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**Marketing Analysis of JJK Jyväskylä,
A First Division Football Club in Finland**

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ABSTRACT

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This empirical case study investigated a First Division semi-professional football club in Finland and tried to explore interrelationships between factors that affect the marketing activities of the club. Previous research shows controversial results about how the on-field performance of a team, attendance and marketing opportunities are interconnected, which underpins the relevance of the present work. In addition, emphasis was also put on ascertaining the antecedents and level of fan satisfaction and identification towards the team, as well as discovering the relationship between them. Furthermore, the research was aimed at detecting a presumed correlation between identification of fans, and their sensitivity to the result of the games. Likewise, an attempt was made to find out whether increasing fan satisfaction or fan identification indicates higher sponsor awareness.

In order to successfully implement the study, an on-line survey, interviews, and participant observation was utilised, as well as statistical data obtained from Football Club JJK Jyväskylä. With the analysis of the collected data, this study has found that improving on-field performance triggers higher attendance and further opportunities in marketing. In addition, there is an existing relationship between factors that determine fan satisfaction and fan identification. Beside these, it has been concluded that JJK fans' sponsor awareness and attitude stand at a low level, therefore JJK's sponsorship strategy needs to be reorganised. Finally, it has been revealed that highly satisfied and identified fans are more eager to buy a season ticket for the following season and recommendations were made how to establish and strengthen the JJK brand.

Implementing the results of this work could help enhance the quality of marketing management and raise the level of services provided to supporters and sponsors of the club. Similarly, this topic area was performed under specific conditions related to Finland.

Keywords: marketing, on-field performance, attendance, satisfaction, identification, football club, semi-professional, sponsor

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 6 |
| 1 TOPIC AREA AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS | 8 |
| 1.1 The History of Football in Jyväskylä..... | 8 |
| 1.2 Main Points of the Topic..... | 9 |
| 2 A REVIEW OF THE RELATED MARKETING AND SPONSORSHIP | |
| LITERATURE | 12 |
| 2.1 Principles of Marketing Concepts..... | 12 |
| 2.1.1 Event Marketing..... | 12 |
| 2.1.2 Merchandising..... | 14 |
| 2.2 Sponsorship..... | 16 |
| 2.2.1 Finnish Environment..... | 16 |
| 2.2.2 Sponsorship Commitment..... | 17 |
| 2.2.3 Fan Satisfaction Related to Fans' Attitude towards Sponsors | 19 |
| 2.3 Brand Extension..... | 19 |
| 2.4 On-field performance – Attendance – Marketing..... | 21 |
| 3 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES | 23 |
| 3.1 Quantitative Methods..... | 23 |
| 3.1.1 Secondary Sources | 23 |
| 3.1.2 Survey | 23 |
| 3.2 Qualitative Methods..... | 24 |
| 3.2.1 Interviews..... | 24 |
| 3.2.2 Ethnography | 25 |
| 3.3 Measures | 25 |
| 3.4 Data Collection..... | 29 |
| 4 RESULTS | 32 |
| 4.1 On-field performance – Attendance – Marketing..... | 32 |
| 4.2 Online Survey | 32 |
| 4.2.1 Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification | 37 |
| 4.2.2 Sponsor Orientation and Awareness | 42 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 4.2.3 | Intention to Attend Future Games..... | 46 |
| 5 | DISCUSSION | 51 |
| 5.1 | The Effects of On-field Performance on Attendance and Marketing | 51 |
| 5.2 | The Average JJK Fan..... | 51 |
| 5.3 | Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification | 52 |
| 5.4 | Sponsor Orientation and Awareness | 55 |
| 5.5 | Intention to Attend Future Games..... | 57 |
| 5.6 | The JJK Brand..... | 58 |
| 6 | CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS | |
| | FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF JJK..... | 60 |
| 6.1 | The Effects of On-field Performance on Attendance and Marketing | 60 |
| 6.2 | Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification | 60 |
| 6.3 | Sponsor Awareness and Orientation | 61 |
| 6.4 | Intention to Attend Future Games..... | 63 |
| 6.5 | Establishing and Strengthening the JJK Brand..... | 63 |
| 6.6 | Limitations of this Study and Recommended further Research..... | 64 |
| | BIBLIOGRAPHY | 66 |
| | APPENDICES | 69 |

Introduction

Marketers of sport clubs need to make their decisions to serve the paramount interest of their team. As sport has become more and more professionalised and commercialised, competition and the needs of the consumers have grown and vice versa. These factors influence each other in a complex and complicated way. Accordingly, the role of the marketing activity at the operation of sport clubs has turned out to be of greater relevance.

Football Club JJK¹ Jyväskylä has achieved considerable results at the Finnish level in recent years. They won the Second Division in 2006 and the following year the team acquired bronze medal in the First Division². Not surprisingly, the objective set by the management was to come first or second in 2008. After a thrilling season, JJK finished in first place and got promoted to the Veikkausliiga³, the number one football series in Finland, for the first time in their history. The growing interest of fans and sponsors has accompanied the outstanding results of the team, and it is reasonable to say that the popularity of football has been increasing immensely in the city. Apparently, the altered situation stemming from the improvements referred to above has given challenges to the management, primarily to those who are in charge of the marketing activities.

The topic of my master's thesis is the examination and the analysis of the marketing activity of Finnish First Division, semi-professional football club, JJK Jyväskylä, during the 2008 season.⁴ Due to the success previously mentioned, the business environment has changed considerably, which requires added efforts and a more professional approach from

¹ JJK stands for 'Jyväskylän Jalkapallo Klubi' = Football Club Jyväskylä

² First Division = Ykkönen. This is the second highest level in Finnish Football. Accordingly, Second Division is the third highest level.

³ Veikkausliiga is managed by The Finnish Football League Association. This is the highest division in Finnish football. (Veikkausliiga 2008)

⁴ The majority of the data collection was carried out in 2008, when JJK played in the First Division, i.e. on semi professional level. Accordingly, the analysis reflects on that year. From 2009 however, the team has played in the highest league in Finland, therefore it became a professional football club.

management. In this context, firstly, the interrelationships among the team's performance, attendance and the marketing activities need to be examined and analysed. Secondly, exploring the nature of fan commitment and identifying the determinants of their satisfaction and identification towards the club is also of crucial importance from the marketing viewpoint. Finally, the relation of the levels of fan satisfaction and identification to sponsor awareness, sponsor orientation and the intention to attend future games is carried out. These measures are believed to be necessary, in order to be able to operate efficiently, i.e. enhance the benefit of the sponsors to the club, increase the number of spectators and augment revenue. Few attempts (Clark 1992; Lipponen 1995; Itkonen, Ilmanen & Matilainen 2009) have been made to conduct research in this area, and even less in the Finnish semi-professional environment.

Implementing the investigation successfully requires a careful planning of the structure. This study kicks off with the reinforcement of the research topic and with the formulation of the research questions. This is followed by comprehensive review of the literature related to the topic of the present paper. Subsequently, the research methods applied in this study, namely data collection from secondary sources, questionnaires, interviews and ethnography are presented. Then, the results are reported and visualised. Finally, the results are analysed in the discussion and summed up in the conclusion. In addition, implications are made for further research and to the management of JJK and limitations of the study are also reviewed.

1 Topic Area and Research Questions

1.1 The History of Football in Jyväskylä

First, it is felt necessary to introduce briefly the subject of this paper in order to get a better understanding of the historical, cultural and geographical features of the research.

The history of so called ‘JYP-family’¹ in Jyväskylä started in 1923 when JYP ry² was founded. Among other sports, a football team was set up right from the beginning. However, the beginning of football in the region dates back to the early 1900s, which is confirmed by the fact that Jyväskylä citizen Artturi Nyysönen was a member and one of the best players of the Finnish national football team at the 1912 Stockholm Olympic Games (K. Suomi, personal communication, February 3, 2010). The name changed in 1977, when the ice-hockey and the football team were divided and football continued under the JYP-77 name. In 1992 Jyväskylän Jalkapalloklubi ry, which was in charge of the first team, was created, and soon JJK Juniorit ry was founded. During these years JJK spent some seasons in the third, second and also in the first division. Shortly after, its name was adjusted to JJK Jyväskylä ry. From the time of their establishment, JJK Juniorit ry and JJK Jyväskylä ry has worked in tight cooperation and has formed the ‘JJK family’, which is currently the biggest ballgame club in Jyväskylä. (JJK 2009)

In the beginning of 2000s, JJK played 6 years in the third level and then in 2007 the team made it to the second level. In the same year the club reached the semi-final in the Finnish Cup series, where they faced and lost against HJK (the most prestigious football club of Finland), in front of a record attendance of more than 5000 people in Stadium Harju³ in Jyväskylä. In the following year, JJK won the First Division and thus got promoted to the

¹ JYP is the acronym of ‘Jyväskylän palloilijat’. Family refers to the friendship between different sport communities.

² Ry equals to ‘rekisteröity yhdistys’ (Sanakirja 2009), which means ‘registered association’, a non-profit company form in Finland.

³ Stadium Harju is JJK’s home ground.

Veikkausliiga for the first time in its history. The decisive game was played against PS Kemi, in the presence of 4700 spectators.

The new, more professional environment required a different company form and changes in the organisation, therefore in the beginning of 2009 JJK Keski-Suomi Oy¹ was founded (JJK 2009). JJK's budget reached lower-middle level compared with other teams of the league (J. Vesalainen, personal communication, July, 17, 2009). In spite of the stable economic background, the first year on the pitch was a rough one, but ended successfully, since JJK secured its place in Veikkausliiga after coming second-last in the table, and was thus obliged to play two extra games in a relegation play-off. The play-off terminated with a victory and JJK fulfilled its goals; it will start the next season in Veikkausliiga again.

1.2 Main Points of the Topic

The fact that this study has been carried out under Finnish circumstances in the field of semi-professional football makes it special, since hardly any previous work has investigated this area. Sport in Finland, in general, is not as commercialised and professionalised as in other parts of Western Europe or in the US. This is due to historical, *cultural* and socio-economical reasons that caused the prevalence of the public and volunteer sector in the country. Additionally, the number one sport is not football, as being the case in most European countries, but ice-hockey, of which the highest division is the only fully professional league in Finnish sport. JJK Jyväskylä football team played in the First Division category in Finland when the data collection of this study was carried out, which is actually the second highest level below the Veikkausliiga. This level is considered semi-professional, which means that there are some professional players who live from playing football, there are some who earn some money but work or go to school besides football, and there are some players who are not rewarded at all.

¹ Oy stands for 'osakeyhtiö' (Sanakirja 2009), which can be translated as 'limited company'. This type of company aims at gaining financial profits.

As mentioned in the previous section, the performance of JJK Jyväskylä football team has been considerable currently and it has apparently become the number one football club in the Central Finland region, which also implies that it is worth dealing with the topic. Fans and sponsors have become more involved with the team, and there appears to be a football 'boom' going on in the city. The club must adapt to the changing environment, such as a growing number of game visitors, increasing interest in sponsorship and more complicated operational procedures of the football club. Furthermore, the writer of this work has lived in Finland and has played for JJK for more than two years, which has notably eased the implementation of the research, both the data collection and the analysis.

The above mentioned facts underpin that it is reasonable to explore the interrelationships between the team's performance, the attendance at the games and the marketing activities, and also to explore the motives of fans to attend games and their nature of satisfaction and identification. So far, there has been little discussion about this topic and even less in the circumstances treated in the previous paragraph, which indicates that there is a need to fill in this gap.

When the research proposition is converted to questions, it forms the following:

1. How on-field performance of JJK (as measured by the yearly final stand in the division in which JJK plays) is related to attendance?
2. How on-field performance of JJK (as measured by the yearly final stand in the division in which JJK plays) is related to the marketing opportunities (as measured by the benefits obtained from sponsors) of the club?
3. What are the factors that determine fan satisfaction? (*e.g. great performance, hospitality, good atmosphere etc.*)
4. What is the level of fan satisfaction?

5. What are the factors that determine fan identification? (*e.g. success of the team, players, origin of the fans etc.*)
6. What is the level of fan identification and what is its relationship to that of satisfaction?
7. What characterises the sponsor awareness and sponsor orientation of JJK fans?
8. How JJK fan satisfaction and fan identification levels are related to their awareness of sponsors?
9. How JJK fan satisfaction and fan identification levels are related to the intention to attend future games?

2 A Review of the Related Marketing and Sponsorship Literature

To be able to achieve the goals ascertained for the study, first, those marketing concepts, which are of crucial importance in regard to the topic, such as event marketing and merchandising, are looked at in general. Second, the environment of sponsorship deals in Finland and the factors that determine sponsorship commitment and fan satisfaction are also studied. Third, the possibilities of building and reinforcing brands are synthesised. Finally, the last part of the literature review includes the factors that could determine the correlation among the on-field performance of the team, number of fans and marketing activity are analysed.

2.1 Principles of Marketing Concepts

2.1.1 Event Marketing

Football games are meeting points, where media, sponsors and fans gather.

Traditionally, event marketing refers to the actual marketing of an event, by event organizers. For sport events, this type of event marketing involves marketing to: (1) athletes to secure their participation in the event, (2) the media to cover the event, (3) the general public to attend the event and/ or follow the event via print and electronic media, (4) corporations to sponsor and support the event, (5) government officials to provide public support, and (6) private vendors to provide efficient and reasonable services.

(Graham, Neirotti & Goldblatt 2001, 151)

In the case of the present paper, the triangle of fans, corporate sponsors and the media are the most relevant factors related to the marketing activity of Football Club JJK Jyväskylä.

Without these three participants we cannot interpret the spectator-sport product. However, focus will mainly be placed on fans and sponsors, because of the limits of content.

Increasing attendance can be achieved by using certain marketing tools. When promoting a game, existing sponsors can contribute to marketing with promotion at their offices, mailing list, or, in case of cars offered by the sponsors, their exterior can act as a marketing communication tool. Selling tickets in packages to families and groups with amenities such as concession vouchers, and/or merchandising can be efficient. These promotional tools could be implemented jointly with sponsors, thus marketed together and share the costs (Graham et al 2001, 155). Ticket sales can also be increased with the contribution of the players, either before or after the event, or by giving themes to the event with which non-sport fans might be attracted to the stadium (157). Offering tickets via Internet and targeting fans through mailing lists has also proved to be effective recently. Games and give-aways could be organised before and after the game or at half-time (158), as it could also be seen in Stadium Harju.

Knowing the audience, their customs, the cultural background – which differ somewhat from the case of other countries as compared to Finland - is also of crucial relevance. As was mentioned earlier, the researcher of this study has lived and played football in Finland for more than 2 years, which can serve as a source of added value to this paper. Based on this knowledge, different kinds of contests can be organised for the fans in cooperation with sponsors. For instance, if participants can sign up for the event beforehand via Internet and it is properly promoted, people will want to be involved and the game again can attract people who are not ‘real’ football fans. Give-aways, for example team schedules printed on the items, such as lunch sacks, sport cups et cetera are efficient tools. (158) Being made up of numerous games, the football season might be exploited in a way that the different give-away promotions are linked, so as to encourage people to future games. Another good example of this kind of marketing tool is making give-aways on other types of events, taking into consideration the characteristics of the city of Jyväskylä; university happenings or ice-hockey games are proper choices for bundling different products.

Additionally, when advertising a football game, the role of Internet nowadays is critical.

The Website's URL needs to be incorporated into all online and offline marketing including voice mail, press releases, banners, video scoreboards, and advertisements. It is also important to keep the site to less than four levels deep. This prevents users from becoming lost in the site. (Graham et al 2001, 162-163)

Sport clubs and organisations can reach the consumers via Internet, can provide highlights or whole games to watch and can help to maintain relations and also provide networking opportunities.

The relationship with the local and national media is also a relevant factor in promoting the team's games and the club itself. The personal relationships are invaluable (166); luckily JJK has employees who have been in the Finnish football environment for many years, and thus there has been enough time to build those connections. The cooperation with the local ice-hockey team, JYP, should be taken into consideration too, since they are in possession of more marketing expertise due to ice-hockey being a more professional sport in Finland than football.

2.1.2 Merchandising

Although JJK is a relatively small club, the role of merchandising activity has been growing in accordance with the team's performance. A definition of merchandise in the context of sport includes T-shirts, souvenirs mugs, hats, jewellery etc. Generally, T-shirts are the most popular, and not because it is functional, but it makes the association of the fan's support unambiguous during a game. Usually the bigger sizes are the most preferred, so it is important to have enough of them in the venues. The most crowded periods, when fans are purchasing merchandise, are the arrival and departure (199). Planning the licensing process is of key importance. Marketers need to decide whether to elaborate it in-house or

outsource it to an external sponsor (Graham et al 2001, 200). It looks probable that JJK cannot afford to hire an external company¹ (I. Hyppönen, personal communication, August, 13, 2008), therefore, plans and implementation need to be carried out by the club itself. However, employing an expert is advisable because they are experienced in the market and know-how to sell a product.

Additionally, local vendors should be involved to put the products in the shop window and also sponsors could help to assist in the marketing of the merchandising. However, there are always threats that could have an effect on merchandise sales, such as the bad reputation of players or scandals (Graham et al 2001, 201). Being a local club, JJK could have the opportunity to enter into a favourable deal with the local shops, since normally the club is required to pay a fee to get their products displayed in certain shops. In addition, as mentioned previously, the cooperation with the local ice-hockey club, JYP, would be beneficial, too. JYP even have a small merchandising shop in the hockey stadium, such that JJK products might be sold there. In return for their cooperation, JYP products could be on display during JJK football games, as part of a reciprocal arrangement. Test-marketing of the products is of key relevance to set pricing, adjust selling techniques and to gather information for future product development (203). Training the sales staff is also relevant. However, at JJK games volunteers mainly work in such positions that they are obviously not professionals. This phenomenon is certainly no surprise, because the role of volunteerism has been always strong in the Finnish and Scandinavian sport culture (Itkonen et al. 2009).

Another possibility to realize profits is the offer to rent booths during smaller events (Graham et al 2001, 204) – like a JJK game – to trade fairs or health expositions. Companies can reach their target audience through this activity. Being a medium sized city in Finland, Jyväskylä does not have many events during a weekend. A football or ice-hockey game is usually one of the most important happenings of the week. Plenty of people

¹ From 2009 the situation has changed. Licensing has been outsourced to Sporttia, a sport department store chain. In this way JJK has no costs, but receives only 10% commission (Vesalainen 2009) after the sold products.

attend sport events, since most people are affiliated with sport in the country, consequently local companies could presumably be convinced that sponsorship is not the only opportunity for them to raise awareness and to meet their prospective clients, but the above mentioned tool as well.

2.2 Sponsorship

2.2.1 Finnish Environment

The nature of sponsorship deals is one of the key concepts of my topic. Few attempts have been made to gather data on sponsorship in semi-professional football (Clark 1992), and even fewer in Finland. However, Lipponen (1995) tried to form a theoretical framework for sport sponsorships under Finnish conditions. According to his argument, putting emphasis on the necessity of the marketing concept of sport organisations is a relevant factor (Lipponen 1995). This statement seems reasonable given that it could serve, in general, as a base for the successful operation of a club or sport organisation. So far it has been lacking and a good example for this is the fact that no systematic process of measuring the outcome of sponsorships exists in Finland. According to research from the 1990s, 50 percent of the investigated teams *somehow* measure the success of sponsorship (Clark, 1992). A recent study (Itkonen et al. 2009) has found however, that “less than (sic) third of the companies evaluated whether the terms of the agreement were actually realized”.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the Finnish football environment requires special attention when dealing with sponsorship deals. For instance, issues such as the geographic location of the city, where the club belongs to, and the fact the in Finland football is considered the ‘runner-up’ behind the number one sport, ice-hockey (Lipponen 1995), could act as examples. Another important phenomenon taken into account is the cooperation of volunteers and professional managers (Verhoeven et al 1999). Since the voluntary sector is fundamentally relevant in Finnish sport life, this issue cannot be avoided. JJK is an adequate example for this. There were only three full-time workers at the club in 2008 that had to work in collaboration with volunteers. Managing director, marketing manager, and one more person who partly worked for JJK’s management and

partly managed the JJK youth academy, were these positions and in addition to that interns were employed from time to time. Besides, approximately 15-20 volunteers worked on match-days.

The role of the marketing concept has already been mentioned. Recording a database of the sponsors can be related to this topic, as well as the dilemma of sponsorship and philanthropy (Lipponen 1995). It is sensible to find out to what extent the companies enter into the business aiming at gaining financial profit and, on the other hand, just supporting the local team. Likewise, the investigation of the offer that the team can give to its sponsors is required. Naturally, the services that could be offered were limited in the case of JJK, since the games were not broadcast on national television; this fact makes the job of the marketers more challenging. Moreover, providing the opportunity of multi-partner cooperation, which can bring businesses together, is an excellent tool for networking, especially in the local level, since local sponsors are the relevant ones in semi-professional football (Clark 1992). Then again, the cultural characteristics of Finland should be taken in account and conducting market research is also of vital importance.

2.2.2 Sponsorship Commitment

The investigation of sponsorship commitment is a hot topic nowadays. In spite of this, scant research has been made to explore this area. It is rational to try to find the answer to the question: why are the majority of the sponsorship commitments short-term with a low proportion of renewal? (Chadwick & Thwaites 2006). Contrary to former studies, the authors put emphasis both on the sponsor's and the club's behaviour, seeing as these two affect the success of a sponsorship deal. Neither the club's nor the sponsor's point of view can be disregarded. Since JJK has numerous sponsor agreements and the money gained this way is the most important financial resources of the organisation with adding up to 81% of the budget in 2008 (Vesalainen 2009), therefore understanding the motives is of great importance. With regard to this topic, this study has mostly implications to the club's behaviour, trying to involve the role of the fans in the context.

The significance of three important determinants was found as relevant by Chadwick and Thwaites (2006), when investigating the commitment of the parties: shared values, perceived benefits and opportunistic behaviour. Additionally, relevant dissimilarities were concluded between short-term and long-term commitment of the parties. The length of the commitment is likely to be dependent on the league the team plays in due to the discrepant media exposure and attendance, and in the case of JJK this is a fairly uncertain factor given that in four years time the team has played in three different levels.

Corporate or cultural shared values look probable in playing an important role at the club that is investigated, given that a local club is the subject of the study. For instance, trust leads to stronger commitment and thus the sponsor will be more likely to renew the deal (Farrelly & Quester 2003). Sponsor benefits were limited by the lack of media presence, owing to the fact that JJK competed in the First Division at the time of the data collection and therefore games were not televised.¹ This fact also strengthens the relevance of shared values since the majority of the sponsors were local companies. In addition to this, it was found that “parties to a sponsorship are more likely to remain loyal to a dyad partner during a period where there is congruence between their goals and procedures.” (Chadwick & Thwaites 2006, 171) Again, the diverse professional, cultural and financial set-up of this semi-professional club should be taken account of when dealing with this issue.

The authors are probably right when they say that if the perception of the relationship between club and sponsors suggest mutual benefits, it contributes to the reinforcement of the commitment. Perceived benefits cannot just be measured in money, but indirectly through such things as networking benefits, which is an important factor to be taken into account. On the other hand, opportunistic behaviour of one of the parties causes harm to the cooperation, which is likely to occur. In this case, economic calculations and considerations characterise the deal.

¹ In 2009, during JJK’s first year in the highest league, two of its games were broadcast. The composition of the sponsors has not changed considerably, i.e. the majority of the sponsors are local ones.

2.2.3 Fan Satisfaction Related to Fans' Attitude towards Sponsors

Past research has noted (Shaw & McDonald 2006) that although a fans' reaction to sponsors' activities depends on various factors, there is an existing connection between the levels of fan satisfaction and their attitudes towards sponsors. This is of great importance because the effectiveness of the sponsorship deal can be influenced through fan satisfaction. However, this discovered relationship is weak, but it is due to the fact that the potential of sponsorship depends on several variables, for instance, the duration of the sponsorship. "Improved outcomes for sponsors are yet another strong justification for efforts to manage and improve the satisfaction of season-ticket holders." (Shaw & McDonald 2006, 319) Then again, market research is necessary in order to be able to measure outcomes.

2.3 Brand Extension

The study on FC Vitesse Dutch football club by van Uden (2005) gives implications to club leaders from managerial and organisational perspectives. The aim of the leadership of the club was to develop an image to the name Vitesse, not only on the football field but through expanding its activity to other spheres of the business life. This includes merchandising, Kids Club, Business Club, relationship with players and fans and, naturally, with the media. It is a kind of attitude that has changed from selling football to offering entertainment spectacles and products. Present work also intends to give implications to the management of JJK for the future besides examining the marketing activity. However, it must be taken into account that Vitesse is a much bigger and more professional football club than JJK. Presumably, this idea can serve several goals from the business point of view. Not only can it create further possibilities to gain income from different sources, but it decreases the sensibility of the revenues to the on-field performance of the team. With the establishment of the 'multi-entertainment football company' (van Uden 2005), the club is able to maintain a relatively stable or increasing clientele that will not quit in case of poor athlete performance. In the case of those clubs relying only on the on-field performance, the management can hardly direct the operation of the business due to reasons that are beyond their control.

Giving ideas on similar concepts to JJK, which was a non-profit company in 2008, might seem like an exaggeration. In actual fact it will turn out during the research whether these concepts are applicable to some extent or not. In any case, certain limitations were required in view of the fact that the aim of the operation of JJK was not in gaining profits as is the case to Vitesse. Nevertheless, in 2009 JJK has been turned into an 'Oy', a profit-oriented company form. Thus, from the extension of the business activities JJK could benefit invaluablely. The profit gained can be used for acquiring more talented players and retaining existing ones, developing the already existing facilities and/or constructing new facilities.

As opposed to the case of Vitesse, launching a new brand might be more useful than a simple brand extension in the case of small-size football clubs (Guenzi & Nocco 2006). The authors of this paper attract the attention to the increasing relevance of merchandising in the life of football clubs as an additional resource. It seems reasonable, with the introduction of a second brand, that merchandising somehow can be related to the club but can be associated with other features, such as territory. This may not only reach highly involved fans, but any negative associations towards the team brand as well as the lack of sporting success of the team might be eliminated. This concept is also stated in the case study of Vitesse. The territory appears to be a key element when talking about the team of Jyväskylä, since it is the most popular and successful team in the region. "Since many people feel a deep sense of love and belonging to this territory, these associations drive purchase behaviour. For those influenced by this type of association, Salento 12 represents a way to demonstrate proudly their origins and a genuine link with the territory." (Guenzi & Nocco 2006, 256) This quotation could be an analogue to JJK too, due to the traditions of the territory, its role in the education of Finland and additionally, the 'original' Finnish language spoken there. According to Stubb (2008), every country and territory should be branded and he argues that "branding is a modern take on identity". Thus, the association of a potential new brand both with the team and the territory turns out to be significant. As demonstrated in the case of Vitesse, the poor sporting performance might be overcome with the extension of the brand, though at U.C. Lecce it happens more than that, a new brand is launched. These ideas might be applicable to JJK as well.

Throughout the majority of former literature concerning brand management, works have been mainly dealt with the strategies and case studies of top football clubs like Manchester United, Real Madrid or Juventus (Guenzi & Nocco, 2006). These are so-called ‘winning teams.’ In contrast, in the case of Vitesse or Lecce, building up a brand is much more difficult, considering that these are much smaller clubs with less success on the field and less financial resources off the field. That is the reason why these two sources are so invaluable, because they might be applied to JJK, which is an even smaller club.

2.4 On-field performance – Attendance – Marketing

Among the main questions addressed in this paper are the interrelationships between the on-field performance of a football team, attendance and the marketing opportunities deriving from them. Earlier studies pointed out that the positive outcome of the game results in satisfaction and triggers further fan attendance, whereas in cases of loss, fans are dissatisfied and attendance is likely to decline (Greestain & Marcum 1981 as cited in Matsuoka, Chelladurai & Harada 2003, 246; Hansen & Gauthier 1989). Similarly, a positive correlation is expected during the course of this research.

In addition to the above statement, other research concluded that although on-field performance is an important part of the club member satisfaction, it is only one factor that is influential and the outcome of the investigation was conflicting (Van Leeuwen, Quick & Daniel 2001). Furthermore, the positive or negative emotion arising in fans depends on the performance of the team. However, the perceived entertainment value is also affected by the previous expectations and goal relevance of the supporters. Satisfaction forecasts optimism about the team’s outlook for the following games (Madrigal 2003).

Further research suggested that the probability of attending future games is weighed upon four factors that express fan satisfaction, namely: the excellence of the contest, performance of the favoured team, the fulfilment of the final result, and also depends on the team identification (Matsuoka et al 2003) that could be considered as ‘long-term fan satisfaction’. The importance of fan satisfaction lies in the fact that if the consumer is

satisfied, he/she is more likely to repurchase the product, i.e. he/she will probably come to future games. Differentiation should be made between transaction-specific and cumulative satisfaction. The first means the perceived values right after the event visited, and the latter is “an overall evaluation on the total purchase and the consumption experience with a good or service over time” (Anderson et al 1994). In other words, cumulative satisfaction is a result of several purchases, and is a long-term determinant such as team identification, whereas transaction-specific satisfaction refers to one single purchase.

Satisfaction is usually handled as a short-term factor, but fan loyalty or team identification is a long-term factor that is based on various experiences related to geographical location, tradition, reputation and so on (Gladden & Milne 1999). The examination of the interrelation between these factors pointed out that creating identification could diminish the sensitivity of fans to the result of the games (Sutton et al 1997). Additionally, identification is a more significant factor influencing fan behaviour to attend future events (Matsuoka et al 2003).

More recent investigation has indicated that there is a positive correlation between the size of attendance and the results of the team, but it is not as strong as often suggested. In some cases an unusual trend appeared to be true; namely the top and bottom teams could count on an increase in attendance and paid membership, whereas those in the middle were fairly fluctuating. It might be the relevance of the salience of the teams’ performances that caused this turn-out (Shaw & McDonald 2006).

3 Methodological Choices

3.1 Quantitative Methods

3.1.1 Secondary Sources

The use of existing statistics and resources were inevitable for the fruitful accomplishment of this research. First of all, it was necessary to obtain the results and rankings of the team from recent years. Although the final standings of certain championships are easily accessible via Internet, present research required detailed statistics that can be collected from the club or from the football federation. Second, written sources about the history of the club and its role in the Central Finland territory, in sociological terms, were essential when coming to the issue of the evaluation of fan satisfaction and the approach towards sponsors. This data appeared to be invaluable because patterns in the behaviour of fans or sponsors can be understood only if one has background knowledge about the relationship between the local communities and the club.

Investigating this area was hindered to some extent by language barrier, given that the majority of the resources were only available in Finnish. Therefore, the help of native speakers turned out to be a necessity.

3.1.2 Survey

The appropriate method that helps to gather empirical data about the opinion, beliefs and attitudes of the fans is the questionnaire. "Surveys can use a random sampling technique to recruit participants, relatively small sample sizes can be used to generate findings." (Mathers, Fox, Hunn 2006, p.7) Since this was the most relevant resource that helped to implement this study successfully, the creation of the questionnaire required special care. However, its drawbacks must be taken into account as well: "Surveys can tell us how many people behave in a certain way . . . but they may be limited in the information they can provide as to why this is so." (Mathers, Fox, Hunn 2006, p.7)" The data collection was likely to be the easiest when JJK played at their home facilities and numerous crowds come

together. With the help of some volunteers many responses could have been obtained and thus the rate of responses would have been higher than those sent via email. However, as a complementary option, questionnaires posted by email such as ones available at the website of the club seemed also as reasonable solutions. Nevertheless, sampling must be carried out in a way that both ‘average’ fans and fans who are sponsors at the same time will be asked as well. Eventually, a decision was made to use an on-line survey¹, which was available from the website of both JJK and the local newspaper, in its Finnish name Keski-suomalainen², in October 2008.

Questions aimed at obtaining information about fan satisfaction and fan identification, fans’ intention to attend future games, as well as their attitude towards sponsors. The background and the clarification of these terms are believed to be vital, and therefore, are integrated into this study. Obviously, the questions were put in a way that all respondents would easily be able to answer them given that the language of the questionnaire is English.

3.2 Qualitative Methods

3.2.1 Interviews

Interviews³ with the club leaders were essential to receive general information about the operation of the club, particularly about marketing activities. There were only three full-time workers employed by JJK football club when the data collection was carried out and even if they have their own scope of activities, it was at times problematic to separate the nature of their tasks. As previously mentioned, managing director, marketing manager, and a third person who partly worked for JJK’s management and partly managed the JJK youth academy, were these positions. It seemed reasonable to ask the participation of the employees that filled in the first two positions specified above.

¹ See Appendix 1.

² From here onwards it is referred to on its abbreviation as ‘KSML’.

³ See Appendix 2.

To compose the structure of the interviews thoroughly required special attention and time. Therefore, a reasonable but strict schedule needed to be established. The use of semi-structured interviews appeared to be applicable in all cases since the topic to focus on was fairly clear.

3.2.2 Ethnography

Due to the fact that the writer of this paper is the player of the researched club, it is felt relevant to highlight the influence of this factor on this study. Nearly every aspect of the research, such as planning, data collection via interviews and questionnaires, discussion and conclusion, were affected as well as facilitated by that fact mentioned. According to Atkinson (2007): “Ethnographic (or field) research provides a detailed description of a different culture, or sub-culture, from the view of an insider, allowing a greater understanding of that culture through its core method, observation.” In this case the culture mentioned refers to JJK and its environment. This explanation implies that the researcher being an insider could have better opportunity to interpret the collected data on the Club and its fans, due to understanding the relevance of the knowledge available and produced, and how this can be presented as subject matter. Observation was carried out on a daily basis, during football practices, meetings and interviews with the leaders of the club and naturally, during games.

3.3 Measures

The survey utilised in this study was planned thoroughly in order to get appropriate data and be able to achieve the goals set beforehand. Accordingly, it was divided in various sections based on the necessities of the information that needed to be acquired. The different divisions were formed as follows:

First, some basic questions obtained socio-demographic data from the respondents, including age, gender, highest education, place of residence, and nationality. In addition to these, the number of games seen in the 2008 season, the status related to JJK (fan, sponsor

or both), the way of attending games (alone, friends, family) and the possible possession of a season ticket were set to find out the information indicated above.

Fan satisfaction with the environment

In the context of this paper, customer or fan satisfaction was understood as “a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment” (Oliver 1997, as cited in Van Leeuwen, Quick and Daniel 2002, p. 100). The spectator sport service consists of core product and product extensions (Bühler & Nufer 2009). Interpreting this idea to the present study, two subsections of fan satisfaction; satisfaction with the environment and game satisfaction were created. The separation of the different dimensions of satisfaction appears to be relevant when analysing the data and drawing conclusions. Along the first part, the respondents’ perception of the environment in the stadium was found out using the following questions: ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the situation of the stadium?’; ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of the stadium?’ (Stands, toilet, state of the facility, etc.); ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the parking opportunities nearby the stadium?’; ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the hospitality in the stadium?’; ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the atmosphere?’ The responses were given on a 10-point differential scale.

Fan satisfaction with the game

A subset of 3 items was used based on Matsuoka et al. (2003) to measure JJK fan satisfaction with the games. Obviously, the questions needed to be modified to fit the present research. Again, a 10-point differential scale was utilised to measure fan opinion on the following points: ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of the games of JJK?’; ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the results of JJK?’; ‘To what extent are you satisfied with the performance of JJK?’ Matsuoka et al. (2003) argue that two types of satisfaction can be differentiated when handling the issue of fans. First, cumulative satisfaction can be defined as a function of various realised game visits, whereas transaction-specific satisfaction is associated with a single visit. The present paper focuses

on the aggregated fan experience – i.e., cumulative satisfaction. Aggregated refers to the games played by JJK in the 2008 season in the Finnish First Division.

In addition, after determining the level of factors that ascertain fan satisfaction, the order of importance of these factors were found out by inquiring ‘To which factor do you give priority from the previous ones when deciding on coming to the games?’. Besides, an open question: ‘What else would you consider as relevant that gives you satisfaction during a JJK game?’ made it possible for the respondents to express their opinion.

Fan identification towards the team

Along the course of this research, team identification was understood as “the degree to which an individual feels psychologically linked to a team.” (Greenwood, Kanters & Casper 2006) Having the definition is usually the first step to approach a problem. It was followed by the careful selection of the questions. This section of the questionnaire was divided into three smaller subsections: attitudinal identification, behavioural identification and fan development. The design of the first two parts of this subsection of the questionnaire was also based on Matsuoka et al. (2003). Again, the questions were adopted according to the goals of present research and a 10-point scale was employed to obtain information from the respondents: ‘How important to you is it that JJK wins?’, ‘How important is being a fan of JJK to you?’, ‘How strongly do your friends see you as a JJK fan?’, ‘How strongly do you see yourself as a JJK fan?’ These questions demonstrated above belong to the attitudinal identification. The following items pertain to the behavioural identification subsection: ‘During the season, how often do you follow JJK via newspaper?’, ‘During the season, how often do you follow JJK via Internet?’, ‘How much do you dislike JJK’s greatest rivals?’

Subsequently, seven items, formed on the basis of Fink et al. (2002 as cited in Greenwood et al. 2006), measured the antecedents of fan development. The respondents had to mark the reason for becoming a JJK fan choosing from the following options: parents and/or family members; coaches and/or players; the success of the team; friends; born/live in the city or region; the good atmosphere; other. Crucially, the original structure had to be

modified in order to get a valid measurement tool for the Finnish environment. Therefore ‘dance team’ and ‘party/tailgating’ was removed and ‘atmosphere’ was added to the initial structure. There is no dance team at JJK games and tailgating is not typical for Finnish people. The term ‘atmosphere’ appears to somehow cover the two excluded points and seems to be relevant when handling the different Finnish cultural setting.

Probability of attending future games

Matsuoka, Chelladurai & Harada (2003) investigated the interaction effects between satisfaction, identification and the intention to attend future games. This point was adapted to the present study by asking: ‘How likely is it that you will attend JJK games for the remainder of the season?’ Again, a 10-point differential scale measured the answers. Moreover, two additional questions were attached to this subsection of the questionnaire: ‘Where do you predict that JJK will finish in the league standings?’ and ‘Are you considering buying a season ticket for the next season?’

Fan satisfaction related to sponsor awareness

The present section was created with an attempt to find out the sponsor awareness of JJK fans by applying the following question: ‘Do you remember any of the sponsors from the announcer/stadium/player’s kit?’ Apart from this, information of fans’ attitude towards merchandising products was to be ascertained: ‘Do you know if it is possible to buy JJK products in Jyvaskyla?’; ‘Do you have any products related to JJK?’ and finally; ‘Would you buy more if there was a wider range on offer?’

Sponsor orientation

Obtaining data from fans’ sponsor orientation was accomplished by adapting a table from Shaw & McDonald (2006), which were constructed to conduct a research on season-ticket holder satisfaction and sponsor-related behaviour. Respondents were asked to express agreement or disagreement with the following statements: ‘I pay little attention to sponsors’; ‘I know little about sponsors but I would like to know/have more information about sponsors’ products’; ‘If I think all the brands are the same, I try to use the sponsor’s product.’ These first three elements were based on Shaw’s & McDonald’s work, whereas

the coming two were added by the researcher, taking into consideration the specificities of the present study, such as JJK players' jersey full of advertisements that presumably baffle spectators and commercial messages by means of loudspeakers: First, 'The high number of sponsors in the stadium and on the players' kit confuses me.' and second, 'The announcements via loudspeakers during the game are efficient.'

3.4 Data Collection

Along the first part of this research, data was collected from secondary sources, such as websites of Football Club JJK, the Finnish First Division and the Finnish Premier League, in its official name the Veikkausliiga. Furthermore, data was also obtained from the archives of JJK and from interviews conducted with JJK's General Manager, Joni Vesalainen, and via informal conversations with Ilkka Hyppönen, Marketing Manager. Three semi-structured interviews, two in 2008 and one in 2009 were carried out with Joni Vesalainen. The acquired data from these interviews and from the secondary sources made it possible to perform analysis on the relationship between on-field performance of a team, number of attendees at games and marketing opportunities of the club. Again, it is believed essential to mention that the researcher is part of the investigated organisation, which enabled meetings, interviews, observations and so on, which would not have been possible or would have been more limited for a non-member.

Subsequently, a sport fan questionnaire was developed and a convenience sampling technique was employed, which can be defined in the following way:

Utilises readily available subjects and sampling often used in small scale localised research projects. The sample may not be representative of the population as a whole and the result may not be generalizable. (Hancock 2002)

To achieve potential respondents, a combination of activities was used. First, during one of JJK's home games, flyers with information on the on-line questionnaire were distributed and this was also reinforced via loudspeakers before the game and at half-time. Second,

articles were featured on the website of JJK and that of KSML local newspaper. KSML is the most relevant daily paper of Central Finland and a separate section is dedicated to the football club on its website with news, videos and player profiles etcetera. The articles informed about present research that JJK's goalkeeper is conducting and asked the readers/fans to visit the address presented there and fill out that on-line questionnaire.

However, a problem was to be faced at this point knowing that in the case of on-line news, one article does not stay visible long due to the arrival of other news. This was overcome by publishing that article more than once so that it was read by more readers. Furthermore, the researcher used the 'power of word-of-mouth' in order to get more respondents. Taking into account the environment of the study, which is a small town that likes sport and the researcher being a student of the sport faculty of the local university, word-of-mouth has proved to be an efficient way of spreading information for the ongoing study. Furthermore, the fact that the researcher is a player of the club simplified all procedures given he could benefit from being in touch with many people in Jyväskylä.

In a few days 208 responses were obtained, out of which 188 were valid. However, the representativeness of the sample is complicated to assure for various reasons. Determining the population of JJK fans seems to be an immense task given that it is not known exactly how many JJK fans there are and in addition, the term fan must be clarified first. The difference between spectators and fans are as follows:

whereas a spectator of sport will observe a spectacle and forget it quickly, the fan continues his interest until the intensity of feeling toward the team becomes so great that parts of every day are devoted to either his team or in some instances, to the broad realm of sport itself. (Pooley 1978, p. 14)

In the context of this paper, the term 'fan' will be used according to the interpretation above. Without knowing the exact population of JJK fans, carrying out the sampling and issues of reliability and validity also become problematic. This should be taken in account when talking about the limitations of this study. However, since JJK did not possess a

database on the fans in 2008, the best possible way was followed to realise this investigation, which is the previously mentioned random sampling technique.

Concerning the question of validity, present work cannot assure all four steps of validity (Research Methods Knowledge Base 2010). After examining each validity type, it can be concluded that the first three steps are likely to be confirmed: there is a relationship between cause and effect; the relationships are casual; and the operationalisation of the ideas of cause and effect were successful, which proves the existence of conclusion validity, internal validity, and construct validity. However, external validity should be handled with care, because generalising of the proven effects might not be possible to carry out due to the method of sampling. In addition, the nature of this research, namely a case study investigating a football club that is in the process of development, requires that the generalisation of the results should be questioned.

The analysis of the acquired data was completed with the help of SPSS statistical program, with the utilisation of the following statistical methods: frequencies, descriptives, crosstabs, tables of frequencies, means, one-way ANOVA and correlations.

4 Results

4.1 On-field performance – Attendance – Marketing

The first set of analyses examined the changes in five categories: financial resources available; income from and number of sponsors; JJK's performance based on the final ranking of the given year; and average home attendance in Stadium Harju, during the course of the last 5 years. Table 1 presents the increase in the various scores unambiguously, in accordance with the better performance accomplished by the team.

Table 1. On-field performance, marketing, and attendance of JJK in numbers 2005-2009 (Vesalainen 2009, edited by Szerovay 2009)

| Year | Budget (Thousand €) | Number of sponsors | Income from sponsors (Thousand €) | Proportion of income in budget from sponsors | Ranking | League | Average home attendance per game |
|------|------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|---------|--------|---|
| 2009 | 985 | 300 | 810 | 82% | 13 | 1st | 3238 |
| 2008 | 580 | 200 | 470 | 81% | 1 | 2nd | 2093 |
| 2007 | 430 | 140 | 320 | 74% | 3 | 2nd | 1351 |
| 2006 | 164 | 90 | 125 | 76% | 1 | 3rd | 614 |
| 2005 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 7 | 3rd | 464 |

4.2 Online Survey

The majority of the respondents were male (85.6%) and the most represented age group was 20-29 years old (39%), followed by 30-39 (21%), 11-19 (17%), 40-49 (15%) and finally 50-63 (8%). The data of males and females were pooled together due to the fact that there are many more males among the respondents and this suggests that it is no use handling them separately. A greater number of the respondents have Finnish nationality (95.2%). Subsequently, Figure 1 demonstrates that more than half of the respondents possess a university degree or were attending university at the time of the research conducted. Jyväskylä is a city well-known for its university. In spring 2009 there were

almost 16 000 students registered at the University of Jyväskylä (University of Jyväskylä 2009), which accounts for 12.5% of the city's population (128 000 in 2009, Wikipedia). Around one-fourth of the participants who filled out the questionnaire attended upper secondary school. Moreover, less than 10% appeared to be in polytechnic and comprehensive school.

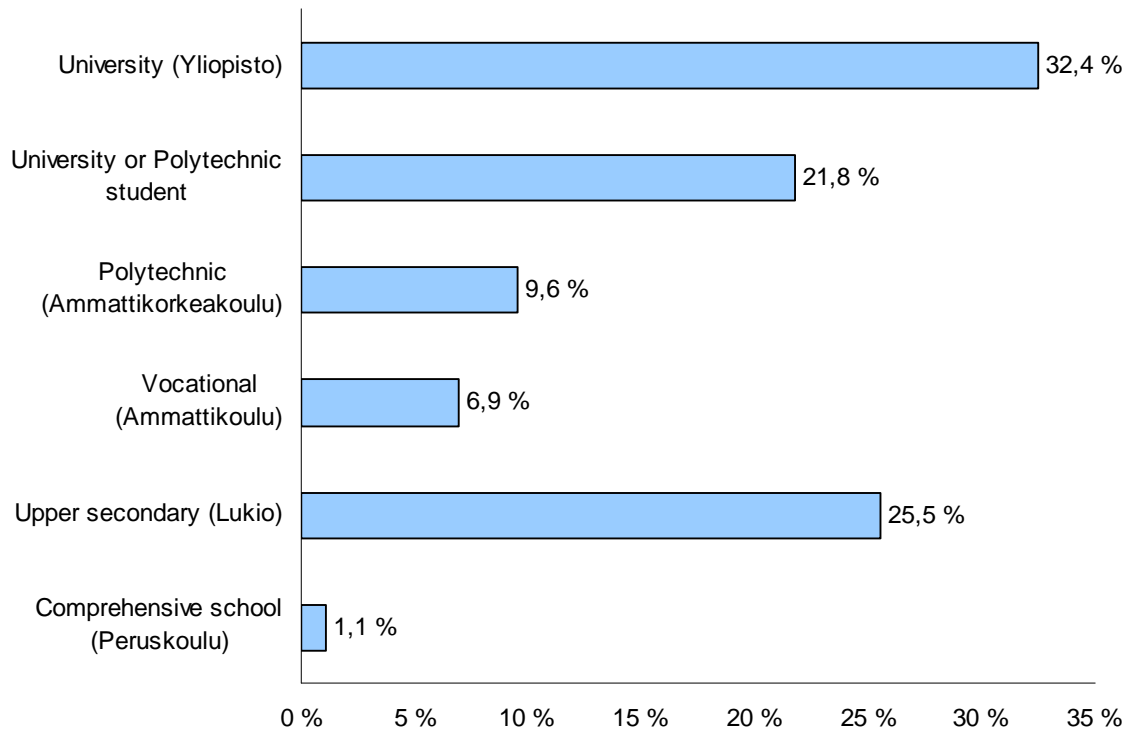


Figure 1. Respondents' highest education

The distribution of visited home games shows that roughly one-fourth of the respondents watched 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-13 matches. This measure has to be considered somewhat unreliable given that the survey was already open when JJK had still 2 home games left in the 2008 season. This fact implies that, in reality, fans watched more games than stated in Figure 2 below. In addition, imprecision is reflected by the 1.6% who allegedly did not watch any games during the 2008 season. In spite of this they consider themselves as JJK fans.

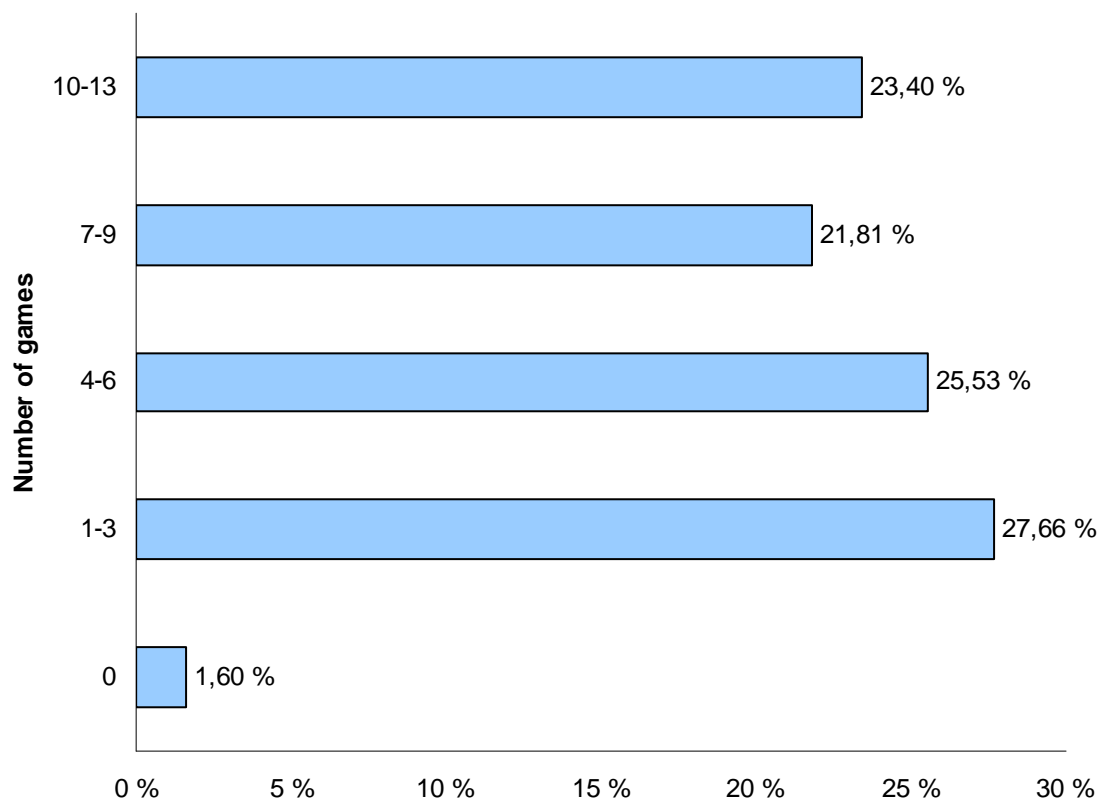


Figure 2. Number of JJK home games watched in 2008 season

Figure 3 presents the different ways of attending games by age groups. The most frequent form, which gives almost one-third of the total number of respondents, is fans aged between 20 and 29 visiting the games with friends. Similarly, among the age groups 11-19 and 30-39 the prevalent form of going to watch games turned out to be with friends, 14.9% and 15.4% of the total, respectively. On the other hand, in the case of the age groups 40-49 and 50-63, the distribution among 'alone', 'family' and 'friends' is fairly equal.

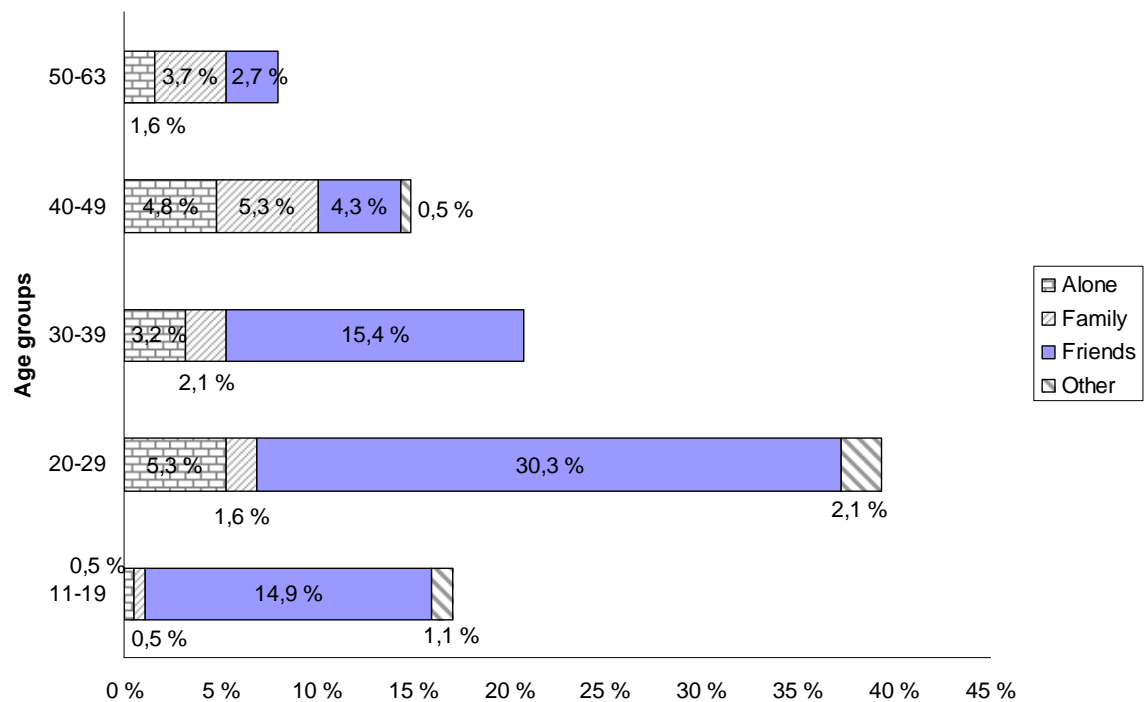


Figure 3. Form of visiting JJK home games by age groups

From Figure 4 below we can see the most typical reasons of becoming a JJK fan. At the related question more than one option could be selected. The vast majority of the respondents, over 66% marked the 'I was born/live in the city or region' option. All the other variables came far behind: 'Coaches and/or players' 33.5%, 'Success of the team' 28.2%, and 'Friends' 27.1%. Lastly, 'The good atmosphere' and 'Parents and/or family members' did not even reach 20%. Again, these results forecast relevant conclusions.

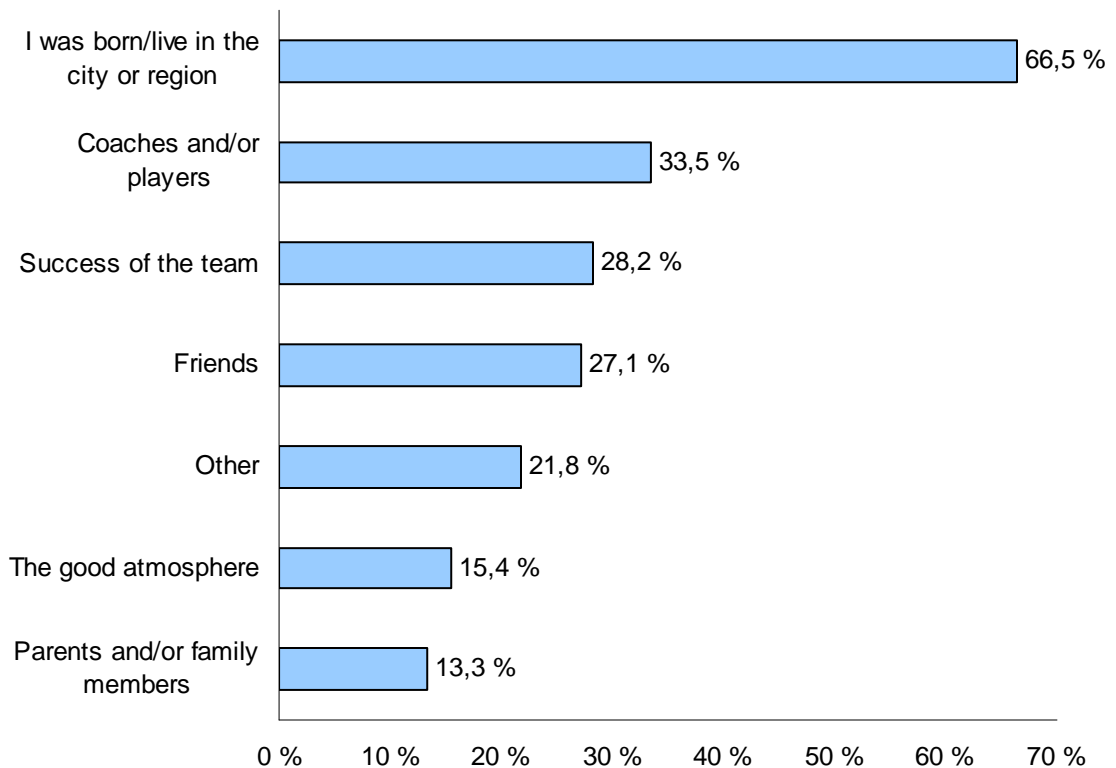


Figure 4. Reason for becoming a JJK fan

4.2.1 Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification

JJK fan satisfaction in 2008 on a 1 to 10 scale is presented in Figure 5. From the 8 different variables the values of 'Results of JJK' (8.12), 'Performance of JJK' (7.54), 'Quality of the games of JJK' (6.85), and 'Situation of the stadium' (6.76) were the highest. 'Atmosphere' and 'Hospitality in the stadium' followed by 5.84 and 5.72, respectively, and finally, 'Quality of the stadium' stood at 4.50 and 'Parking opportunities nearby the stadium' at 3.75. The obtained results from this graph can be considered as anticipated.

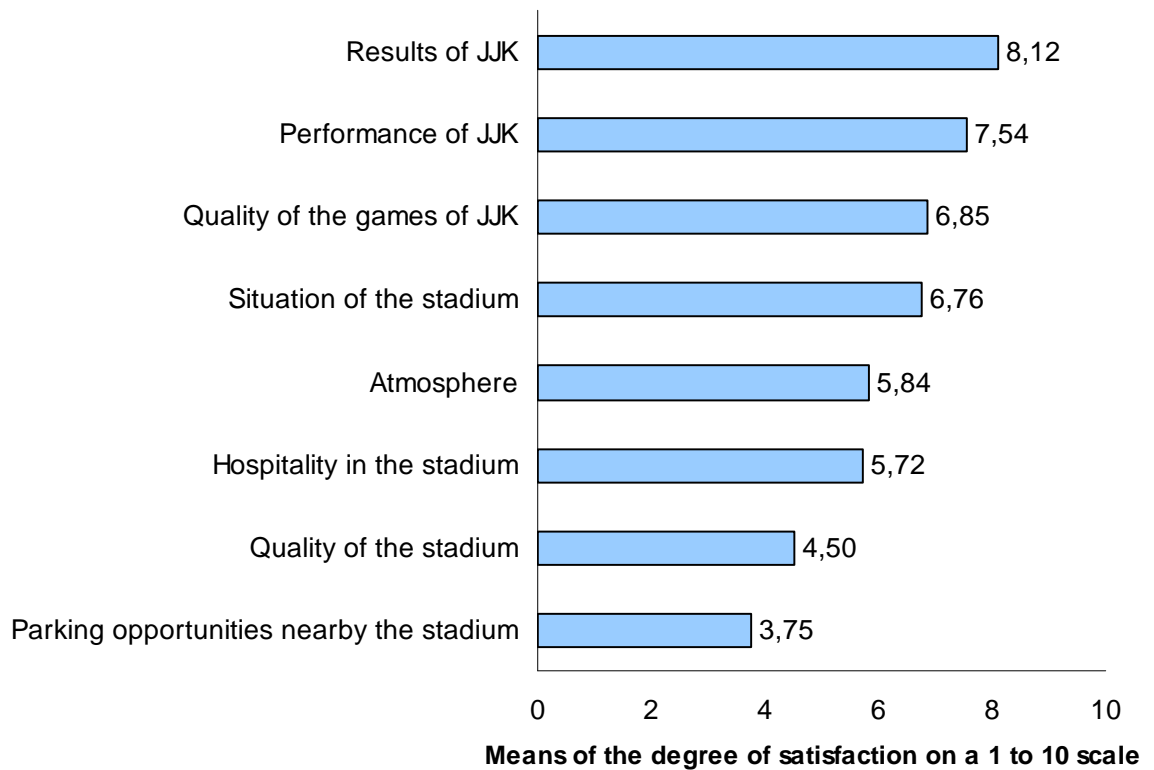


Figure 5. JJK fan satisfaction 2008

The results obtained from descriptive analysis presented in Table 2 give answer to the following question: To which factor of fan satisfaction do you give priority when deciding on coming to the games? The numbers suggest that the factors of ‘Fans’ satisfaction with the environment’, i.e. the sport product extensions, are less important compared to those of the core service i.e. ‘Fans’ satisfaction with the game’. It is clearly indicated that performance, quality of the game and results were placed much more frequently on any of the first three places than atmosphere, quality of the stadium, hospitality, situation of the stadium and parking opportunities.

Table 2. Priority list of factors that determine JJK fan satisfaction

| <i>Fan satisfaction with the game</i> | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Performance of JJK | 30,32 % | 23,40 % | 13,83 % |
| Quality of the games of JJK | 26,06 % | 18,62 % | 19,68 % |
| The results of JJK | 17,02 % | 19,15 % | 23,40 % |
| <i>Fan satisfaction with the environment</i> | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
| Atmosphere | 16,49 % | 6,91 % | 9,57 % |
| Quality of the stadium | 2,13 % | 4,26 % | 2,66 % |
| Hospitality in the stadium | 2,13 % | 2,66 % | 3,72 % |
| Situation of the stadium | 1,60 % | 2,13 % | 2,66 % |
| Parking opportunities nearby the stadium | 0,00 % | 0,53 % | 1,06 % |

In response to the question: ‘What *else* would you consider as relevant that gives you satisfaction during a JJK game?’ they mentioned that the practice of annoying advertisements during games should be discontinued, and stands should be closer to the field. Moreover, the necessity of half-time show and interviews, information on other games, a huge screen for replays, more organised support, beer sold in the stadium¹ and more away fans were emphasised. Besides these, the importance of home-grown players and lights in the stadium were revealed.

¹ Alcohol beverages are not sold in Stadium Harju.

Figure 6 illustrates the means of those variables that determine JJK fan identification on a 1 to 10 scale. The highest scores were produced by 'Following JJK via Internet during the season' (8.64), 'Following JJK via newspaper during the season' (8.24) and 'Importance of JJK winning' (8.14). These were followed by 'Degree of being a JJK fan' (6.82), 'Importance of being a JJK fan' (6.80). Finally, the scores of 'Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan' (5.99) and 'Degree of disliking JJK's greatest rivals' (4.76) are shown.

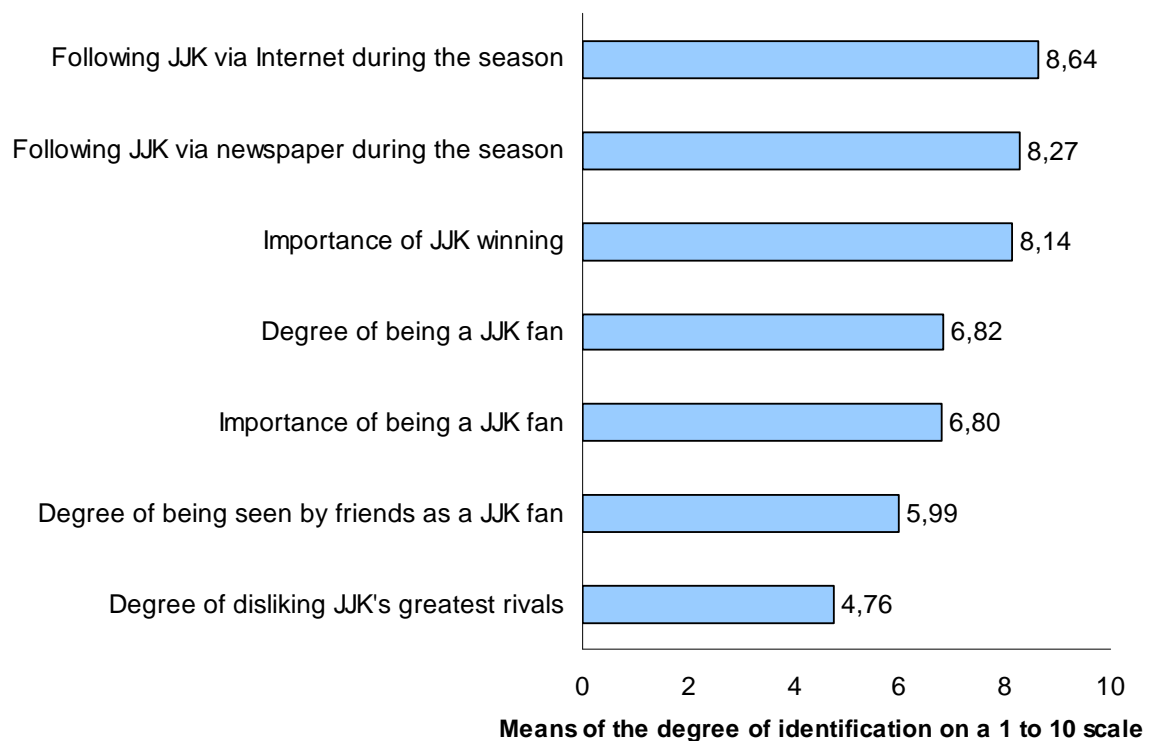


Figure 6. JJK fan identification 2008

Subsequently, a Pearson's correlation matrix was used to identify the potential inter-relationships between factors that determine fan satisfaction and fan identification. Satisfaction with the quality of the stadium, situation of the stadium, parking opportunities nearby the stadium, hospitality in the stadium and atmosphere in the stadium did not show especially significant correlation with either of the factors of identification. Significant

positive correlation at the 0.01 level¹ were found between ‘Satisfaction with the quality of games of JJK’, and the following identification factors: ‘Importance of being a JJK fan’ ($r=.266^{**}$, $n=188$), ‘Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan’ ($r=.252^{**}$, $n=188$), ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’ ($r=.268^{**}$, $n=188$) and ‘Following JJK via Internet during the season’ ($r=.249^{**}$, $n=188$). Further significant correlations were revealed between ‘Satisfaction with the results of JJK’ and the hereby listed identification factors: ‘Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan’ ($r=.214^{**}$, $n=188$) and ‘Following JJK via Internet during the season’ ($r=.203^{**}$, $n=188$). Lastly, ‘Satisfaction with the performance of JJK’ correlated with ‘Importance of being a JJK fan’ ($r=.264^{**}$, $n=188$), ‘Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan’ ($r=.216^{**}$, $n=188$), ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’ ($r=.256^{**}$, $n=188$) and ‘Following JJK via Internet during the season’ ($r=.194^{**}$, $n=188$).

Additionally, comparing means method was utilised in order to re-test the most relevant results of fan satisfaction and identification and to discover new ones, as it can be seen from Table 3 and 4 on the following page.² ‘Importance of JJK winning’ is related to ‘Satisfaction with the performance of JJK’ ($p=.003$) and with ‘Satisfaction with the quality of games of JJK’ ($p=.002$). It indicates that higher satisfaction level corresponds to the higher identification levels. Further analysis showed that larger levels of ‘Satisfaction with the results of JJK’ ($p=.000$) and ‘Satisfaction with the performance of JJK’ ($p=.086$) belongs to higher scores of the identification factor ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’.

Some of these results unveiled by comparing means method were also provided by the Pearson’s correlation measures, though at a lower 0.05 significance level, which were not provided in the text of this research but in the appendix.

¹ See Appendix 3.

² The scores given by the respondents from 1 to 10 on fan identification were converted for some measures in the following way: 1-4: Not important, 5-6: Slightly important, 7-8: Important, 9-10: Very important.

Table 3. Comparing means of fan satisfaction and fan identification (1)

| <i>Importance of JJK winning</i> | <i>Satisfaction with the results of JJK</i> | <i>Satisfaction with the quality of the games of JJK</i> |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Not important | 7,43 | 5,14 |
| Slightly important | 7,81 | 6,50 |
| Important | 8,21 | 6,85 |
| Very important | 8,14 | 7,05 |
| | (<i>p</i> =.003) | (<i>p</i> =.002) |

Table 4. Comparing means of fan satisfaction and fan identification (2)

| <i>Degree of being a JJK fan</i> | <i>Satisfaction with the results of JJK</i> | <i>Satisfaction with the performance of JJK</i> |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Not important | 7,71 | 7,03 |
| Slightly important | 8,08 | 7,00 |
| Important | 8,38 | 7,94 |
| Very important | 8,10 | 7,77 |
| | (<i>p</i> =.000) | (<i>p</i> =.086) |

4.2.2 Sponsor Orientation and Awareness

The graph presented below provides information on the sponsors that were recalled in highest numbers by JJK fans. According to the question in the questionnaire, they had to name at least five sponsors that appeared in the stadium. About one-third of the respondents did not name any. Fans being uninterested is also supported by the results obtained later from Figure 8 describing sponsor orientation. Forty percent of the fans could recall Harvia, thus being the mostly recognised¹ brand and around 23% remembered Peugeot. Apart from these two sponsors, almost 20% called up Osuuspankki. Another 10 sponsors were mentioned by the respondents several times, but those numbers are less considerable.²

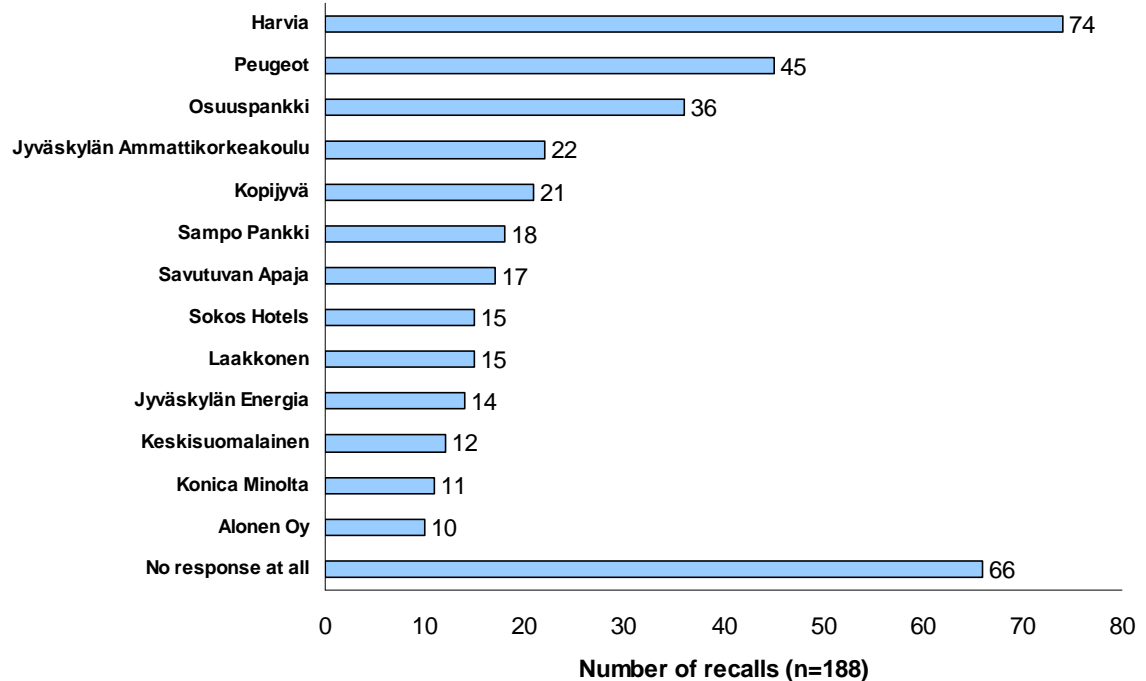


Figure 7. Sponsor awareness of JJK fans 2008

¹ Recognition and awareness are used as synonyms in the context of this paper.

² JJK had approximately 200 sponsors in year 2008. (Vesalainen 2009)

As it can be seen from Figure 8, 58% of the respondents pay hardly any attention to sponsors. This result is of crucial importance when coming to the topic of sponsor effectiveness. Likewise, 39.9% of those surveyed reported that the high number of sponsors appearing in the stadium and on players' jersey is confusing. Around one-fourth of the fans stated that in the case of similarity of different brands they try to use the sponsor's product. Only twenty-one point-three percent thought that announcements via loudspeakers are efficient. A quasi 13% of the respondents would have been interested in receiving more information of the sponsor's products.

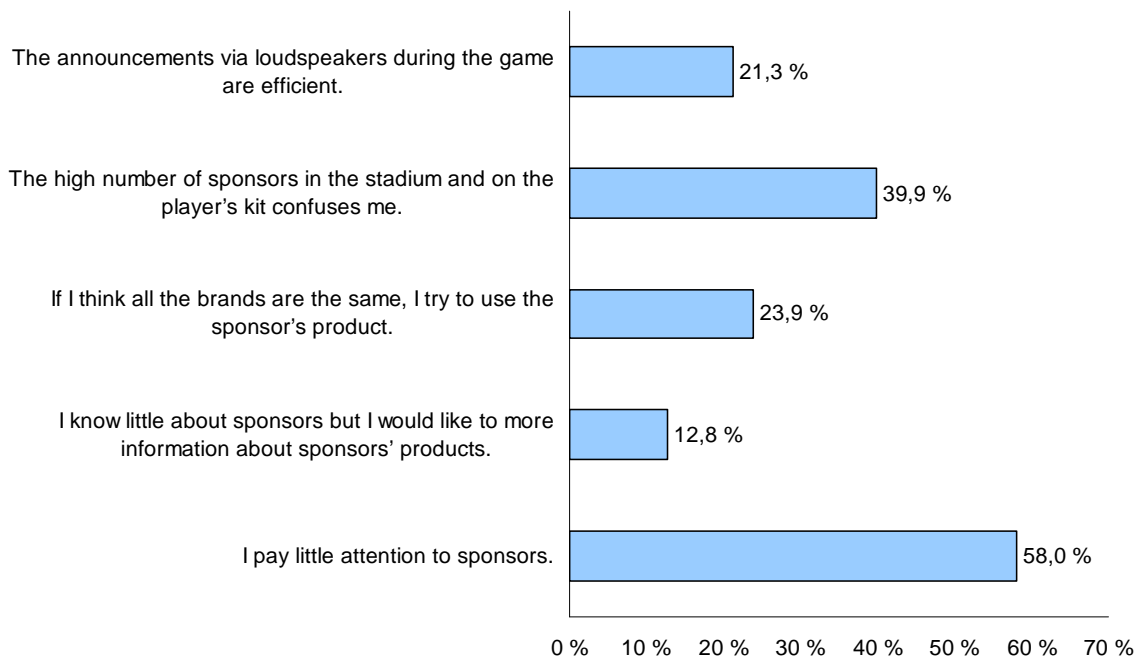


Figure 8. Sponsor orientation of JJK fans 2008

Fan identification/satisfaction and sponsor awareness

Table 5 presents the results of a cross tabulation comparison between 'Degree of being a JJK fan' and 'Recalling sponsors'. As expected, higher identified fans typically recall more sponsors ($p=.002$). The most notable data here is that 28.8% of those who consider being a fan 'Very important' recall no sponsors whereas 59.6% recall more than 1 sponsor, and 64.7% of those who consider being a fan 'Not important' recall no sponsors while 32.4% recall more than 1 sponsors. In addition, two further outcomes are relevant to mention but these are not visualized in a table: 'Importance of being a JJK fan' versus 'Recalling

sponsors' is also somewhat significant ($p=.043$). On the other hand, although expected, the same measures for 'Satisfaction with the result of JJK' ($p=.567$) and 'Satisfaction with the performance of JJK' ($p=.124$) did not reveal significant results.

Table 5. Cross tabulation for fan identification and sponsor awareness

| <i>Degree of being a JJK fan</i> | | Recalling sponsors | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| | | Did not name any sponsors | Recalled 1 sponsor | Recalled more than 1 sponsor |
| Not important | Count | 22 | 1 | 11 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan (recoded) | 64,7 | 2,9 | 32,4 |
| Slightly important | Count | 10 | 6 | 22 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan (recoded) | 26,3 | 15,8 | 57,9 |
| Important | Count | 19 | 3 | 42 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan (recoded) | 29,7 | 4,7 | 65,6 |
| Very important | Count | 15 | 6 | 31 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan (recoded) | 28,8 | 11,5 | 59,6 |

($p=.002$)

From the data in Figure 9, which demonstrates fans' 'sponsor orientation' against 'Satisfaction with the performance of JJK', it is apparent that no significant difference can be detected between the various levels of satisfaction.¹ The same measure with other satisfaction and identification factors yielded highly similar results. Typically within all satisfaction/identification levels the answers 'I pay little attention to sponsors.' and 'The high number of sponsors in the stadium and on the players' kit confuses me.' gained the highest scores.

¹ The scores given by the respondents from 1 to 10 on fan satisfaction were converted for some measures in the following way: 1-4: Not satisfied at all, 5-6: Slightly satisfied, 7-8: Quite satisfied, 9-10: Highly satisfied.

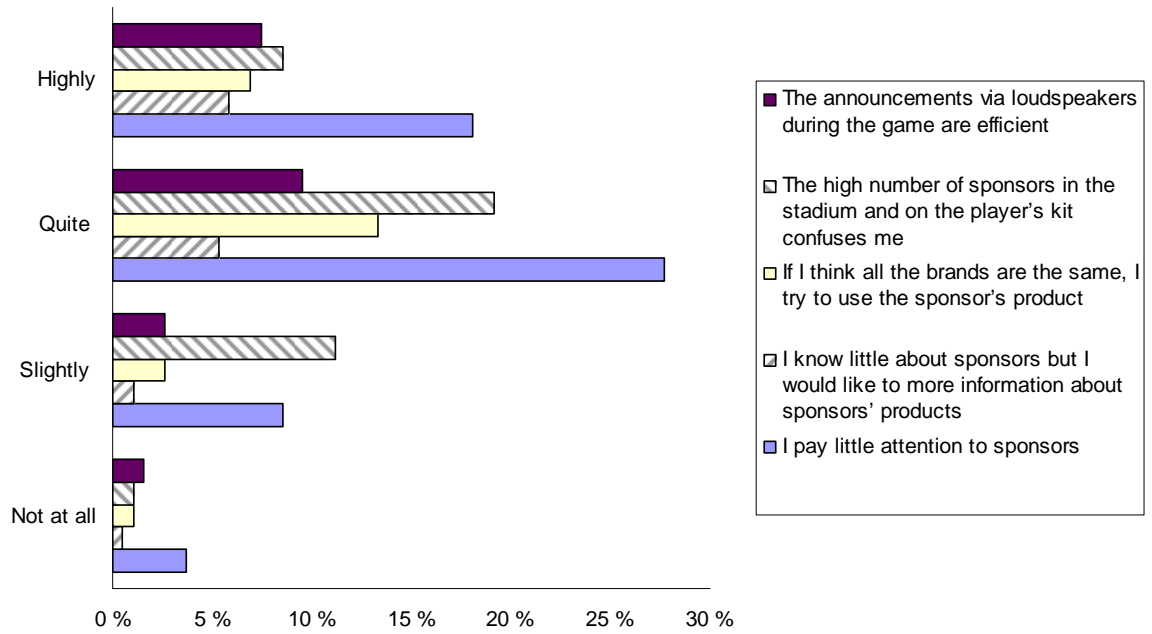


Figure 9. Sponsor orientation versus 'Satisfaction with the performance of JJK'

4.2.3 Intention to Attend Future Games

ANOVA measurement unveiled significant relationship between the intention to attend future games and two factors of fan identification; namely ‘Importance of JJK winning’ ($p=.006$) and ‘Importance of being a JJK fan’ ($p=.000$). Table 6 clearly shows the higher identified fans are more eager to visit games for the remainder of the 2008 season given that the mean value of the ‘Intention to attend future games’, which was measured on a 1 to 10 scale, grows gradually parallel to the identification levels. Although it did not prove to be statistically significant ($p=.305$), it can be also seen from the table that more satisfied fans are more likely to watch further games as well.

Table 6. ANOVA for intention to attend future games on a 1 to 10 scale and fan identification/satisfaction

| <i>Importance of JJK winning</i> | <i>Probability of attending future games</i> Mean | <i>Importance of being a JJK fan</i> | <i>Probability of attending future games</i> Mean | <i>Satisfaction with the performance of JJK</i> | <i>Probability of attending future games</i> Mean |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Not important | 6,29 | Not important | 6,25 | Not satisfied at all | 6,78 |
| Slightly important | 6,38 | Slightly important | 7,93 | Slightly satisfied | 7,77 |
| Important | 8,33 | Important | 8,66 | Quite satisfied | 8,19 |
| Very important | 8,38 | Very important | 8,57 | Highly satisfied | 8,37 |
| | <i>p=.006</i> | | <i>p=.000</i> | | <i>p=.305</i> |

The results from Table 7, that displays a cross tabulation between possessing a season ticket for the 2008 season and ‘Importance of being a JJK fan’ ($p=.025$) as well as ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’ ($p=.002$), turned out to be significant. It is notable that at the identification level ‘Not important’ 78.6% answered with ‘No’ and 21.4% with ‘Yes’, whereas at the ‘Very important’ level the score was 50% each. Similarly, at the factor ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’ at level ‘Not important’ 85.3% said ‘No’ and 14.7% ‘Yes’ while at the ‘Very important’ level the proportion is 46.2% and 53.8%, respectively. Meanwhile, ‘Importance of JJK winning’ ($p=.198$) did not show statistical relevance with season ticket holding, although the scores suggest those at higher identification levels are more likely to have a season ticket.

Table 7. Cross tabulation for holding a season ticket for the 2008 season and fan identification

| <i>Importance of being a JJK fan</i> | | <i>Holding a season ticket for the 2008 season</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| | | No | Yes |
| Not important | Count | 22 | 6 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 78,6 % | 21,4 % |
| Slightly important | Count | 33 | 10 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 76,7 % | 23,3 % |
| Important | Count | 46 | 27 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 63,0 % | 37,0 % |
| Very important | Count | 22 | 22 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 50,0 % | 50,0 % |

($p=.025$)

| <i>Degree of being a JJK fan</i> | | <i>Holding a season ticket for the 2008 season</i> | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| | | No | Yes |
| Not important | Count | 29 | 5 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 85,3 % | 14,7 % |
| Slightly important | Count | 27 | 11 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 71,1 % | 28,9 % |
| Important | Count | 43 | 21 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 67,2 % | 32,8 % |
| Very important | Count | 24 | 28 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 46,2 % | 53,8 % |

($p=.002$)

Table 8 was created the same way as Table 7 and brought identical results. In this case cross tabulation between consideration to buy a season ticket for the following season and ‘Importance of being a JJK fan’ ($p=.009$) and moreover, ‘Degree of being a JJK fan’ ($p=.002$) resulted in being significant. Again, the difference in values between ‘No’ and ‘Yes’ at the various identification levels should be noted. Similarly to the former measurement, ‘Importance of JJK winning’ ($p=.098$) did not show statistical significance with the intention to buy a season ticket for the following season, but the numbers imply that those at higher identification levels are more likely to plan to do so.

Table 8. Cross tabulation for probability of buying a season ticket for the following season and fan identification

| <i>Importance of being a JJK fan</i> | | <i>Probability of buying a season ticket for the following season</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---------------|
| | | No | Yes |
| Not important | Count | 21 | 7 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 75,0 % | 25,0 % |
| Slightly important | Count | 23 | 20 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 53,5 % | 46,5 % |
| Important | Count | 29 | 44 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 39,7 % | 60,3 % |
| Very important | Count | 18 | 26 |
| | % within Importance of being a JJK fan | 40,9 % | 59,5 % |
| <i>(p=.009)</i> | | | |
| <i>Degree of being a JJK fan</i> | | <i>Probability of buying a season ticket for the following season</i> | |
| | | No | Yes |
| Not important | Count | 26 | 8 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 76,5 % | 23,5 % |
| Slightly important | Count | 19 | 19 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 50,0 % | 50,0 % |
| Important | Count | 27 | 37 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 42,2 % | 57,8 % |
| Very important | Count | 19 | 33 |
| | % within Degree of being a JJK fan | 36,5 % | 63,5 % |
| <i>(p=.002)</i> | | | |

Contrary to former tables in this study that confirmed the assumed relationship between observed factors, Table 9 suggests that the predicted position of JJK in the ranking is not related to the levels of fan satisfaction with the performance of JJK. Among those who are 'not satisfied at all' 77.8% awaited JJK ending in positions 1-3, and 22.2% foretold positions 4-14. Then, the opinion of 'highly satisfied' fans was fairly similar; 71.2% and 28.8%, respectively. It is apparent from this table that fans on higher satisfaction level did not forecast better ranking at the end of the 2008 season. Corresponding measures for other factors of satisfaction and identification revealed identical results.

Table 9. Cross tabulation for Satisfaction with the performance of JJK and predicted Ranking of JJK in 2008

| <i>Satisfaction with the performance of JJK</i> | | <i>Ranking 2008</i> | |
|---|---|---------------------|--------------|
| | | 1-3 | 4-14 |
| Not satisfied at all | Count | 7 | 2 |
| | % within Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | 77,8% | 22,2% |
| Slightly satisfied | Count | 27 | 4 |
| | % within Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | 87,1% | 12,9% |
| Quite satisfied | Count | 73 | 16 |
| | % within Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | 82,0% | 18,0% |
| Highly satisfied | Count | 42 | 17 |
| | % within Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | 71,2% | 28,8% |

Lastly, Figure 10 describes the situation of possessing JJK merchandising products among fans. As it can be seen from the chart, almost 60% did not hold any JJK related goods. Around 21% owned a scarf and 12.4% had more than one type of product. Other products occurred in scant numbers: 5.9% possessed a jersey, 2.2% a jacket, and 1.6% a cap. It should be noted that those fans who owned more than one product were not counted again when observing the possession of one single product.

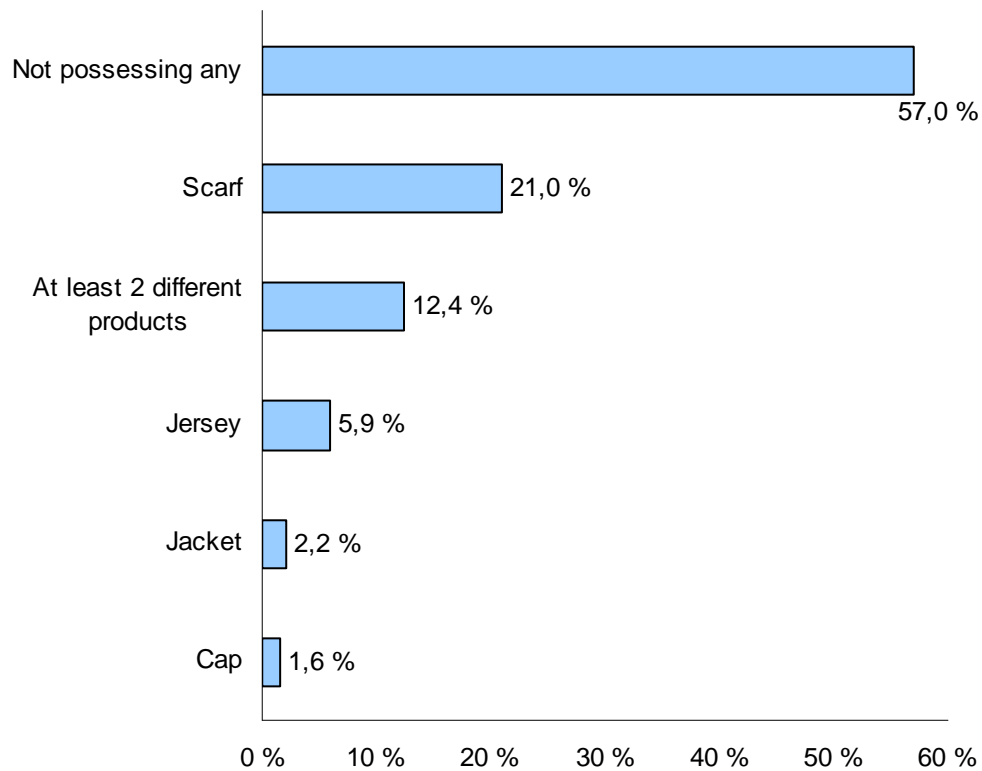


Figure 10. Fans possessing JJK products 2008

5 Discussion

5.1 The Effects of On-field Performance on Attendance and Marketing

Similarly to previous studies (Greestein & Marcum 1981 as cited in Matsuoka et al 2003, 246; Hansen & Gauthier 1989), this research suggests that better on-field performance triggers higher numbers in attendance. Average attendance at JJK's home games has grown gradually from 464 to 3238 in the last 5 years while JJK accomplished their rise from the third league to the first league. The team spent two years at the third level, another two in the second and one season in the number one series of Finland. Better performance by the team year by year, not surprisingly, has been reflected in spectator numbers as well. In addition, JJK has gained more income from sponsors. Not only did the benefits from sponsors increase, but the proportional contribution per sponsor have also grown. Thus, the assumption made earlier in this study about on-field performance related to the number of attendees and marketing opportunities of the club seems to be justifiable.

Apart from these outcomes it is worthwhile to mention that in 2009 JJK ended second-last in the Veikkausliiga. In spite of that, the attendance was the third highest in the league. This fact implies the significance of Shaw's and McDonald's (2006) finding, namely the teams on the top and the bottom of the ranking can count on higher spectator numbers. In the case of JJK it is probable that the recent success of the team and Jyväskylä being a 'sporty' town also played an important role in obtaining over 3000 thousand attendees per game on average.

5.2 The Average JJK Fan

This study has found that a 'typical' JJK fan is a Finnish man, aged between 20 and 40, visits the games with friends, has become a fan because he was born/lives in the Jyväskylä region, studies at university or holds a university degree and watched around 6 JJK home games in the 2008 football season. The group with the most intense presence in Stadium Harju is that of between 20 and 29 years old who watches games with friends. One out of three fans belongs to this group. This discovery is of crucial importance for JJK

management when it comes to the planning and implementation of marketing activities and sponsorship issues. It does not mean, however, that the needs and wishes of fans, other than 'typical' fans should not be taken into account. The management of the club needs to meet the requirements of this group and at the same time they should try to foster other ways of attending games, especially that of families. This can be achieved for example by family tickets, activities organised for children and so on.

Interestingly, hardly any answers were received from non-Finnish people despite personal experience¹ showing the presence of international people in Stadium Harju during football games. It is possible that they were not so much concerned about this research and this is why they filled out the questionnaire in such a small number. Another considerable outcome is the high number of respondents who were studying at university or possessed a university degree. Though this score might be misleading with knowing that the questionnaire for this research was placed on the Internet. It can be presumed that among higher qualified people Internet usage is higher than average, and moreover, they may be more interested in participating in a scientific research. A further meaningful result is the low proportion of polytechnic students at games. Although the number of students at the University of Jyväskylä (University of Jyväskylä 2009) is only twice as big as the JAMK University of Applied Sciences² students (JAMK 2009), the appearance of University students was 3 times higher than the JAMK students.

5.3 Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification

One of the major findings of this study is related to fan satisfaction. Levels of fan satisfaction of 8 factors presented predictable results. It was an obvious outcome that fans were most satisfied with the 'results of the JJK' given that the team won the First Division in 2008. The scores of 'performance of JJK' show a somewhat lower average because evidently good results are not always accompanied by appealing performance from the

¹ As indicated before, the researcher is a player of JJK.

² In the town of Jyväskylä there are two institutes of higher education: the University of Jyväskylä and the JAMK University of Applied Sciences.

team. The ‘situation of the stadium’ was apparently valued highly since the facility is situated quite close to the city centre. On the other hand, ‘parking opportunities nearby Stadium Harju’ are highly limited, which is reflected in low satisfaction levels of the audience. Lastly, the assessment for the 3 remaining factors was moderately satisfied. Being that Finnish football is the topic of this research, it is no wonder that the ‘quality of the games’ were not ranked so high. Furthermore, ‘atmosphere in the stadium’ also received a moderate level of satisfaction. This is a key point here because it seems that Finnish fans support their team dissimilarly from those in other countries. That is why it can happen that in a stadium where the local team wins the league and the average number of attendees is the highest in the series, satisfaction with the atmosphere is not considerably high. This result confirms the anticipation that Finnish supporters are quiet and lack enthusiasm, or at least they do not express or release their excitement, but rather withhold or contain it. The reason for this phenomenon probably lies in the nature of Finnish people.¹ JJK is a small club in European terms, thus it is already an improvement that we can talk about ‘hospitality’, which was the last factor rated. Food and drink options are limited, which might not be an inconvenience considering that most Finnish people make do with sausages, bun and coffee. Unlike at other stadiums in Finland, JJK’s games start with the march of the club and the introduction of players, which is also somewhat ceremonial. It can also be noticed that the management “tries to market the event distinctly than the usual.” (Vesalainen 2009)

Another major finding is resolving the order of importance of the various factors of fan satisfaction mentioned in this paragraph. As previous research (Greenwood et al. 2006) has already shown, fans give priority to the results and performance of the team and the quality of the game, i.e. the core spectator sport service against the product extensions, such as the hospitality, stadium and atmosphere. This finding implies that the potential of the marketing manager of the club is limited due to the factors that he/she is not able to influence.

¹ Again, personal experience supports this finding.

When discussing the topic of identification, the findings of this research suggest that for the JJK fans, their ‘team winning’ as well as ‘following the news on the club’, both via newspaper and Internet are highly important. It is worth mentioning that Internet was ranked slightly higher, therefore, it can also be concluded that fans appreciate the Website of JJK and the section dedicated to the club on KSML online. On the other hand, ‘being a fan’ and ‘being seen as a fan by others’ are moderately relevant for JJK supporters. This reflects that highly identified fans occur in very small numbers. Moreover, the level of ‘hatred towards JJK’s rivals by JJK fans’ is almost negligible, which also implies the lack of an emotional dimension of being a fan. These findings enhance our understanding of fan commitment and the level of fan identification in the case of a Finnish semi-professional club, and moreover, denote a particular cultural setting.

Existing relationship between fan satisfaction and fan identification

The factors that determine *fan satisfaction with the environment* (i.e. sport product extensions) do not have any palpable relationship with the factors of *fan identification*. Thus, there is no evidence that a better facility would increase the identification of fans towards JJK or higher identified fans would rate the existing facility better, although this kind of relationship was assumed (Sutton et al 1997; Gladden & Milne 1999). On the other hand, this study has found that those fans, who are satisfied to a higher extent with the performance and results of JJK and the quality of the games, typically consider themselves and are considered by their friends as a ‘higher identified’ JJK fan and furthermore, they follow JJK closer via Internet. The following outcome to note is the higher level of fan satisfaction with the results and performance correspond to greater importance of ‘JJK winning’. Subsequently, fans who are more satisfied with the ‘quality of the games’ consider the ‘importance of being a JJK fan’ more relevant. To sum up, the results suggest that more satisfied fans could become more identified or vice versa, and more identified fans could be more satisfied.

The discovered casual relationship between the various factors of *fan satisfaction with the game* and the factors of *fan identification* are in some cases weak, while in others stronger, but certainly existing. Similarly, the direction of dependency cannot be determined,

although previous research (Matsuoka et al 2003) advocated that fan satisfaction is the dependent factor and fan identification is the independent one. Further research should be done to investigate these issues. However, present work is noteworthy for detecting the existing relationship similarly to former studies (Gladden & Milne 1999), and thus makes potential recommendations possible towards the management of JJK.

5.4 Sponsor Orientation and Awareness

JJK had around 200 sponsors in 2008. (Vesalainen 2009) According to the present research, only 13 of them were mentioned at least 10 times by the 188 respondents who filled out the on-line questionnaire. Among the 10 most recalled sponsors, merely 3 reached considerable results. Firstly, Harvia, which was called up by around 40% of the respondents and has been one of the main sponsors of JJK, allocated several spots in the stadium and on the most visible place of the players' jerseys. Secondly, around 23% of those remembered Peugeot, whose logo has also been situated in the front of players' jerseys. Moreover, some cars, which were easy to recognise in the city of Jyväskylä, given that huge JJK logos and other promotional material were painted on them, were provided to the club by the company. Lastly, Osuuspankki had a recall rate of 20%.¹ Due to the reasons explained above, it is no wonder that these brands were called up in higher numbers than others. In addition to this outcome, one-third of the respondents did not name any sponsors, either because they did not remember any or due to being incurious towards the sponsorship issue.

Subsequently, another significant finding to emerge from this study is that more than half of the supporters are paying very little attention to sponsors. It does not mean however, that all those who said this do not remember any of the sponsors, given that around two-thirds of the respondents recalled at least one sponsor, as was mentioned earlier in this section. Consequently, even if someone has a negative attitude towards the sponsors, it is still possible that they remember some of them. For sponsors aiming at brand awareness this might be an essential point. We do not know, however, to what extent JJK's sponsors

¹ Future research carried out on a regular basis is necessary to be able evaluate these results in a context.

behave consciously, *if at all*. According to a recent Finnish study (Itkonen et al. 2009), less than one-third of the companies tried to assess whether the terms of contract had been fulfilled or not. Taking the JJK's point of view, it should be careful with the number of sponsors. It is understandable that the club needs the income coming from sponsors and therefore they try to maximize the number of them, but results affirm that the numerous brands placed on players' kit and in the stadium is confusing for the spectators and, as demonstrated earlier, yields poor rate of recall. Furthermore, advertisements and encouragement to cheer for the team coming from loudspeakers was seen as lacking efficiency, and moreover, in the majority of the cases was considered disturbing. Therefore, it is recommended that these practices are discontinued. Altogether, less than one-fourth of the fans had positive attitude towards sponsors, such that they were interested in sponsors' products or try to use them in respect of various brands supplied. These results suggest that the sponsorship efficiency is limited for various reasons, such as a high number of sponsors causing confusion and fans being inattentive. It is believed that fans do not remember any brand names after their saturation point is exceeded. On the contrary, some results indicate that even the presence of brand names in the stadium might result in recognition by spectators.

When taking the sponsors' point of view of these circumstances presented, the following question emerges: Whether investing in a business with JJK is a conscious undertaking based on careful planning with the calculation of the return on investment for the sponsors, or is it more like a financial support to the most important football club of Central-Finland?¹ Market research based on former studies on sponsorship commitment (Chadwick & Thwaites 2006; Farrelly & Quester 2003) is highly recommended.

To conclude, a considerable option to improve the setting in which JJK's sponsorship business take place could be to restrict the number of sponsors, but, at the same time, offer each of them a special and unique relationship with the team, including exclusive appearance in the stadium and players' kit, activities through which sponsor alignment can

¹ The difference between *donation* (gift), *traditional sponsorship* (placing a logo on players' kit or in the stadium in return for money) and *modern sponsorship* (sponsor alignment) should be noted at this point.

be achieved and so on. One example of this could be to introduce a pre-match magazine and give the opportunity for sponsors to present themselves in it, and thus creating contact with the fans. In return, JJK could expect more revenues from each of the sponsors and could maximize income without having countless sponsors.

Fan identification/satisfaction and sponsor awareness

The current study has also found that fans on a higher identification level recall more sponsors. Again, this outcome underpins the relevance of creating fan identification. On the other hand, although expected, fan satisfaction did not prove to influence the number of sponsors recalled.

This research has failed to justify an existing connection between sponsor orientation and fan satisfaction as well as fan identification, although past research has discovered (Shaw & McDonald 2006) that although a fans' reaction to sponsors' activities depends on various factors, there is an existing relationship between the levels of fan satisfaction and their attitudes towards sponsors. These results appear to be somewhat ambiguous concerning the influence of fan satisfaction/identification levels on sponsor awareness/attitude. Thus it can be concluded that this part of the research has just partly fulfilled the initial assumptions, and further investigation is required. If a club presents a study confirming the positive relationships between the above-mentioned factors, sponsors could be attracted much easier.

5.5 Intention to Attend Future Games

As predicted beforehand, fans on *higher identification and satisfaction levels*¹ have been proved clearly to be more eager to *attend future games*. Previous research (Greestein & Marcum, 1981; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Sutton et al 1997, Matsuoka et al 2003) has concluded identical results. It must be noted, however, that visiting future games is

¹ The relationships in this chapter were not measured to all factors of fan satisfaction or fan identification. See Table 6, 7, 8, and 9.

influenced by additional factors other than fan identification and fan satisfaction. These two variables also interfere with each other.

Another way of obtaining information on the intention to attend future games is to ask whether the fan plans to buy a season ticket for the following season. In accordance with the preceding results of this research, it has been noted that fans on higher identification levels were more likely to consider buying a season ticket for the following season, and similarly, were more probable to possess a season ticket for the 2008 season.

Although past investigation has discovered that higher levels of fan satisfaction foretell optimism towards the results of the upcoming games (Madriral 2003), present work failed to confirm this relationship. Accordingly, no connection has been explored between levels of fan satisfaction and predicted ranking of JJK at the end of the 2008 season.

Taken together the findings of this section, the importance of creating fan satisfaction and fan identification has been confirmed again, because it appears to enhance the intention to attend future matches and to buy a season ticket for the upcoming season.

5.6 The JJK Brand

The relevance of building fan identification and fan satisfaction has been confirmed several times by the findings of this study. A number of recommendations have already been mentioned with regard to the development of the present levels of identification and satisfaction, but it has felt necessary to elaborate further on this topic.

When dealing with the topic of branding and identification, this study reveals helpful results, which explain the antecedents of *fan development*. Two out of three fans becomes the supporter of JJK due to their family roots in Central Finland region. The relevance of the *geographical location* is also supported by former studies (Gladden & Milne 1999). In addition, the relevance of players and coaches, the success of the team and the influence of friends are also considerable factors in the process of becoming a fan. It can be assumed

that the proportion of the importance of success has grown as the team reached a higher and higher division, although to certify this requires further research.

During the course of building the brand of JJK, the region of Central Finland is advised to be emphasized and attention must be paid to having a rational proportion of home-grown and foreign players. Both types of players are necessary from a marketing point of view, because local players strengthen identity, while quality foreign players represent extra value to the sport product. The issue of atmosphere at games has already been examined in this study and it can be concluded again that a great atmosphere is not the ultimate characteristic of JJK football games, given that it did not become a strong factor to influence fan development. The question that arises from this outcome is whether and to what extent it could be generalised?

The results of this investigation show that merchandising possibilities have hardly been exploited so far. Almost two-thirds of the respondents do not possess any products related to the club. This number reflected to the total 'population' of JJK fans is possibly lower as personal experience attests. It is highly recommended to increase the promotion and the accessibility of JJK related products, although prior to the establishment of this aim, conducting market research is necessary. This proposal is reinforced by the recent growth in attendance presented in Table 1. It looks probable that the club is careful with investing money in operations that might not assure benefits¹, but the increment of selling JJK merchandising products would not only be a possible source of income, but also potential contribution to the creation of a strong brand and to the development of fan identification. Cooperation between JJK, Jyväskylä town and the University of Jyväskylä is a key issue at this point. It seems reasonable that not all benefits can be measured with financial indexes. Among the preferred products the scarf is the most favoured. Besides this, the jersey, cap and jacket were mentioned.

¹ Planning is complicated due to the possible promotions or relegations from one league to another.

6 Conclusion and Implications for the Management of JJK

This paper has investigated many aspects of the marketing activities of a Finnish First Division football club and this has brought numerous and considerable results. The vast majority of the research has been conducted through the analysis of fans' opinion of JJK's operation, both on-field and off-field. In addition, statistical data obtained from the club and found on the Internet, interviews accomplished with the leaders of JJK and the method of direct (participant) observation of numerous forms of interaction provided invaluable insight to JJK's marketing activities.

6.1 The Effects of On-field Performance on Attendance and Marketing

Taking the first two research questions posed at the beginning of the study, this work has proved that developing *on-field performance* has continuously brought higher numbers in *attendance* during the course of the five years analysed. Moreover, in accordance with the attendance, the number of sponsors (as well as the *benefits* provided by them) has also increased remarkably. This evidence confirms the ongoing football 'boom' anticipated in Jyväskylä at the beginning of this paper and indicates the presence of an environment that fosters the further development for JJK.

Subsequently, the study has delivered the characteristics of a 'typical' JJK fan: he is a Finnish man aged between 20 and 40 from the Jyväskylä region, attends 6 games with his friends in a season and has studied at university.

6.2 Fan Satisfaction and Fan Identification

The answer for research question number 3, which was set to determine the *factors of fan satisfaction* used in the questionnaire of this study, was developed based on former studies. Research question number 5 was created in a similar way to decide on the most important *factors of fan identification*. The solution for the fourth research question is that the fans were most satisfied with the performance and the results of the team in the 2008 season. Apparently, marketing managers are not able to influence factors that determine the *fan*

satisfaction with the game, such as the two factors mentioned above and the quality of the games. On the other hand, they *could* control some factors of the *environment*, such as the hospitality, the quality of the stadium and the atmosphere might also be added as well. According to the scores received by the fans, these 3 factors mentioned need to be improved.

The evidence from this study suggests that the possibilities of the management of the club are limited due to the fans rating the *core spectator service* much more important than the environment in the stadium. It implies that that a solid performance of the team is worth more than any efforts made by the marketing manager. However, a key point here is that building fan identification could blunt this contrast and could decrease the fans' sensitivity to the result of the games (Sutton et al 1997).

The analysis of research question 6 that deals with the *levels of fan identification* has demonstrated that for the fans of JJK good results are highly important and they are eager to follow the team in the media. However, the relevance of 'being a fan' turned out to be less important as well as 'disliking JJK's greatest rivals'. It can be concluded that highly identified fans occur in small numbers and fandom is short of an emotional dimension, due to a great extent to cultural specificities. This is the domain where the management should work hard to be able to enhance fan identification towards JJK.

The results of this investigation show that although factors of *fan satisfaction with the environment* did not correlate to the factors of *fan identification*, there is an existing relationship between some factors of *fan satisfaction with the game* and factors of *fan identification*. However, the direction of these correlations is problematic to determine and the strength of the connections are uncertain as well. Therefore, further (and continuous) research on this issue is highly advised.

6.3 Sponsor Awareness and Orientation

When coming to the following research question on the *sponsor awareness* and *sponsor orientation* of JJK fans, this study has established an invaluable outcome. Only 13 out of

the 200 sponsors that JJK had in 2008 were recalled by more than 5% of the respondents, and merely 3 sponsors' recall-rate was considerable, i.e. more than 20%. On the other hand, two-thirds of the respondents remembered at least one sponsor.

The investigation of the *sponsor orientation* has also presented poor results from the perspective of the sponsor. The majority of the people pay little attention to sponsors, and almost half of them are confused due to the high number of them. Additionally, announcement via loudspeakers were not recognized as efficient and very few fans had a positive attitude towards sponsors, such that they were trying to use their products or would receive more information on them. It can be concluded that owing to disinterested fans, the huge number of sponsors and the assumed lack of consciousness by the sponsors, efficiency stands at a low level.

Getting to know this outcome might be very helpful for JJK management when it comes to the improvement of marketing management. It is recommended to reconsider the system of sponsorship, in a way that concentrating on a restricted number of sponsors and offering them a unique relationship with JJK, can be more profitable for both the club and the sponsors. As a result, JJK could maximise the revenue coming from sponsors and in return, could offer sponsor alignment to its partners. To achieve this, however, firstly, sponsors need to be convinced about the benefits of behaving consciously, secondly, they should be involved in various activities to be able to get contact with JJK and its fans. An option to accomplish this goal by the club is to utilise the tools of *relationship marketing* and carry out regular market research that gives facts about the possible benefits/profits of being a sponsor.

The following major finding of this paper, which answers research question 8, is that *higher identified fans recall more sponsors*, which underscores the relevance of creating fan identification. This result is believed to contribute to the development of the management of sponsorship. On the contrary, there was no detected correlation between levels of fan satisfaction and recalling sponsors. Furthermore, in contrast to former studies (Shaw & McDonald 2006), one unanticipated finding was that neither levels of *fan satisfaction* nor

fan identification are related to the *sponsor orientation* of fans. At this point future investigation is advised.

6.4 Intention to Attend Future Games

Subsequently, this research has confirmed that higher *satisfied* and *identified* fans are more determined to *attend JJK games* in the future, thus certifying the relevance of the last research question set at the beginning of this study. Furthermore, fans on a higher identification level were more likely to *have a season ticket* for the observed 2008 season and would more probably *purchase a season ticket* for the following season. On the contrary, results suggest that the level of fan satisfaction is not an indicator of optimism toward future games.

6.5 Establishing and Strengthening the JJK Brand

Several results of this study have proved the significance of the improvement of fan satisfaction and fan identification levels. When looking at the possible tools to attain this, strengthening the JJK brand is of crucial importance. It is advised to emphasise the club's origin of Central Finland, due to the fact that JJK is a local club and the regional root is the most important factor of fan development, as this research has established. In the long term, extending the JJK brand based on the ideas of former studies (van Uden 2005; Guenzi & Nocco 2006) should also be pondered. In addition, a sensible proportion of home-grown and foreign players should be balanced. According to the results of this research, atmosphere and hospitality in Stadium Harju could be enhanced via more organised support, half-time shows, more information on other games that are played at the same time and with a large screen showing highlights and replays. A better stadium should be also considered but it does not seem realistic in the short term. On the other hand, setting up a more exigent and professional website might be an affordable undertaking.

Moreover, increasing the scale of merchandising activities should be contemplated in order to augment revenues and build fan identification towards the club. It is believed that there is great potential in this segment given that the number of attendees has grown significantly

and the team has been more and more successful. It must be noted, however, that careful and coordinated planning, strategising and market research should precede action. Similarly, some further marketing tools, such as promotions that increase and reinforce spectators' involvement and affection to the team, making the players more available for fans through public events and addressing younger spectators or families with special offers. Establishing a database, membership card and fan club could not only allow results that can be compared or contrasted year-on-year, but would contribute to the creation of fan identification as well. And finally, a greater deal of community involvement, including municipality, university and the local ice-hockey team as a partner or stakeholder, should be contemplated. Bundling as a tool could play a key role in the branding process.

6.6 Limitations of this Study and Recommended further Research

Finally, a number of important limitations need to be considered. First, this work has been a case study investigating only one football club. Therefore, it should be careful when generalising conclusions. Second, the source of the data analysed was an on-line questionnaire in English and that fact might have influenced the type of respondents. For example, those who had access to the Internet and who had sufficient technical and English skills to fill out the survey might unbalance the structure of respondents. Third, although this study has found numerous relationships between various factors, these might be influenced with other factors that were not taken into account in this research. In addition, the nature of the relationship, i.e. direct or indirect, linear etc., as well as the direction of the relationship has been hard to comprehend.¹

This research has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. It has touched on many areas of sport marketing and given that the length of this paper is limited, it has been complicated to ensure elaboration throughout the whole work. Thus, more detailed research on each of the issue areas analysed is believed to be worthwhile. This investigation has been planned for particularly *Finnish conditions*. Therefore, congruent research may be beneficial to conduct periodically for *any* Finnish semi-professional and professional

¹ For example, correlation measures between factors of fan satisfaction and fan identification.

football clubs, in order to enhance the level of marketing management and be able to fulfil the requirements of fans and sponsors. Regularity is a key point here, because this makes it possible to compare results from various periods and measure improvement. Accordingly, it seems reasonable that JJK should carry out similar research on a regular basis. A similar research could serve as a tool to increase stability and profitability for the long-term future of the club.

To conclude, the purpose of the current study was to determine relationships between different variables that characterise the marketing activity of Football Club JJK Jyväskylä, a semi-professional sport club from Finland, during the course of the 2008 season. This research has presented several remarkable results using four methods of research. Firstly, secondary sources were used to get data on the club. Secondly, informal interviews were carried out to obtain information on JJK's on-field and off-field operation. Thirdly, an on-line survey was applied through which the majority of the data was collected. Finally, the last method, which was practiced every day until the conclusion of this work, and affected all the other research methods, was ethnography/participant observation.

This master's thesis has brought valuable results concerning fan satisfaction, fan identification, sponsor awareness, sponsor identification and intention to attend future games. These results could not only add to the growing body of literature on sport marketing, but also serve as recommendations to the management of JJK. It is suggested that these implications are taken into consideration in order to be able to raise the quality of marketing management and augment the level of services provided to the supporters and sponsors of the club.¹

¹ It must be noted that one year passed between the implementation of this research and writing up its conclusions. During this period of time, the management of JJK, reacting to the necessities of the changing environment, has put into action several activities in order to develop the operation of the club. Therefore, although this study intends to give recommendations to the management of JJK, it might happen in some cases that that management had already responded to the challenges that were topical one year ago, thus a few proposals of the present paper cannot be carried out anymore. However, these results are still relevant, given that they refer to the 2008 season and could be utilised as a point of comparison to potential future research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. JJK Fan Satisfaction and Identification – online questionnaire

- 1* Your age
- 2* Your gender
- 3* Place of living
- 4* Highest level of education
- 5* Status related to JJK
 Fan Fan & Sponsor
 Other, please specify:
- 6* Nationality
- 7* How many games have you attended so far this season?
 (Take into account both home and away games.)
- 8* How many of these games were home games?
- 9* Who do you usually go to the games with?
 Alone Friends Family
 Other, please specify:
- 10* Do you have a season ticket?
 Yes No

(A) Fan's satisfaction with the environment

From question 11 to 18, please mark on a scale from 1 (totally dissatisfied) to 10 (totally satisfied) your level of satisfaction.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 11* To what extent are you satisfied with the situation of the stadium?
- 12* To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of the stadium? (stands, toilet, state of the facility, etc.)
- 13 To what extent are you satisfied with the parking opportunities nearby the stadium?

14* To what extent are you satisfied with the hospitality in the stadium? (food and drinks, ticket office, announcer etc.)

15* To what extent are you satisfied with the atmosphere? (number of fans, way of supporting etc.)

Fan's satisfaction with the game

16* To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of the games of JJK?

17* To what extent are you satisfied with the results of JJK?

18* To what extent are you satisfied with the performance of JJK?

19* To which factor do you give priority from the previous ones (question 11-18) when deciding on coming to the games?

e.g. 17,15,16,13,12,14,18,11

(Indicate by putting the number of the questions from 11 to 18 in order, where the first one is the most important.)

20 What else would you consider as relevant that gives you satisfaction during a JJK game?

(B) Fan identification towards the team

Attitudinal ID

From question 21 to 27, please mark on a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 10 (highly important) the grade of importance to you of the given question.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

21* How important to you is it that JJK wins?

22* How important is being a fan of JJK to you?

23* How strongly do your friends see you as a JJK fan?

24* How strongly do you see yourself as a JJK fan?

Behavioural ID

25* During the season, how often do you follow JJK via newspaper?

26* During the season, how often do you follow JJK via internet?

27* How much do you dislike JJK-s greatest rivals?

Fan development

28* I have become a JJK fan because...

(Tick all of the boxes that apply!)

of parents and/or family members.

of coaches and/or players.

of the success of the team.

of friends.

I was born/live in the city or region.

of the good atmosphere.

Other, please specify:

(C) Probability of attending future games

29* How likely is it that you will attend JJK games for the remainder of the season?

Please mark on a scale from 1 (for sure not) to 10 (for sure) the level of probability.

30* Where do you predict that JJK will finish in the league standings?

Use numbers from 1 to 14.

31* Are you considering buying a season ticket for the next season?

Yes No

(D) Fan satisfaction related to sponsor awareness

32* Do you know if it is possible to buy JJK products in Jyvaskyla? (jersey, scarf etc.)

Yes No

33 If yes, where? Please indicate:

34* Do you have any products related to JJK?

Yes No

35 If yes, which are those? Please indicate:

36* Would you buy more if there was a wider range on offer?

Yes No

- 37 Do you remember any of the sponsors from the announcer/stadium/player's kit?
Name at least 5 of them!

Sponsor orientation

- 38* Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(Tick all of the boxes that apply!)

I pay little attention to sponsors.

I know little about sponsors but I would like to more information about sponsors' products.

If I think all the brands are the same, I try to use the sponsor's product.

The high number of sponsors in the stadium and on the players' kit confuses me.

The announcements via loudspeakers during the game are efficient.

Appendix 2. Interviews conducted with Joni Vesalainen, JJK's managing director

Interview 1.

Topic: Introduction and basic questions related to JJK

Date: 30.01.2008

Place: JJK office, Stadium Harju, Ihantolantie 1, 40720 Jyväskylä, Finland

Subject: Joni Vesalainen, club manager

Could you introduce briefly the organisation of JJK?

- ➔ There are only three full time workers
 - Joni Vesalainen – club manager
 - Antero Kivilä - Manager of the JJK youth academy
 - Ilkka Hyppönen– marketing manager
- ➔ Board of Directors
- ➔ Community ownership (ry) no companies, just individuals are involved

How did the financial and marketing background change with the improvement of the team's performance between 2006 and 2007?

- ➔ Average attendance grew from 600 to 1700
- ➔ Income from sponsors grew from 65 to 250 thousand Euros
- ➔ Sponsors support individual players but through the club (sponsor signs contract with the club)

Let's talk about the history of JJK!

- ➔ Book on JJK
- ➔ Powerpoint presentation (in Finnish language)
- ➔ JJK was founded in 1992
- ➔ JJK's predecessor was founded in 1923

Is there any cooperation between the local ice-hockey team JYP and JJK?

- ➔ No cooperation – might be possible in the future

➔ So far no JJK shop – would be too expensive for the club

Interview 2.

Topic: SWOT analysis of JJK

Date: 19.08.2008

Place: JJK office, Stadium Harju, Ihantolantie 1, 40720 Jyväskylä, Finland

Subject: Joni Vesalainen, club manager

Joni, if you think about a SWOT analysis of JJK, what points could you add to each of the four sections?

SWOT analysis is widely used in strategic management and marketing and is very helpful to evaluate a company or sport club such as JJK.

Strengths (e.g. Jyväskylä is Central-Finland's significant city; some outstanding players on First Division level...)

- 3000 under 18 years old registered players in Jyväskylä
- Large university (only sport university in the country) can offer study places in every area
- 7th biggest city in Finland

Weaknesses (e.g. old stadium without lights and heating; lack of expertise in professional football...)

- fast move from Second Division to close to Veikkausliiga (in only 2 years!)
- lack of know-how, knowledge
- stadium, facilities, economic situation of the club should be improved

Opportunities (e.g. people are interested in football in the city; companies eager to sponsor the club...)

- Veikkausliiga, for the first time in history
- Sport in the life of people in Jyväskylä is especially important), sport culture

Threats (e.g. JJK needs help to be able to meet the requirements of the Veikkausliga with respect to facilities; stadium must be refurbished and so on...)

- economic issues, unpredictability of sport, problems of covering the costs of a too expensive team (kind of dependency on factors that are hard to influence)

I would be also interested what kind of steps do you take to satisfy fans and sponsors? (apart from the good performance of the team that players should provide) (e.g. refreshments, VIP tent, half-time show, quality web-site etc.)

- Taking sponsors to fishing, to football games (Finland-Germany e.g.) to drive rally car, VIP tent etc.
- Numbered place on stands, plans to develop facilities, website, music

How do you think the brand JJK could be strengthened, and what have you done so far to achieve it? (strong merchandising; presence in media; KSML and so on)

- Responsible behaviour as an example, activities for the young, cultural issues, emphasising locality, no alcohol at games, players who go abroad or to other teams have good image

To what extent do you think sponsors are conscious when they invest their money to JJK? (Do they measure somehow the effectiveness of the sponsorship, or is it more like a 'gift' from them.)

- it is not a gift anymore, it is business, e.g.: JJK receives money from them but provides appearance and also work for many companies

You mentioned a new company form that is about to set up to take care of JJK.

- 400 000 Euros capital is needed for this company (Oy), anybody can buy shares in it (min 1%), Stricter rules applied, taxation etc.

(Still no income from broadcasting rights; Composition of income is quite different from that of other professional leagues)

- Season tickets sold in 2009: around 1000
- Survey done in Finnish on sponsor satisfaction in 2009
- Employees (structure has changed many times): Joni Vesalainen: full time, Ilkka Hyppönen: partly JJK + partly JJK juniorit, during the summer internships (partly or entirely paid by the state), accountancy outsourced
Company structure (Oy)
- 6000 shares (100e/share)
2500 owned by the 'old' JJK (but it has not been paid yet, so JJK is worth 350 000 at the moment)
28 people/companies are involved in the ownership
- 2010 spring new field with heating should be ready
- Many recommendations arrive on new players day by day
- No organized fan club yet
- Vision: in 5 years JJK should be a strong middle team in the league with a chance to obtain a position that entitles the Club to play international cup games

Appendix 3. Correlation between factors of fan satisfaction and fan identification

Correlations between factors of fan satisfaction and identification

| | | Satisfaction with the situation of the stadium | Satisfaction with the quality of the stadium | Satisfaction with the parking opportunities nearby the stadium | Satisfaction with the hospitality in the stadium | Satisfaction with the atmosphere | Satisfaction with the quality of the games of JJK | Satisfaction with the results of JJK | Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | Importance of JJK winning | Importance of being a JJK fan | Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan | Degree of being a JJK fan | Following JJK via newspaper during the season | Following JJK via Internet during the season | Degree of disliking JJK's greatest rivals |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|--|---|
| Satisfaction with the situation of the stadium | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | 1 188 | ,408** ,000 188 | ,184* ,012 184 | ,257** ,000 188 | ,144* ,049 188 | ,206** ,005 188 | ,152* ,038 188 | ,110 ,133 188 | -,001 ,994 188 | -,044 ,549 188 | ,066 ,367 188 | ,033 ,650 188 | ,085 ,247 188 | ,113 ,122 188 | ,008 ,913 188 |
| Satisfaction with the quality of the stadium | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,408** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,382** ,000 184 | ,562** ,000 188 | ,227** ,002 188 | ,259** ,000 188 | ,093 ,203 188 | ,155* ,034 188 | -,047 ,526 188 | ,023 ,758 188 | ,079 ,281 188 | ,001 ,994 188 | ,062 ,397 188 | ,113 ,123 188 | ,030 ,679 188 |
| Satisfaction with the parking opportunities nearby the stadium | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,184* ,012 184 | ,382** ,000 184 | 1 ,000 184 | ,326** ,000 184 | ,212** ,004 184 | ,183* ,013 184 | ,043 ,562 184 | ,078 ,295 184 | ,037 ,621 184 | ,042 ,569 184 | -,032 ,665 184 | ,033 ,654 184 | -,053 ,476 184 | ,024 ,745 184 | ,102 ,170 184 |
| Satisfaction with the hospitality in the stadium | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,257** ,000 188 | ,562** ,000 188 | ,326** ,000 184 | 1 ,000 188 | ,428** ,000 188 | ,399** ,000 188 | ,167* ,022 188 | ,304** ,000 188 | ,199** ,006 188 | ,081 ,269 188 | ,171* ,019 188 | ,022 ,769 188 | ,126 ,085 188 | ,118 ,106 188 | -,013 ,859 188 |
| Satisfaction with the atmosphere | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,144* ,049 188 | ,227** ,002 188 | ,212** ,004 184 | ,428** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,465** ,000 188 | ,318* ,000 188 | ,436* ,000 188 | ,003 ,966 188 | ,072 ,329 188 | ,070 ,341 188 | ,062 ,395 188 | ,057 ,440 188 | -,115 ,116 188 | ,010 ,891 188 |
| Satisfaction with the quality of the games of JJK | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,206** ,005 188 | ,259** ,000 188 | ,183* ,013 184 | ,399** ,000 188 | ,465** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,493** ,000 188 | ,725** ,000 188 | ,180* ,013 188 | ,266** ,000 188 | ,252** ,000 188 | ,268** ,000 188 | ,163* ,025 188 | ,249** ,001 188 | ,057 ,437 188 |
| Satisfaction with the results of JJK | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,152* ,038 188 | ,093 ,203 188 | ,043 ,562 184 | ,167* ,022 188 | ,318** ,000 188 | ,493** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,695** ,000 188 | ,098 ,183 188 | ,156* ,033 188 | ,214** ,003 188 | ,126 ,085 188 | ,061 ,407 188 | ,203** ,005 188 | -,017 ,821 188 |
| Satisfaction with the performance of JJK | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,110 ,133 188 | ,155* ,034 188 | ,078 ,295 184 | ,304** ,000 188 | ,436** ,000 188 | ,725** ,000 188 | ,695** ,000 188 | 1 ,016 188 | ,176* ,000 188 | ,264** ,000 188 | ,216** ,003 188 | ,256** ,000 188 | ,085 ,246 188 | ,194** ,008 188 | -,020 ,788 188 |
| Importance of JJK winning | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | -,001 ,994 188 | -,047 ,526 188 | ,037 ,621 184 | ,199** ,006 188 | ,003 ,966 188 | ,180* ,013 188 | ,098 ,183 188 | ,176* ,016 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,547** ,000 188 | ,432** ,000 188 | ,535** ,000 188 | ,308** ,000 188 | ,229** ,002 188 | ,270** ,000 188 |
| Importance of being a JJK fan | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,044 ,549 188 | ,023 ,758 188 | ,042 ,569 184 | ,081 ,269 188 | ,072 ,329 188 | ,266** ,000 188 | ,156* ,033 188 | ,264** ,000 188 | ,547** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,752** ,000 188 | ,843** ,000 188 | ,380** ,000 188 | ,305** ,000 188 | ,338** ,000 188 |
| Degree of being seen by friends as a JJK fan | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,066 ,367 188 | ,079 ,281 188 | -,032 ,665 184 | ,171* ,019 188 | ,070 ,341 188 | ,252** ,000 188 | ,214** ,003 188 | ,216** ,000 188 | ,432** ,000 188 | ,752** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,756** ,000 188 | ,387** ,000 188 | ,463** ,000 188 | ,357** 188 |
| Degree of being a JJK fan | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,033 ,650 188 | ,001 ,994 188 | ,033 ,654 184 | ,022 ,769 188 | ,062 ,395 188 | ,268** ,000 188 | ,126 ,085 188 | ,256** ,000 188 | ,535** ,000 188 | ,843** ,000 188 | ,756** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,421** ,000 188 | ,405** ,000 188 | ,346** 188 |
| Following JJK via newspaper during the season | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,085 ,247 188 | ,062 ,397 188 | -,053 ,476 184 | ,126 ,085 188 | ,057 ,440 188 | ,163* ,001 188 | ,061 ,005 188 | ,085 ,246 188 | ,308** ,000 188 | ,380** ,000 188 | ,387** ,000 188 | ,421** ,000 188 | 1 ,000 188 | ,418** ,000 188 | ,199** 188 |
| Following JJK via Internet during the season | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,113 ,122 188 | ,113 ,123 188 | ,024 ,745 184 | ,118 ,106 188 | -,115 ,116 188 | ,249** ,001 188 | ,203* ,005 188 | ,194** ,002 188 | ,229** ,000 188 | ,305** ,000 188 | ,463** ,000 188 | ,405** ,000 188 | ,418** ,000 188 | 1 188 | ,179* ,014 188 |
| Degree of disliking JJK's greatest rivals | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | ,008 ,913 188 | ,030 ,679 188 | ,102 ,170 184 | -,013 ,859 188 | ,010 ,891 188 | ,057 ,437 188 | -,017 ,821 188 | -,020 ,788 188 | ,270** ,000 188 | ,338** ,000 188 | ,357** ,000 188 | ,346** ,000 188 | ,199** ,006 188 | ,179* ,014 188 | 1 188 |

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

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