strategic and Competitive Edge*. Free Press: New York.

Harden, L. Heyman, B (2009). *Digital Engagement*. Amacom: Newyork. P158-160.

Harness, D Harness, T. (2007). *Managing sport products and services*. In: Beech, J and Chadwich, S *The Marketing of Sport*. London: Prentice Hall. P158-160.

Huddleston, P. Whipple, J. and Van Auken, A. (2004) *Food Store Loyalty: Application of a Consumer Loyalty Framework*, *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 12, 213-230.

Jacoby J. and Chestnut, RW., 1978, *Brand Loyalty: Measurement and Management* (John Wiley & Sons, New York).

Keller, K (1998), "Brand Equity," in the *Handbook of Technology Management*, ed. Richard Dorf. CRC Press Inc., 12:59-12:65.

Keller, K. L. (2003) *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity*. Prentice Hall: New Jersey.

Keynote. (2012). *Sports Clothing & Footwear Market Report 2012*. Available: <https://www.keynote.co.uk/market-intelligence/view/product/10555/sports-clothing-%26-footwear>. Last accessed 15th December 2012.

Kohli, C. and Thakor, M. (1997) Branding Consumer Goods: Insights from Theory and Practice, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 14, 206-219.

Kotler, P (2009). *Marketing Management*. Edinburogh: Pearsons Education Limited. p54.

Kotler, P, Armstrong, G, (2008) *Principles of Marketing*. 12th edition. London: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P, Armstrong, G, Wong, V, Saunders, J (2008) *Principles of Marketing*. 5th European edition, London: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P. & Keller, K.L. (2006). *Marketing Management (12th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P. (2004). WRESTLING WITH ethics. *Marketing Management*, 13(6), 30-35.

Kwon, D (2012). Polaris, *Marketing Research*. Newyotk: American Marketing Association. p6-9.

Lau, M. M., Chang, M. S., Moon, K. and Liu, W. S. (2006) The Brand Loyalty of Sportswearin Hong Kong, *Journal of Textile and Apparel, Technology and Management*, 5, 1-13.

Loudon.(2001) *Consumer Behavior: Concepts And Application* .Tata McGraw-Hill

Mahony, D. F, Howard, D. R, & Madrigal, R. (2000). BIRGing and CORFing behaviors by sport spectators: High self-monitors versus low self-monitors. *International Sports Journal*, 4, 87-106.

Mainspring. (2000). The Value of Online Customer Loyalty. Available: [http://www.bain.com/Images/Value\\_online\\_customer\\_loyalty\\_you\\_capture.pdf](http://www.bain.com/Images/Value_online_customer_loyalty_you_capture.pdf). Last accessed 27th December 2010.

Mao, J. (2010). Customer Brand Loyalty. *International Journal of Business and Management*. 5 (7), p211- 216.

Marketing Metrics. (2009). Advertising. Available: <http://www.marketing-metrics-made-simple.com/advertising-metrics.html>. Last accessed 31 December 2012.

McCormick,K and Scorpio, C,. 2000. Commanding performance: A new Breed of consumer demands high function and high fashion, *Sporting Goods Business*. 33(9).pp.16

Mcdonald, M (2000). *Creating Powerful Brands*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann. p7-10.

McIntosh, P. (2010) *Action Research and Reflective Practice: Creative and visual methods to facilitate reflection and learning*. Oxon, Routledge.

Meijer, P.C., Verloop, N. &Beijaard, D. (2002) Multi Method Triangulation in a qualitative study: An attempt To Increase Internal Validity. *Qualitative Research*, 36 (1991), 145-167.

Meir, R and Arthur, D. (2007). Pricing sports and sports pricing strategies. In: Beech, J and Chadwich, S *The marketing of sport*. London: Prentice Hall. p321-335.

Mintel . (2012). Sports Participation. Available: <http://academic.mintel.com.ezproxy.uwic.ac.uk/display/636051/?highlight=true#hit1>. Last accessed 20th December 2012. *Oxford English Dictionary*. (2010). 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Mintel. (2010). Sports Goods retailing. Available: <http://academic.mintel.com.ezproxy.uwic.ac.uk/display/623679/?highlight=true#hit1>. Last accessed 20th December 2012

Mintel. (2011). Clothing retail Market. Available: <http://academic.mintel.com.ezproxy.uwic.ac.uk/display/642253/?highlight=true#hit1>. Last accessed 21st December 2012. *Mintel*. (2012). Sports Retail Market. Executive Summary. 6 (1), p1-4.

Mintel. (2012). Sports Goods retailing. Available: <http://academic.mintel.com.ezproxy.uwic.ac.uk/display/623679/?highlight=true#hit1>. Last accessed 20th December 2012

Oliver, M. (2009). Issues in the Market . *Sports Goods retailing*. 1 (2), p1-4.

Oxlade. (2012). Economy watch: What caused the return to recession and how long will it last?. Available: <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-1616085/Economy-watch-How-long-Britains-recession-last.html>. Last accessed 20th Feb 2013.

Parker, M. (2011). Nike annual Report Available: [http://investors.nikeinc.com/files/doc\\_financials/AnnualReports/2011](http://investors.nikeinc.com/files/doc_financials/AnnualReports/2011). Last accessed 30 th November 2012.

Pedersen, L. (2004). Why is Branding so Important. *Sport Marketing and Management*. 10 (1), pg 47-49.

Phau, I., & Prendergast, G. (2000). Consuming luxury brands: The relevance of the “rarity principle”. *Journal of Brand Management*, 8, 122-138.

Punch, K. (2009) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. London, Sage Publications Ltd.

Randall, G (2000). Branding. *London: Marketing Magazine*. 2-3.

Reichheld, F.F. & Sasser, Jr., W.E. (1990). Zero defections. Quality comes to services. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(5), 105-111

- Robson, C. (2002) *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitionerresearchers*(2<sup>nd</sup> Ed). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Russell, R. S. and Taylor, B. W. (2006) *Operation Management: Quality and Competitiveness in a global Environment* (5th Ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.: River Street.
- Smith . (2012). Say goodbye to double dip . Available: <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/business/Economy/article1153140.ece>. Last accessed 25th Feb 2013.
- Sharp, J (2009) *Study skills in education: Success with your education research project*. Exeter, Learning Matters Ltd.
- Sparks, L. (2007). Sports goods retailing . In: Beech, J and Chadwich, S *The marketing of sport*. London: Prentice Hall. p365-369.
- Taleghani, M. Jourshari, M. (2012). Assessment of Gender Differences in Brand Loyalty of Sportswear Consumers. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*. 2 (3), p2136-2139.
- The University of Sheffield. (2012). How students starting university this year may rack up a £4,145 interest bill - before graduation. Available: <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate>. Last accessed 30th Feb 2013.
- Thomas, G. (2009) *How to do your Research Prohct*. London, Sage Publications Ltd.
- Thomas,G . (2009) *How to do your research project*. London, Sage Publications Ltd.
- Thompson, L. (2012). How students starting university this year may rack up a £4,145 interest bill - before graduation. Available: <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-2059351/Students-charged-325-000-year-revenue-generating-Student-Loans-Company-phone-number.html>. Last accessed 29th Feb 2013.
- Trenberth, L., Garland (2006), *Sport Marketing Research and Marketing Information Systems*, in Beech, J., Chadwick, S. (2006), *The Marketing of Sports*, Harlow: Prentice Hall.
- Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L. W. (1999). A review and a conceptual framework of prestige-seeking consumer behavior. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 1999, 1-15.
- Wale,D. Phoenix, F.. (2009). Chapter 4. In: Bill, K *Sports Marketing*. London: Learning matters. p34-40.

Walliman, N & Buckler, S. (2008) Your Dissertation in Education. London, Sage Publications Limited.

Walliman, Nicholas. (2006) Social Research Methods. Sage Course Companions. [ebook]. SAGE Publications. Available from: <http://lib.mylibrart.com?ID=124466>>[Accesses 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013].

Wilkie, W.L., 1990, Consumer Behavior, 2nd. ed., (John Wiley & Sons, New York).

Wilson, E. & Stuchbury, K.(2009) Research Design and Ethics. London, Sage Publications Limited, p57-75.

Wood, L.M. (2004). Dimensions of brand purchasing behaviour : Consumers in the 18-24 age group. Journal of Consumer Behaviour.

Yee, W .Sidek, B. (2008). Influence of Brand Loyalty on Consumer Sportswear. Journal of Economics and Management. 2 (2), 221-236.

Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, "Communication and Control Processes in the Delivery of Service Quality," Journal of Marketing, April 1988, pp. 35-48.

# **APPENDICIES**

# **APPENDIX 1**

## Factors affecting brand loyalty

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Q1 Age:</b></p> <p>20 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>21 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>22 <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q2 Degree of Study</b></p> <p><i>Sport Management</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Sport Development</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Sport and Exercise Science</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>SCRAM</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Sport Coaching</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Sport and P.E</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q3 Gender</b></p> <p><i>Male</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Female</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p><b>Q4 Are you involved in University Sport</b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q5 Please tick the description which describes you best.</b></p> <p><i>I buy one brand of sportswear all the time.</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>I buy two or three brands of sportswear only.</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>I move from sportswear brand to sportswear brand.</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>I exhibit no loyalty to a sportswear brand.</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
|--|--|

***Please tick the relevant answers below.***

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Q6 The QUALITY of a particular brand of sportswear influences me to buy the product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q7 The PRICE of a particular brand of sportswear influences me to buy the product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q8 The STYLE of a particular brand of sportswear influences me to buy the product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p><b>Q9 The BRAND NAME of a particular brand of sportswear influences me to buy the product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q10 The PROMOTION/ADVERTISING of a particular brand of sportswear influences me to buy the product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p><br><p><b>Q11 The STORE ENVIRONMENT in which the brand of sportswear is sold influences me to buy a product.</b></p> <p><i>Strongly Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Agree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Neutral</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Strongly Disagree</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
|---|---|

**Q12 The QUALITY OF SERVICE has influenced me to buy a particular brand of sportswear product.**

- Strongly Agree*
- Agree*
- Neutral*
- Disagree*
- Strongly Disagree*

**Q13 Have you used the internet to purchase any sportswear since you have been at university?**

- Yes (go to Q14)*
- No (go to Q16)*

**Q14 How many times**

- Once*
- Three times*
- More*

**Q15 Briefly explain why the internet has influenced your decision to buy a particular brand of sportswear.**

- Quicker*
- Online Discounts*
- Online Advertising*
- Increased availability on stock*
- Easily accessible*

**Q16 Do your student finances influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand?**

- Yes (go to Q17)*
- No (go to Q18)*

**Q17 Briefly explain how and why your student finances influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.**

- I Have to Budget my money thus budget what i spend*
- Lack of finances to buy preferred brands*
- Student loan leads to increased spending on preferred brands*

**Q18 Does your participation in sport at university influence your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand?**

- Yes (go to Q19)*
- No (go to Q20)*

**Q19 Briefly explain how and why playing sport at university has influenced your decision to buy a particular sportswear brand.**

- The right brands aid my performance*
- Conform with others wearing the brand*
- Buying the most stylish brand as I am representing my university*
- Buy the brand which possesses the most comfort when playing sport*

**Q20 Are you Loyal to sportswear brands associated with your major sport(s)?**

- Yes (go to Q21)*
- No (go to Q22)*

**Q21 Briefly explain how and why you are loyal to sportswear associated with your major sport.**

- Aspire to be like my role model(s) who wear the brand*
- I Believe it can improve my performance*
- Sponsors pay for me to wear the sports brand*
- Increased comfort when playing.*

**Q22 Does wearing the university sportswear brand (Cardiff Met) influence the number of times you buy alternative sportswear brands?**

- Yes (go to Q23)*
- No (Finished)*

**Q23 Briefly explain how and why wearing the university sportsbrand influences the number of times you buy alternative sportswear brands.**

- Its Compulsory to wear at lectures*
- The Cardiff Met sportswear can be worn across a number of sports*
- Its Good Quality and efficient meaning i spend less on my preferred brands.*

**Thankyou for your time.**

## **APPENDIX 2**

## Transcription

### **Researcher:**

“Thank you for coming have you all read my the introduction to my research and my ethical consideration sheet”

### **All Participants:**

“Yeah”

**Researcher:** “Hi I’m Reece and today we are going to be talking about factors effecting brand loyalty, We are just going to go through a few themes..Umm and try a get a bit of a discussion on the go. First of all can you state your names and what course you do?”

**P1 SM :**“Joe Whelan and I’m doing sport management.”

**P2 Scram:** “Jon Lane and I m doing Scram.”

**P3 SES:** “Joey Doherty, sport and exercise science.”

**P4 SD:** “Morgan Lewis, Sport Development.”

**P5 SC:** “Tom Weymouth, Sport Coaching.”

**Researcher:** “Great, Basically the first in our discussion theme , in my questionnaire, the quality, the price, the style, the brand name and the promotion/advertising was seen as a very important factor in why you buy a sports wear product. But the store environment and quality of service was seen as undecided as why its really important’ why do you think this is.”

**P1 SM:** “Can you just say which was like the most positive or most effective.”

**Researcher:** “What do you mean? What do you mean?”

**P1 SM:** “The first part of the question.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah.”

**P1 SM:** “The most effective”

**Researcher:** “The most effective was the quality, the price, the style, the brand name, and the promotion and advertising. Whereas the store environment and quality of service was not seen as very important.”

**P3 SES:** “I think the price is important because your interviewing a lot of students and students are really concerned about price aren’t they make it cheap and good quality.”

**Researcher:** “What they are not concerned about store environment?”

**P3 SES:** “Well they are concerned about store environment but obviously if it was cheaper and shit haha... If it was cheaper they would rather go there than go to a good store.”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah”

**P3 SES:** “Well that’s how I feel.”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah, because at the end of the day you don’t go into a shop to have a nice environment, or go and have a chat with someone.”

**P3 SES:** “Yeah you don’t have a shampoo and shower before,”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah you buy what you want and then go.”

**P1 SM:** “The store environment, I don’t think as you said doesn’t effect it that much. Because as long as you walk past a shop window and see like a style, which is one of the major effects isn’t it.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah, Yeah”

**P1 SM:** “Uhh if you walk past and see a good style you are going to want to buy it no matter what the store looks like.”

**P4 SD:** “Yeah. If something’s cheap enough and I really wanted it, I wouldn’t be like. If some one was serving me just like, not like, really engaging with me it wouldn’t bother me at all as long as I’m getting what I want.”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah.”

**P3 SES:** “But I think good engaging can help you buy something as well.”

**P1 SM:** “If you’re un-decided.”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah they could sell it to you.”

**P3 SES:** “They could be like... you look and then you would be like yeah I do look good.”

**P5 SC:** “Yeah ,yeah.”

**Researcher:** “John?”

**P2 Scram:** “The environment of the store can definitely help... but I can understand why it wouldn’t effect most people .”

**Researcher** "Yeah"

**P2 Scram:** "Because their buying the product not the environment."

**P5 SC:** "Could the store environment be how tidy the shop is kept "

**Researcher:** "Yeah, yeah."

**P5 SC:** "Because if everything was on the floor you wouldn't even bother would you."

**P2 Scram:** "Na."

**P5 SC:** "You would just go somewhere else."

**P2 SM:** "Like Primark, look how people treat Primark and now is not sports but..."

**P3 SES:** "But look how busy Primark is all the time."

**P5 SC:** "Because It's cheap."

**P3 SES:** "Yeah it's cheap."

**P5 SC:** "It's price mate."

**P1 SM:** "It's getting the right mix I think."

**P5 SC:** "Yeah, definitely."

**Researcher:** "Also one of the factors why store environment wasn't was obviously because people didn't agree and people are using the internet a lot more, like people are using tablets and through online advertising they've been drawn towards it with obviously the new technology that's around . But ummm, Have you used the internet to purchase sportswear and why have you used it."

**P1 SM:** " I use the internet all the time"

**Researcher:** "For sportswear yeah?"

**P1 SM.** "Ummm... not recently for sports wear but obviously I've bought a lot of stuff online and I've used it for certain sports equipment like ... shoes. That's about it but, yeah the main reason I buy stuff off the internet is that it is so easy to access and there's so much choice in style and everything so ..."

**Researcher:**"Yeah, yeah."

**P1 SM:** “You can also customize there’s loads of different stuff you can do and usually there’s online discount...which is good.”

**P2 Scram:** “Yeah its easy use plus you might go into a shop and what you want might not be in there.”

**P3 SES:** “You can get a lot of different sizes as well.”

**P2 Scram:** “And you can question it.”

**P4 SD:** “Yeah, I have bought a lot of stuff of the internet but like.. I’ve bought stuff before and it’s never really fit and that and then its just awkward sending it back.”

**Researcher :**“So that’s the negative side of it then?”

**P4 SD** “Yeah, so I bought some rugby boots not long ago and they just didn’t fit at all and then it was so awkward trying to change them I just gave them away like.”

**P3 SES:** “Yes I always buy stuff of the internet if I’ve previously owned it or tried it on in the shop like in real life.”

**Researcher:** “So you would still buy it if you went to a shop tried it on then you could go back and buy it online.”

**P3 SES:** "Yeah, yeah."

**P5 SC:** "There is more variety online as well, isn't there."

**P3 SES:** "It's cheaper."

**P1 SM:** "That's why I buy it."

**P5 SC:** "There is more variety online but like if you buy football boots you can go on the 'Nike' store and you can customize your own."

**P1 SM:** "You can add your name on to it."

**P5 SC:** "You can't do that in a shop."

**Researcher:** "Yeah, yeah."

**P4 SD:** "Where we live is quite convenient for town anyway , so its not completely out of our way just to go and have a browse in town."

**P5 SC:** Yeah, yeah.

**Researcher:** “Another factor from analysing my data, one of the questions is, is student finances are a big factor and how does that effect you when buying sportswear.”

**P5 SC:** “Because we have to think about paying rent, bills and going out every other Friday umm..... So we might not have enough money spare to buy the most expensive brands, that might not like be the most expensive brand but the latest of like a new nike boot that comes out could be like 240 quid but there might be one reduced to like 50.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah.”

**P1 SM:** “Im a bit different tho, I just look at it as, that’s my only source of income so I’ll just buy what ever I want with that amount of money.”

**Researcher:** “So if you like.... when your loan comes in straight away. “

**P1 SM:** “Then I would prefer to spend more when my loan comes in because I know I have a large some of money I can use at a time. So that influences me to buy if anything more expensive products because I know I have the cash available.”

**Researcher:** “Morgan?”

**P4 SD:** “Ummm... yeah because I’m going to America this summer so I have to think about paying that, so I mean, have not really bought many new clothes or anything like that recently.”

**Researcher:** "Yeah.."

**P4 SD:** "And there is more important stuff for me like going to the gym so I buy stuff like protein shake rather than just clothes."

**Researcher:** "The next topic we will be talking about is, basically, obviously we do coaching every week, and obviously some of us are involved in sport at university. How does doing sport at university effect your decision to buy a particular brand? Or does it at all?"

**P5 SC:** "I don't think it does at all because the uni, well it depends which uni you go to really because some universities play in really nice 'Adidas' kits and don't get me wrong our university wears 'Errea' which is nice but I wouldn't go out of my way to go out my way to buy 'Errea' boots."

**P1 SM:** "Nor me."

**Researcher:** "I understand."

**P4 SD:** "I don't like my Unis kit. I would by something nicer."

**P1 SM:** "Yeah the style of our kit is not something I would choose in a shop sooo therefore it would influence me to buy a different more attractive style because I prefer that than my uni kit."

**P3 SES:** “And the price of it was absolutely ridiculous it was like 300 quid for 2 pairs of trackie bottoms “

**P1 SM:** “Yeah its just as expensive as going into a shop and buying it anyway.”

**Researcher:** “Would you say you’re loyal to it because you have to be because its compulsory?? Because you have to wear it in that sort of way?”

**P4 SD:** “No because I bought it and didn’t wear it.”

**P3 SES:** “Yeah I didn’t.”

**P1 SM:** “My actual tracksuit bottoms didn’t fit me so that’s something I’ve never forgotten.”

**P5 SC:** “They fear monger you buy saying if you don’t wear it you will fail but its just rubbish.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah.”

**P3 SC:** “I only wear it if I’m told too.”

**Researcher:** “Obviously you’re saying now you’re not really to the UWIC brand but are you loyal to brands associated with your sport. So say football because obviously ‘Nike’ and ‘Adidas’ are associated with football, would you be loyal to that brand.”

**P4 SD:** "I am with boots."

**P1 SM:** "In a boots sense yeah, because they are the leading brand and everyone knows them as the best."

**P3 SES:** "Because you know what size fits you."

**Researcher:** "Why would you say you buy them just because the way they fit? Do you think its helps your performance or because other people wear them?"

**P5 SC:** "Because 'Nike' and 'Adidas' are like top brands they can afford to mess around"

**P1 SM:** "I feel comfortable buying it, because you know what you're getting because you have bought them before."

**P5 SC:** "But they know because they're popular they can bring out any old boot and someone's going to go crazy like do you remember the vapours they bought out they were like that thin."

**Researcher:** "So they weren't that efficient but people still bought them?"

**P5 SC:** "Yes"

**P2 Scram:** "Its like your mates init."

**Researcher:** "Whats that?"

**P2 Scram:** "Like if your team mates or friends have got something, then your going to be more influence to buy something."

**Research:** "Yeah, defiantly.... Right the next topic, ummm ... how does wearing the UWIC sportswear brand have an effect to your loyalty to your preferred brand. So basically its like, as you were kind of saying before, so if you like, went to a lecture in your UWIC brand and say if you went to another lecture and you were wearing your preferred brand how would that.... Do you think it would affect your performance in anyway or do you think it would umm you would feel more comfortable."

**P1 SM:** "I wouldn't say it would affect my performance but it certainly makes me feel a lot more comfortable in my own gear."

**Researcher:** "Yeah."

**P1 SM:** "opposed to like the UWIC gear because everyone's wearing it, everyone looks the same when your wearing your own thing you tend to stand out a bit more and you can do something on your own more."

**P4 SD:** "It is nice to be like.. your all there in the same kind of kit and stuff, but like I prefer that when your in a team not like going to a lecture or something."

**Researcher:** “You don’t feel like a part of a team is that what you’re saying?”

**P4 SD:** “It just feels like you’re made to wear it, its like ahhhh.”

**P1 SM:** “It’s more of a uniform than a kit.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah.”

**P4 SD:** “Yeah I thought I left school quite a while ago.”

**Researcher:** “Yeah, yeah I understand yeah. Definitely. Uhhh Jon ,do you have anything to say on it?”

**P2 Scram:** “No.”

**Researcher:** “The last one ummm..The last theme is basically, by being at university with the student finances and stuff and obviously wearing the university brand like compulsory, not through choice but, into lectures will it has an effect on your future loyalty.”

**P3 SES:** “Na.”

**Researcher:** “Do you reckon you will be looking at like....”

**P1 SM:** “Yeah probably because it will send me away from ‘Errea’.”

**P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 :**“ hahaha.”

**P1 SM:** “I probably won’t buy ‘Errea’ again.”

**Researcher:** “Will you be looking....Will you be more aware of your finances ?”

**P1 SM:** “Ummm, well after uni I will because I’m not getting the loan income that we get anymore to purchase all the sports gear so I will have to spend money that I’ve earned rather than received.”

**Researcher:** “So you will be more aware in what you buy?”

**P1 SM:** “Yeah, Exactly.. Ill probably end up buying more budget kit and stuff like that.”

**P5 SC:** “Going back to loyalty like. If you look at.....The only reason you buy something is because of role models isn’t it and like. You don’t see ‘Errea’ bringing out adverts with like ‘Messi’ running round in their boots and stuff and you don’t see players wearing ‘Errea’ boots any more , just cause the fact we wore it at university which is probably because it’s a cheap option.”

**P3 SES :**“Yeah.”

**P5 SC:** "I wouldn't buy it in the future."

**P3 SES:** "Saying that the 'Belief' is doing loads of rugby gear for everyone now aint they."

**P5 SC:** "Yeah."

**P3 SES:** "And they are not really a big brand and they have only recently become big because they are a good price and good quality."

**P5 SC:** "Yeah."

**P3 SES:** "As everyone's like 'ye its cheap we can get shit loads for money.'"

**P4 SD:** "Like before I came to uni, I don't think I bought anything by 'Errea'."

**P5 SC:** "Either had I."

**P4 SD:** "I generally don't think I did and it might be the cheap option and what ever but we paid a stupid amount of money."

**P5 SC:** "It was like 380 quid for 8 items wasn't it."

**P1 SM:** "It was ridiculous."

**P4 SD:** "It was nuts."

**P2 Scram:** "It's like the make we had in school it was on school kits and that. "

**P1 SM:** "Yeah, school kits, 'Errea' do a lot."

**P1 SM:** "I think its because they must, they must, because there budget brands they bring out a budget package with different.. You know and that influences people to but it because it's a massive package that you get as opposed to individual items."

**P5 SC:** "Don't forget that uni is trying to rob us as well imagine what they, what they made us pay for Brecon and stuff like that."

**P3 SES:** "The thing is that 'Errea' gear was like 350 quid and I got all that UWIC rugby gear, I got more stuff and I've had that gear ever since and it was only 110."

**P1 SM:** "Yeah, exactly."

**P5 SC:** "But the thing is they changed it"

**P1 SM:** "They changed it"

**P5 SC:** "What is it?"

**P3 SES:** "Its urrrr.... 'Under Armour'."

**P5 SC:** "Yeah 'Under Armour' yeah and that's a big brand."

**P1 SM:** "It was only like 200 pound."

**P4 SD:** "It is much nicer."

**Researcher:** "So if you could go back to the first year now."

**P3 SES:** "Yeah I would definitely by the 'Under Armour' gear."

**P1 SM:** "I think I would be more influenced to buy the 'Under Armour'."

**P3 SES:** "They ruined us in first year."

**P5 SC:** "Don't get me wrong I would still get annoyed if I had to pay 380 quid but I wouldn't mind paying a lot more than 'Errea'".

**Researcher:** “Right guys, that’s it for today thank you for your time.”

**P1 SM:** “Thank you”

**Researcher:** “I hope you enjoyed the focus group.”

**P1 SM, P5 SC:** “Cheers mate”

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Focus group Consent/Information form**

# Focus Group

## **Identification and Critical Analysis of Factors Affecting Consumer loyalty to Sportswear Brands: A Focus on undergraduate sport students.**

Reece Jones

Sport Management  
Cardiff Metropolitan University

I am a student currently studying sport management at Cardiff Metropolitan University. As part of my Dissertation, I am conducting research under the supervision of Chris Jennings and I am inviting you to participate in my study. The purpose of the study is to examine the factors associated with brand loyalty amongst students. This study involves undertaking a focus group where 4 selected themes will be discussed in relation to the selected title. Participants will be guided through the themes before the focus group and it will take approximately 10-20 minutes. The process is laid back and will aid your knowledge in factors affecting brand loyalty.

**Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.**

All information gained in this process will be kept strictly confidential. All participants will be asked not to disclose anything said within the context of the discussion. All identifying information will be removed from the collected materials, and all materials will kept in a secure file were only I and my supervisor can access the information.

I also understand that my words may be quoted directly. With regards to being quoted, please initial next to any of the statements that you agree with:

	I wish to review the notes, transcripts, or other data collected during the research pertaining to my participation.
	I agree to be quoted directly.
	I agree to be quoted directly if my name is not published (I remain anonymous).
	I agree to be quoted directly if a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.
	I agree that the researchers may publish documents that contain quotations by me.

**By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree to participate in this study.**

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the researcher at [Rjones243@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Rjones243@hotmail.co.uk) or supervisor at [cjennings@uwic.ac.uk](mailto:cjennings@uwic.ac.uk)

