Exploring sport brand double jeopardy: The link between team market share and attitudinal loyalty

Keywords: Double Jeopardy, Attitudinal loyalty, Brand associations, Sport Fans

Abstract

Marketers are charged with the responsibility of attracting consumers and encouraging loyalty to their brands. Double Jeopardy, a marketing law observed across numerous product and service settings, contends that loyalty is largely influenced by a brand's market share. There have been suggestions that sport may be one of a few areas immune to such effects, providing researchers with an opportunity to test how sport brand loyalty may be impacted by market share. The current research capitalises on this opportunity by assessing the effects of market share on attitudinal loyalty reported by a sample of 794 Australian sport fans. ANOVA tests revealed fans of high market share brands displayed higher levels of attitudinal loyalty towards their favourite teams in comparison to small market share team fans. Further tests revealed differences existed in terms of the brand association perceptions held by high and small market share team fans, and how these contributed to predicting attitudinal loyalty. Consequently, sport marketers should be cognisant of double jeopardy effects when evaluating sport brands and formulating marketing strategies, though future research is needed to determine the full applicability of double jeopardy within the sport context.

Exploring sport brand double jeopardy: The link between team market share and attitudinal loyalty

1. Introduction

In order to better assess brand performance and to build relationships with consumers, marketers must understand the factors that shape consumer behaviour. Established empirical generalisations, or laws, are based on a phenomenon being observed across a number of contexts and provide marketers with a base to formulate effective marketing strategies (Dawes, 2008; Hand, 2011). One of these laws, double jeopardy, proposes small market share brands not only have fewer buyers than their larger competitors, but that the few buyers they do have are also slightly less loyal (Ehrenberg, Goodhardt, & Barwise, 1990). This effect results from small share brands typically having lower levels of distribution and awareness, meaning that their buyers find other brands easier to buy and easier to recall, leading to the observed lower loyalty (Sharp, 2010).

Researchers have theorised that sport may be one of the few areas where double jeopardy does not apply (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharp, 2010), but it is not a context that has been investigated in detail. Sport has been described as a unique consumer setting given the highly emotional relationship that exists between fans and their preferred teams (Shank & Beasley, 1998). From a theoretical perspective this emotional connection may explain why sport might resist double jeopardy effects; however no existing research has yet tested this claim. Therefore, opportunities to extend understandings of the sport consumer exist. This paper acknowledges Chalip's (2006) and Fink's (2012) suggestion that sport management research that contributes most strongly to the theoretical development of the discipline is that which has the sport context at the core of its application. Specifically, we explored potential differences in the brand association perceptions and attitudinal loyalty exhibited by fans of small and high market share teams within a single market. Although not an exhaustive double

jeopardy test, the current research offers a starting point to explore the validity of sport brand double jeopardy and provides advancements to sport management theory and practice.

This manuscript is presented in the following format. First, a literature review discussing double jeopardy, loyalty, and brand associations is provided. Second, an overview of the research context is presented where high market share and small market share sport teams are conceptualised. Third, the methods chosen to guide the research are described. Finally, the results, discussion and implications are included along with an acknowledgement of limitations and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Double Jeopardy

The term double jeopardy refers to the multiple challenges faced by small brands in comparison to their larger competitors. Specifically, double jeopardy contends that a small brand is at a disadvantage to a larger competitor in terms of their smaller number of buyers and the fact that its buyers tend to be less loyal (Ehrenberg et al., 1990; Hand, 2011). The two effects are related in that purchasers of the popular brand will be more likely to find their preferred brand at the time of purchase due to wider distribution channels, whereas those who buy a lesser known brand may be forced to choose the popular brand if they cannot locate their usual choice (Ehrenberg et al., 1990; Sharp, 2010).

Double jeopardy effects have been observed across a number of diverse consumption settings extending back to the early 1960's. Some industries found to experience double jeopardy effects include: comic strip and radio announcer preference, instant coffee choice, television series viewership, newspaper readership, sanitary product buying, soap purchasing, and airline gasoline contracts (c.f., Chaudhuri, 1995; Donthu, 1994; Ehrenberg et al., 1990; Martin Jnr, 1973; McPhee, 1963). More recent validation has been provided in unique

settings such as: Chinese groceries and hair products (Uncles & Kwok, 2008; Yang, Bi, & Zhou, 2005), Australian beer (Dawes, 2008), Thailand car brand choice (Bennett & Graham, 2010), and the U.K performing arts industry (Hand, 2011). This replication and validation across a variety of contexts indicates double jeopardy would likely apply across most consumer settings. However, researchers have speculated there may remain contexts which are immune to double jeopardy (Dowling & Uncles, 1997; Sharp, 2010). Thus, researching previously unexplored contexts further tests the generalisability of double jeopardy (e.g., Dawes, 2008).

2.1.1 Double Jeopardy Exceptions

Dowling and Uncles (1997) proposed that whilst the repeat purchasing of most brands may be predicted in accordance with double jeopardy, certain brands may be immune due to environmental influences. Such brands have been described as those occupying a niche in the marketplace, those with unusually high loyalty and those with situation specific use; termed niche, super-loyalty and change-of-pace brands respectively (Dowling & Uncles, 1997).

Niche brands are those which are small but possess a higher number of buyers who are more loyal than expected (e.g., early versions of subculture influenced brands like Monster Energy drink). Super-loyalty brands represent popular brands with higher than expected purchase rates (e.g., Apple's focus on design and functionality has created cult-like following amongst buyers, although data suggests they deviate only slightly from expected repurchase rates (Sharp, 2010)). Change-of-pace brands are those which report high market share but are purchased less frequently than double jeopardy would suggest due to situational confounds (e.g., a person who would ordinarily buy full strength alcoholic drinks may buy a low alcohol brand in situations where they are required to drive) (Dowling & Uncles, 1997). For a diagrammatical representation of the interaction between the loyalty and market share enjoyed by these brands in relation to double jeopardy brands, please see Figure 1.

=====INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE=====

Although the uniqueness of niche, super-loyalty and change-of-pace brands may make them immune to double jeopardy effects they are far less prevalent than the brands which are governed by the double jeopardy law (Dowling & Uncles, 1997). However, the sport context may be exceptional in this respect.

2.1.2 Sport Brand Double Jeopardy

Sport leagues typically contain both “Star” and “Underdog” teams with varying levels of success, popularity and subsequent market share (Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein, & Kunkel, 2010). The English Premier League for example contains high market share teams such as Manchester United and Arsenal, along with small market share teams such as Wigan Athletic. Despite the disparity of market share present in sport leagues, anecdotal evidence suggests underdog teams may attract fans as loyal as their star team counterparts. Certain small market share teams continually fill their stadiums with fans that could easily choose to switch their support to star teams. Switching support to star teams would be attractive given the increased opportunities to consume the brand (through greater media coverage) and provide benefits from greater ‘network externalities’ (c.f., Katz & Shapiro, 1985) such as opportunities to interact with more like-minded fans. However, this type of brand switching is rarely reported in the sport context (McDonald & Stavros, 2007). The infrequency in which sport fans switch team support in comparison to other consumptive situations may be explained by the tribal, highly emotional relationship characterising the fan-team bond (Shank & Beasley, 1998). For these reasons, it is conceivable that the sport context might operate differently from the numerous settings where loyalty following the double jeopardy line has been observed. Indeed, the unusually high levels of loyalty present in the sport context may indicate sport brands operate outside the double jeopardy line as niche brands

(Dowling & Uncles, 1997) though this claim remains unsubstantiated. To date, no empirical research has yet explored the validity of sport brand double jeopardy. However, previous sport management research has noted the theory may be useful as a framework to understand brand loyalty enjoyed by teams.

In their study exploring the link between brand associations and brand loyalty, Gladden and Funk (2001) discussed double jeopardy in the context of sport team support. Although described as a “useful way to examine market share differences among sport teams and their enthusiasts” (Gladden & Funk, 2001, p.70), ultimately double jeopardy was suggested as not applicable to sport team brands due to the finite resources, such as the geographic restrictions and stadium sizes, available in sport as compared to other consumer markets. Whilst this claim may be valid in some contexts (e.g., a limited number of tickets can be sold per game), technology ensures sport consumers are not limited to consume the sport product via live attendance only, as evidenced by increasingly large international supporter bases (c.f., Kerr & Gladden, 2008) and consumption of ‘digital’ products by consumers outside of teams home markets (Hutchins & Rowe, 2009). Sharp (2010) briefly posited that sport brands may not follow double jeopardy patterns simply because the nature of sport demands high involvement and loyalty to one team. On the other hand, general team preferences exhibited by international fans lends weight to the likelihood that sport brand double jeopardy may be a plausible phenomenon. Specifically, international supporters display a tendency to gravitate towards high market share teams, as evidenced by Manchester United’s popularity in countries like China where supporters outnumber those located in Britain (c.f., Kerr & Gladden, 2008). Thus, the potential usefulness of double jeopardy in sport warrants further investigation. Exploring how market share may influence the brand associations linked to teams and how market share may impact on attitudinal loyalty represents a useful way to further knowledge surrounding double jeopardy (e.g., Dawes,

2008; Dowling & Uncles, 1997; Hand, 2011) and its applicability to the sport context (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharp, 2010). Accordingly, this research advances and tests, a number of hypotheses related to attitudinal loyalty of sport fans that align with the established nature of the double jeopardy law.

2.2 Conceptualising Loyalty

One key element of double jeopardy contends that high market share brand buyers are more loyal to their selected brand than small market share brand buyers are to their brands (Ehrenberg et al., 1990). Oliver (1999, p. 34) defined brand loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing.” This conceptualisation suggests brand loyalty is comprised of both attitudinal and behavioural characteristics. Whilst loyalty may be conceptualised in a number of ways and measured using a variety of metrics (Dawes, 2008), most research contends loyalty contains attitudinal and behavioural elements (e.g., Day, 1969; Dick & Basu, 1994; Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Li, 2010; Yang et al., 2005). Attitudinal components of loyalty are comprised of an individual’s degree of positive attitudes towards a particular brand, whereas behavioural loyalty may be measured by assessing the usage rates of a particular brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

As with the wider marketing literature addressed above, sport brand loyalty has also been described as consisting of both attitudes and behaviours (Mahony, Madrigal, & Howard, 2000). In the sport context, attitudinal loyalty may be conceptualised as possessing committed and persistent attitudes towards a particular team. Generating such loyalty is an important concept for sport marketers who must build and maintain their fan bases in increasingly competitive environments (Filo, Funk, & Alexandris, 2008; James, Kolbe, & Trail, 2002; McDonald, 2010). For this research we investigate the link between market share and the formation of *one* component of loyalty, attitudinal loyalty, only. This decision was

made due to the exploratory nature of the research and support from the literature concerning the attitude-behaviour link (c.f., Eagly & Chaiken, 1984; Fazio, 1990; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Thus, we focus on attitudinal loyalty indicators and outcomes which may be influenced by market share and offer the following hypothesis in relation to attitudinal loyalty for high and small market share team fans:

Hypothesis 1. In comparing high market share and small market share sport teams, fans of high market share sport teams will report significantly higher attitudinal loyalty scores towards their favourite teams than fans of small market share sport teams will report towards their favourite teams.

The above hypothesis provides a preliminary way to explore sport brand double jeopardy and to assess if market share may impact on the attitudinal loyalty directed towards sport brands. Brand associations, reviewed next, provide another key indicator to consumer loyalty. An outline of brand associations and their use within sport management research is now included.

2.3 Brand Associations

Brand associations represent links that exist within a consumer's mind concerning a brand (Aaker, 1991) and represent key predictors to brand loyalty. Such associations help an individual to determine the perceived attractiveness of the brand, and ultimately boost the brand's salience and likelihood of consumption (Romaniuk, 2012; Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2011). For these reasons, brand associations represent key indicators to behavioural patronage or brand use (Romaniuk, 2012). Researchers posit the more associations a person links to a brand, the more likely they will be to select that brand (Romaniuk, 2003; 2012; Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2011) and become loyal brand consumers (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2003).

Such choices and loyalty are attributed to the large number of associations creating ‘mental market share’ whereby the brand is more likely to be thought about and considered for use in a larger number of scenarios (Romaniuk, 2012). For example, a person who links attending a sport team’s matches with entertainment, the opportunity to socialise with friends and the chance to escape from their daily life would consider that option should they require excitement, friendship or stress relief. On the other hand, a person who only associates sport team attendance with entertainment would be more inclined to think about alternate leisure options (e.g., attending the movies with friends) should they require social interaction and a break from their daily life. Intuitively, the strength to which each brand association (e.g., how strongly a sport team is associated with providing entertainment) is linked to a brand will also likely influence their propensity to select the brand.

2.3.1 Sport Team Brand Associations and Loyalty

Sport organisations are becoming increasingly aware that they must manage their teams as brands in order to attract customers and provide a superior customer service experience (Ross, 2006; Ross, James, & Vargas, 2006). Sport team brand associations represent the attributes, benefits and attitudes a consumer perceives as being linked to a given team (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Such associations may be used to understand the emotional and experiential benefits which are provided through following sport teams (Gladden & Funk, 2002). For example, a person may be drawn to support Barcelona F.C. due to the perception that the team plays high quality football, provides the individual with an escape from their daily life, and possesses star players such as Lionel Messi and Francesc Fabregas.

Over the last decade, researchers have developed and refined scales which illustrate the various associations consumers link to their preferred sport teams (c.f., Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler, 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001; 2002; Ross et al., 2006; Ross, Russell, & Bang, 2008) and more recently, leagues (Kunkel, Funk, & King, in press). The

most widely used team brand association scale is the Team Association Scale (TAS) (Gladden & Funk, 2001) and is employed in the current study.

The TAS measures thirteen attributes (8) and benefits (5) found to be associated with sport teams. The brand associations identified as attributes are linked to perceptions of a team's; Success, Star Player, Head Coach, Management, Logo Design, Stadium, Product Delivery and Tradition. Meanwhile, the brand associations titled Escape, Fan Identification, Peer Group Acceptance, Nostalgia and Pride in Place capture associations identified as benefits. Whilst sport brands have been proposed as an area which may not display double jeopardy effects (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharp, 2010), the differences in exposure and accessibility between high and small market share teams would likely impact on the associations fans link to these respective teams. Therefore we offer the following hypothesis in relation to the brand association strengths of high and small market share teams:

Hypothesis 2. In comparing high market share and small market share sport teams, fans of high market share sport teams will report significantly higher brand association scores towards their favourite teams than fans of small market share sport teams will report towards their favourite teams.

As well as indicators of a brand's attractiveness, brand associations represent one area of sport consumer research previously linked to sport team loyalty, with TAS scale again featuring prominently in such research. For example, in a study of American sport fans Gladden and Funk (2001) found seven of the TAS associations to be predictive of fan loyalty - Fan Identification, Nostalgia, Peer Group Acceptance, Escape, Tradition, Product Delivery and Star Player. Elsewhere, Funk (2002) demonstrated that six of the TAS associations (Star Player, Fan Identification, Nostalgia, Product Delivery, Success and Escape) could be used to classify American sport fans into one of three loyalty groups with 74% accuracy. More

recently, Filo and colleagues (2008) tested the link between brand associations and loyalty using brand trust as a meditational variable. Using two sport brand contexts, managed sport brands in Australia and fitness brands in Greece, the link between seven brand associations and loyalty was examined. Results indicated a significant relationship existed between loyalty and Management, and loyalty and Popularity (an aggregate measure of Tradition and Success) for both samples. Additionally, loyalty and Nostalgia, and loyalty and Fan Identification (termed Vicarious Achievement) possessed a significant relationship for the managed brand sample.

Overall, the abovementioned research has linked brand associations with loyalty and provided a basis for deeper exploration of brand associations and attitudinal loyalty. An opportunity exists to extend this research which links brand associations with loyalty, by investigating possible differences between brand association perceptions and their influence on attitudinal loyalty based on a team's market share. Based on the above review, the following hypotheses are offered in relation to the link between brand associations and attitudinal loyalty for both high and small market share teams:

Hypothesis 3. A greater number of brand associations will be predictive of attitudinal loyalty for high market share sport team fans when compared to the number of brand associations which are predictive of attitudinal loyalty for small market share team fans.

Hypothesis 4. A greater amount of the variance in attitudinal loyalty will be explained by the brand associations held by high market share sport team fans when compared to the amount of variance in attitudinal loyalty which is explained by the brand associations held by small market share team fans.

In summary, the above studies have linked brand associations held by sport consumers with loyalty and provide the current research with a rationale to explore sport

brand double jeopardy. Despite sport being proposed as an area that could be possibly immune to double jeopardy (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharp, 2010), the wide distribution and variation in market shares held by different sport teams, suggests that double jeopardy effects may in fact manifest within the sport consumer research setting. This would be apparent in consistent and predictable variations in the attitudinal loyalty and brand association perceptions of high and small market share team fans. This position is taken here, given the established nature of the double jeopardy law and the replication of its effects across diverse sectors. Overall, we hypothesise that sport teams, are susceptible to the double jeopardy effect. An overview of the method used to conduct this research is now presented.

3. Method

In order to explore the possible attitudinal manifestations of sport brand double jeopardy, it was important to select a context where sport teams with varying levels of market share existed. Most cities in the world play host to sport teams representing a variety of sports which attract varying amounts of popularity. Of these teams, some are well supported and enjoy high market share (e.g., London's Arsenal Football Club) whilst others enjoy less market share (e.g., London's Broncos Rugby League Club). In designing an appropriate setting to examine sport brand double jeopardy, a region that possesses both high and low market share sport teams was selected.

3.1 Research Context

In the Australian sport market place, two codes compete for the title of Australia's most popular spectator sport - the Australian Football League (AFL) and the National Rugby League (NRL) (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2009). Although both codes are popular in Australia, certain geographic regions display clear preferences for one over the other (McDonald, Karg, & Lock, 2010). For example, the NRL is the dominant sport in the

state of New South Wales, whereas AFL is less popular in the region. The NRL has nine Sydney-based NRL teams, with a history dating back to 1908. On the other hand, the AFL has only one Sydney based team (Sydney Swans) and traditionally enjoys more popularity in Australia's southern and western states.

In order to successfully represent high and small market share sport brands in the current study, we focus on contrasting NRL team fans (conceptualised as high market share team fans) and AFL team fans (conceptualised as small market share team fans) residing in the capital city of New South Wales, Sydney. This approach is based on a broad definition of product category (e.g., professional sport) as opposed to a narrower code or league based view (e.g., AFL). The decision to combine fans of all the Sydney NRL teams into our high market share brand sample was made as the NRL and AFL may be considered in the same product category in the mind of the consumer (e.g., professional football). Such an approach is appropriate due to the contextual bounds of the research where Sydney residents are more likely to be exposed to the NRL (regardless of which team they follow) than the AFL based on the greater opportunity to consume NRL either in person (e.g., attending games, talking to friends who follow NRL) or via the media (e.g., televised matches). This disparity in market share provides an appropriate setting to test the applicability of sport brand double jeopardy and our specified hypotheses, as the patterns have been found to hold at both narrow and broad definitions of 'product market' (Ehrenberg et al., 1990).

3.2 Participants

Participants ($n = 794$) were Sydney residents identified as fans of a Sydney-based NRL or AFL team. A total of 627 NRL fans and 167 AFL fans formed our sample. Respondents were likely to be male (55%), identify ethnically as Oceanic (Australian, New Zealander or Pacific Islander) (64%) and reported an average age of 41 years. Nearly one-third (29%) indicated their annual household income was between \$51,000 - \$100,999

Australian dollars. Comparisons with Australian Government data indicated our sample was representative of the greater Sydney population. For example, the average Sydney resident is likely to be male (53%), aged 25-44 (49%) and earn an average annual income of \$52,716 (ABS, 2010). Chi-square analyses suggested that NRL and AFL fans did not significantly differ on any of these demographic indicators.

3.3 Materials

Participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire created with survey builder Qualtrics. Online research has increased in popularity in the last decade due to the benefits the medium provides over traditional research methods. Suggested advantages include; higher response rates, reduced overall costs, increased turnaround times, less respondent error and improved aesthetic and design capabilities (Bech & Kristensen, 2009; Birnbaum, 2004; Wright, 2005). Based on these advantages and logistical constraints, our questionnaire was developed and distributed online.

The online questionnaire contained the following items. First, 13 seven-point Likert scale items anchored with *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7) measuring the established team brand associations of Success, Star Players, Head Coach, Management, Logo Design, Product Delivery, Tradition, Nostalgia, Pride in Place, Escape, Fan Identification, Peer Group Acceptance and Stadium (Gladden & Funk, 2001; 2002) were included. Although the use of single-item measures is sometimes questioned, in certain situations a single-item approach provides benefits over a multi-item approach, especially when a number of constructs are measured and respondents may become fatigued or lose interest in an overburdening survey (Kwon & Trail, 2005). Recent research has also found comparable levels of reliability and validity between multi-item and single-item measures of the same construct (Jordan & Turner, 2008), suggesting a single-item approach to be an effective and efficient method of measurement. For these reasons and given the exploratory

nature of the current study, measuring each brand association with a single-item was deemed to be an acceptable approach.

Second, five seven-point Likert scale items anchored with *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7) measuring the multi-item construct attitudinal loyalty were included. The five items were taken from established scales and measured attitudinal loyalty by assessing respondent commitment and purchasing intent (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Pritchard, Havitz, & Howard, 1999). Third, respondents were asked to answer demographic questions concerning their gender, age, income and ethnicity. A full list of the items used is provided in the appendix.

3.4 Procedures

A link to the questionnaire was sent to 8000 email addresses identified by an external market research panel provider as belonging to Sydney residents. The research invitation first provided information regarding the nature of the research. Subsequent instructions informed the recipient of the time required to complete the questionnaire (approximately 10 minutes) and invited them to click on the link should they wish to participate. Participants were first asked to indicate their favourite sport and then their favourite sport team, from any code. A total of 2551 respondents completed the survey. Indicating the NRL is the most popular code in Sydney, 44% nominated the code as their favourite, compared with 24% of the sample who preferred AFL. Considering double jeopardy theory, this indication of market share supported our conceptualisation of NRL teams being high market share and AFL teams being small market share brands within the Sydney sport consumer context. In order to assess the effects of market share on the brand association perceptions and attitudinal loyalty linked to sport teams, only those individuals who were both currently living in Sydney and supported either a Sydney-based NRL or AFL team were used in our analysis. This condition ensured that all respondents were from a heterogeneous marketplace and were exposed to the same

media outlets and environmental factors, thus making it possible to account for high and small market share differences.

Of our 2551 completed, usable surveys, 794 (31%) indicated a favourite Sydney-based team in either the NRL or AFL and satisfied our criteria for inclusion. After reducing our original dataset to only include fans of Sydney-based NRL and AFL teams, an overall response rate of 10% was observed. Whilst we acknowledge this response rate is not high; it was necessary to only include these particular respondents to test our hypotheses in a suitably controlled environment. Additionally, any problems associated with a low response rate are offset by the sample being drawn from representative members of the general public, which provide a more robust sample than other methods (e.g., McDonald, 2010) and keep sport firmly positioned as the foci of this investigation (Chalip, 2006; Fink, 2012). To test our hypotheses, data were downloaded into a statistical software package for analysis.

3.5 Analysis

SPSS version 20.0 was selected to analyse our data. Data analysis consisted of the following steps. First, a reliability estimate for our attitudinal loyalty construct was calculated to ensure the items were accurately representing the construct of interest. Both samples (high market share brands = .91, small market share brands = .89) reported Cronbach alpha scores above the recommended threshold (0.70) suggesting the items were a reliable measurement of a single construct (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Second, the five items were aggregated to form our attitudinal loyalty construct. Third, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple linear regression (MLR) tests were conducted to address our hypotheses. ANOVA was selected to statistically test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 by comparing the mean scores reported by our high market share (NRL) and small market share (AFL) sport team fans for attitudinal loyalty and each of the 13 sport team brand associations. Further MLR tests were selected to determine which associations were significant predictors of attitudinal loyalty,

which addressed Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4. Results related to our hypotheses are presented below.

4. Results

ANOVA results indicated that fans of high market share teams possessed stronger levels of attitudinal loyalty than those fans who reported following the small market share team. Additionally, the ANOVA results indicated that fans of high market share teams held significantly stronger associations towards their teams than did small market share team fans. Specifically, nine of the 13 team brand associations were significantly different between the high market share and small market share conditions. The associations Success, Star Player, Logo, Tradition, Nostalgia, Pride in Place, Fan Identification and Escape were significantly higher amongst the Sydney-based NRL team fans than AFL team fan sample. In contrast; the association Peer Group Acceptance was significantly higher for the small marker share team fans. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is partially supported. See Table 1 for a full list of mean scores, standard deviations and significance levels reported for attitudinal loyalty and the brand association items. Based on the ANOVA results, Hypothesis 1 was supported and Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

=====INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE=====

Results of the MLR analyses address Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 by examining the link between the sport team brand associations and attitudinal loyalty for our high and small market share team fan samples. As per previous research (e.g., Gladden & Funk, 2001), our attitudinal loyalty construct represented the dependent variable, whereas the 13 TAS associations acted as the independent variables. The regression analysis examined which associations explained a significant proportion of the variance in the attitudinal loyalty

construct as well as how much variance within attitudinal loyalty was explained by the brand associations. Discriminant validity was achieved across both samples as all of the correlation coefficients contained within the correlation matrices were well below the recommended cut-off point of .85 (Kline, 1998). Additionally, the variance inflation factor (VIF) scores for all of our predictors were well below the suggested cut-off value of 10.0 indicating multicollinearity was not a problem (Myers, 1990; Kennedy, 2003). Results for both samples are presented in Tables 2 and 3 below.

=====INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE=====

=====INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE=====

Results of the MLR analysis for small market share team fans revealed the 13 brand associations contributed to attitudinal loyalty. Investigation of the adjusted R-squared statistic demonstrated that the 13 brand associations explained 59% ($R^2 = .59$) of the variance reported in attitudinal loyalty $F(13,153) = 19.10$. Further investigation revealed five of the 13 included brand associations significantly contributed to attitudinal loyalty. The associations Nostalgia ($b = .31$), Success ($b = .26$), Logo ($b = .19$) and Product Delivery ($b = .18$) were found to have a significantly positive relationship with attitudinal loyalty, whereas Peer Group Acceptance ($b = -.14$) reported a significantly negative relationship with attitudinal loyalty.

Results of the MLR analysis for high market share team fans also revealed that the 13 brand associations contributed to attitudinal loyalty. In this case, the 13 brand associations explained 57% ($R^2 = .57$) of the variance present in attitudinal loyalty $F(13,613) = 65.39$. A total of eight of the 13 brand associations were significantly linked to attitudinal loyalty. The associations Nostalgia ($b = .35$), Success ($b = .22$), Fan Identification ($b = .13$), Product Delivery ($b = .18$) and Logo ($b = .09$) were found to have a significantly positive relationship with attitudinal loyalty, whereas Peer Group Acceptance ($b = -.12$), Stadium ($b = -.08$) and

Management ($b = -.08$) reported a significantly negative relationship with attitudinal loyalty. Based on these results, Hypotheses 3 was partially supported and Hypothesis 4 was not supported. A discussion of these results is now presented.

5. Discussion

The paper explored potential differences in the brand association perceptions and attitudinal loyalty exhibited toward small and large market share teams from a single market. This research employed the double jeopardy marketing law as a foundation to extend knowledge related to the associations which fans link to sport teams as well as the attitudinal component of sport team loyalty. Although double jeopardy has been observed in a number of consumer purchasing scenarios, sport is one suggested area where the effect may not apply (Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharp, 2010). Based on our results, the notion of double jeopardy within the sports marketplace has partial support, however further research should be conducted within the sport context to extend our findings.

Hypothesis 1 investigated whether or not high market share teams attracted significantly higher levels of attitudinal loyalty from their fans in relation to the attitudinal loyalty small market share team fans displayed towards their teams. Findings indicate market share is positively related to loyalty strength with high market share team fans reporting significantly higher loyalty scores than their small market share team counterparts. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported. This finding suggests that high market share sport brands potentially have fans that exhibit stronger loyalty than small market share sport brand fans. Results indicate sport consumer loyalty operates similar to a range of goods and services purchasing scenarios which previous research has examined (e.g., Chaudhuri, 1995; Dawes, 2008; Donthu, 1994; Ehrenberg et al., 1990; Hand, 2011; Martin Jnr, 1973; McPhee, 1963; Uncles & Kwok, 2008; Yang et al., 2005).

Hypothesis 2 assessed whether or not the brand associations linked in the mind of high market share and small market share team fans were significantly different. A range of established sport team brand associations were used as one indicator of loyalty based on previous research (Gladden & Funk, 2001). Previous research has positively associated brand associations with brand choice propensity (Romaniuk, 2003) and with loyalty (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2003). Providing partial support for Hypothesis 2, results indicated nine of the 13 identified brand associations linked to sport teams were significantly different for high market share and small market share teams. Higher Tradition, Pride in Place and Nostalgia scores may be explained by the NRL's rich history and popularity in the Sydney market. The higher scores for Success, Star Player, Logo and Fan Identification may be attributed to the extra socialising agents such as friends, family, social institutions, sponsors and the media facilitating awareness and stronger fandom for high market share teams (Funk & James, 2001; 2006; McPhee, 1963).

Romaniuk's (2012) claim that brand use also influences brand association perceptions may also explain why high market share team fans perceived stronger brand associations for their preferred teams. The increased opportunities to encounter NRL team brands through media coverage, game attendance or through word of mouth would enhance high market share team fans' knowledge of the team. Relating this to attitudinal loyalty, the increased market share enjoyed by high market share teams enables them to better generate favourable brand associations by consistently promoting the desired message to their customers. As a result, high market share consumers arguably have a more consistent and favourable perception of their preferred sport team brands leading to higher attitudinal loyalty.

Hypothesis 3 extended previous research (Filo et al., 2008; Funk, 2002; Gladden & Funk, 2001) by exploring how market share may influence the link between brand associations and attitudinal loyalty. MLR analyses were conducted for both high and small

market share teams to explore if brand associations and attitudinal loyalty reported different relationships based on market share influences. Confirming Hypothesis 3, the high market share team sample possessed more significant predictors (8) than did the small market share sample (5). This finding suggests that market share influences how an individual may view the benefits and attributes linked to their favourite team, and which of these factors may significantly contribute to attitudinal loyalty.

Hypothesis 4 explored the amount of variance in attitudinal loyalty which was explained by the brand associations for both high and small market share team fans. Results of the MLR demonstrated that the sport team brand associations of small market share team fans accounted for 59% of the variance in attitudinal loyalty, whereas the sport team brand associations of high market share team fans accounted for 57% of the variance in their attitudinal loyalty. Whilst the difference in explained variance is minimal, results do not support Hypothesis 4.

Taken together, despite the non-acceptance of Hypothesis 4, our results indicate that sport brand double jeopardy is a plausible phenomenon and that a sport fan's attitudinal loyalty to their favourite team may be somewhat predicted by the market share enjoyed by that team. Overall, empirical results from the present study counter previous suggestions that sport brands may be immune to double jeopardy effects (e.g., Gladden & Funk, 2001; Sharpe, 2010). Accordingly, the present research provides preliminary validation that sport team attitudinal loyalty is influenced by market share and environmental factors linked to high and low market share teams. However, as Hypothesis 4 was not supported, future research is needed to confirm whether double jeopardy extends across the sport context, or if context operates differently to other disciplines (e.g., Fink, 2012).

5.1 Theoretical Contributions

By investigating an empirical marketing generalisation and its application to the sports marketplace, this paper has contributed to the marketing and sport management literature bases. Three broad contributions were made. First, this study was the first to explore the concept of sport brand double jeopardy, and provided partial support to extending the generalisability of the double jeopardy law. This result is notable in that it suggests that marketing efforts may be best focused primarily on increasing market share, with the knowledge that loyal consumers will follow. Therefore, sport marketers may be informed by this research when formulating their marketing strategies by placing an increased focus on building market share first and foremost.

A second contribution was made to knowledge surrounding the brand associations that fans link to their favourite teams by contrasting how high market share and small market share fans perceive their favourite teams using established brand association measures. This research extends previous sport team brand association research by examining how factors external to the individual may influence overall brand equity indicators (Gladden & Funk, 2001; 2002). Finding that high market share fans have significantly higher brand association perceptions on nine out of the 13 associations suggests the attributes and benefits associated with a given sport team is related to that team's respective market share. Such a finding informs brand management thought and may explain how external factors influence the overall perceptions attributed to sport brands.

A third contribution was made by demonstrating how market share may influence how predictive brand associations may be of attitudinal loyalty. Although high and small market share team fans have similarly constructed attitudinal loyalty, more associations were predictive of loyalty for the high market share team fans. The current research suggests that the brand associations Success, Logo, Product Delivery, Nostalgia and Peer Group Acceptance are significant predictors of attitudinal loyalty for both high and small market

share team brands. Consequently, these five associations may be viewed as the associations particularly influential in building sport team loyalty. Results also suggest that the attitudinal loyalty of high market share team fans, but not small market share team fans, is linked to perceptions surrounding the team's Stadium, Management and ability to foster Fan Identification.

5.2 Practical Contributions

Four broad practical contributions are offered to sporting organisations based on the current research findings. First, insights into strategies which build attitudinal loyalty are provided. Given that increasing an individual's exposure to a brand is likely to positively affect brand association perceptions (Romaniuk, 2012), brand choice (Romaniuk, 2003) and loyalty (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2003) sport marketers must place an increased effort on increasing their visibility and maximising their exposure. Small market share teams may wish to negotiate deals with popular venues and media outlets to ensure team matches are broadcast to a larger number of people. Tapping into social circles by way of sponsoring large scale events and drawing links with high-profile community leaders may also prove to be effective in this regard. Similarly, encouraging positive word of mouth communications by offering two-for-one ticket deals may be effective in introducing new potential consumers to the team. This suggestion is in line with the theorising of Funk and James (2001; 2006) who suggest individuals usually begin their association with a team by becoming aware of that team through friends, family and the media. For similar reasons, established teams should investigate ways to maximise market share by way of increasing their visibility and accessibility in ways which capitalise on their superior market share.

Second, sport organisations can use the insights to understand the effectiveness of various associations as predictors of attitudinal loyalty. Based on our findings, both high and small market share teams should focus on communicating positive messages around five

associations (Success, Logo, Product Delivery, Nostalgia and Peer Group Acceptance). To achieve this, marketing materials should prominently display club logos, reference historical past achievements and emphasise that the team strives for success whilst playing in an attractive manner. As the association Peer Group Acceptance was shown to be negatively related to attitudinal loyalty, marketing managers should avoid using peer group pressure tactics in attempts to develop attitudinally loyal fans. Whilst using socialisation agents such as friends remains a popular strategy to introduce individuals to sport teams (Funk & James, 2001), the current research findings indicate long term fan development initiatives should focus on highlighting the individual level link between each individual and the team. In addition to focusing on these associations, high market share teams would benefit by augmenting communications to portray desirable images for the association Fan Identification. Marketing collateral such as television advertisements, membership packages and social media pages should acknowledge the importance of fans and their contribution to the team and in turn, make salient the associative benefit of supporting their teams.

Third, sporting organisations may wish to reconsider their approaches to evaluating marketing programs, and implement new strategies in customer relationship management based on the current research findings. In evaluating their marketing effectiveness, high market share teams should not overestimate the effectiveness of their marketing efforts given that their customers are prone to showing higher loyalty simply due to the team's high market share status. On the other hand, small market share teams should not undervalue their marketing efforts but rather consider the double jeopardy effect and expect reduced loyalty simply due to their small status. Small market share teams should also focus more of their efforts on customer retention by focusing on providing superior customer service in order to make better use of their reduced potential customer base. In contrast to high market share

teams, small market share teams must be more efficient in customer retention as they have a smaller pool of potential fans which could be moved onto higher levels of engagement.

Fourth, sport organisations may use the findings of this study to explore positioning their brands outside of the double jeopardy line. Small market share teams such as the Sydney Swans may consider repositioning their brands as niche or super-loyal options in order to avoid the negative effects of double jeopardy associated with small market share teams (Dowling & Uncles, 1997). In line with this strategy, the club could establish exclusive or underground supporter clubs and highlight their appeal by advertising the uniqueness of the team in its market. Alternatively, the team could be positioned as an alternate leisure option which does not conflict with high market share rivals. Changing game dates and cross-promotion with high market share teams may be effective strategies for this type of repositioning.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This research represents a first step to exploring the applicability of double jeopardy in professional sport, and as such a number of limitations should be noted. First, the exploratory nature of the research resulted in a narrow focus in terms of our conceptualisation of loyalty. The current research was focused on attitudinal loyalty and did not consider behavioural loyalty. More robust tests of double jeopardy, which account for both attitudinal and behavioural components of loyalty, should be conducted given that loyalty is said to be comprised of attitudinal and behavioural dimensions (Day, 1969; Dick & Basu, 1994; Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Li, 2010; Oliver, 1999; Yang et al., 2005). Capitalising on this multidimensional approach, future research should also implement a longitudinal research design where respondent behaviour can be tracked over a number of time periods, so that loyalty as a function of repeat buying can be better assessed. Future sport brand double jeopardy investigations should also strive to assess the frequency that high market share fans

consume small market share team matches and vice versa, to further evaluate the effect of market share on loyalty and brand choice. It is possible that the switching tendencies of high market share team and small market share team fans differ in this regard. Whilst complete switching is rare in the sport context, what is of more interest is not absolute loyalty, but relative loyalty – whether fans of low market share sport teams consume more high market share team games than vice versa.

Second, although brand associations have been used previously to represent loyalty metrics (Filo et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001; Romaniuk, 2012) and we utilised previously verified sport team brand associations, we accept they are a narrow representation of the attributes and benefits consumers may link to teams. Considering the exploratory nature of this research, using a narrow but established set of brand associations linked to sport teams was deemed an acceptable starting point. To increase the generalisability of our exploratory findings, future research should investigate a broader range of associations, and measure these associations with multiple items in order to increase instrument validity and reliability.

Third, the current study was contextually confined to one specific region within the Australian sports marketplace and explored two professional sport codes scarcely popular outside of Australia. We also combined a number of NRL teams to form our high market share sample which was compared against only one AFL team. In this case, these perimeters were necessary in order to broadly and correctly identify high market share and small market share teams and to achieve a suitable sample size. However, these factors mean the results reported in this study may not necessarily extrapolate to the entire sport marketplace.

Future studies should transcend multiple sports, skill levels and national boundaries to inform the generalisability of the double jeopardy law, and the applicability to the sport context. To extend this study's findings future research should also examine double jeopardy

across diverse sport consumer profiles, utilising theoretically sound sport spectator segmentation tools (e.g., Doyle, Kunkel & Funk, in press). Additionally, researchers may wish to explore single-sport single-market settings (e.g., L.A Lakers and L.A Clippers both play professional basketball in Los Angeles, Getafe and Real Madrid both play football in Madrid) as this approach would provide a control for possible cross-code influences not accounted for in this study. Finally, researchers could explore the role of competition or rivalry in fostering sport team loyalty and how the existence of rivalries may impact sport brand double jeopardy. Given the high saturation of NRL teams in Sydney, it is possible that NRL teams were able to utilise developed rivalries in ways which strengthened fan loyalty, an opportunity the AFL may not have been able to capitalise upon.

7. Conclusion

In summary, this paper has been the first to explore sport brand double jeopardy. Given current results and that double jeopardy has been observed across an array of consumer product and service consumption categories, sport management academics are urged to consider the theory in future research. Future research attempts into the area are encouraged and are likely to contribute to knowledge surrounding the widespread effects of this marketing law. Based on the exploratory results of the current study, future research is positioned to extend knowledge related to sport teams and their consumers by informing sport management academics and brand managers as to the effect of market share on sport fan loyalty. In conclusion, sport brands do not appear immune to the effects of double jeopardy with high market share brand teams evaluated in this study benefitting from increased instances of attitudinal loyalty relative to their small market share brand counterparts.

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Table 1

Summary of ANOVA: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations reported for Attitudinal Loyalty and Brand Associations

Construct	<i>NRL fans</i> (<i>N=627</i>)		<i>AFL fans</i> (<i>N=167</i>)		F (1,792)
	M	SD	M	SD	
Attitudinal Loyalty	5.86	(1.00)	5.33	(1.07)	32.72**
Success	6.08	(1.00)	5.63	(1.13)	25.64**
Star Player	5.64	(1.20)	5.25	(1.12)	14.24**
Logo	5.89	(1.09)	5.45	(1.15)	21.27**
Tradition	5.99	(1.08)	5.28	(1.13)	56.76**
Nostalgia	5.87	(1.15)	5.18	(1.12)	47.81**
Pride in Place	4.74	(1.29)	3.76	(1.60)	68.83**
Fan Identification	4.97	(1.41)	4.46	(1.37)	17.08**
Peer Group Acceptance	2.58	(1.52)	3.26	(1.48)	26.26**
Escape	4.65	(1.51)	4.37	(1.53)	4.73*
Head Coach	5.41	(1.18)	5.57	(1.05)	2.25
Product Delivery	5.76	(1.01)	5.66	(0.99)	1.22
Management	5.08	(1.16)	5.15	(1.02)	0.57
Stadium	5.20	(1.28)	5.18	(1.14)	0.02

Notes. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = F Value and degrees of freedom.

** $p < .001$

* $p < .05$

Table 2

Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Brand Associations predicting Attitudinal Loyalty for NRL team fans (N=627)

Item	B	SE B	β	<i>t</i>	R	R ²
					.76	.57
Nostalgia	.32	.04	.35	8.74**		
Success	.27	.04	.22	6.55**		
Product Delivery	.11	.04	.18	2.64*		
Fan Identification	.10	.03	.13	3.39**		
Peer Group Acceptance	-.09	.02	-.12	-4.42**		
Logo	.09	.04	.09	2.36*		
Stadium	-.06	.03	-.08	-2.28*		
Management	-.07	.04	-.08	-1.97*		
Star Player	.03	.03	.03	.88		
Tradition	-.01	.04	-.01	-.11		
Pride in Place	.04	.03	.05	1.45		
Escape	.03	.03	.04	1.13		
Head Coach	.06	.04	.07	1.69		

Notes. β = standardised beta; *t* = *t*-value; R² = Adjusted R square.

** *p* < .001

* *p* < .05

Table 3

Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Brand Associations predicting Attitudinal Loyalty for AFL team fans (N=167)

Item	B	SE B	β	<i>t</i>	R	R ²
					.79	.59
Nostalgia	.28	.06	.31	4.58**		
Success	.23	.07	.26	3.52**		
Product Delivery	.18	.08	.18	2.17*		
Fan Identification	.08	.05	.12	1.58		
Peer Group Acceptance	-.09	.04	-.14	-2.53*		
Logo	.16	.06	.19	2.60*		
Stadium	.01	.06	.01	.07		
Management	-.10	.07	-.10	-1.40		
Star Player	-.05	.06	-.06	-.80		
Tradition	-.09	.07	-.10	-1.30		
Pride in Place	-.01	.04	-.01	-.23		
Escape	.06	.05	.09	1.34		
Head Coach	.13	.08	.14	1.63		

Notes. β = standardised beta; *t* = *t*-value; R² = Adjusted R square.

** *p* < .001

* *p* < .05

Appendix Survey Items

Items Used	Source
Attitudinal Loyalty I am committed to <i>[Team name]</i> . I intend to keep supporting <i>[Team name]</i> . My preference for supporting <i>[Team name]</i> would not willingly change. Even if my close friends recommended following another team, I would not stop following <i>[Team name]</i> . It would be difficult to change my beliefs about <i>[Team name]</i> .	Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Pritchard et al., 1999.
Brand Associations Success Star Player Head Coach Management Logo Product Delivery Tradition Nostalgia Pride in Place Escape Fan Identification Peer Group Acceptance Stadium	Gladden & Funk, 2002.

Figure 1. The Double Jeopardy brand line and exceptions. Adapted from “Do customer loyalty programs really work?” by G. Dowling and M. Uncles, 1997, *Sloan Management Review*, 38, p. 75. Copyright 1997 from MIT Sloan Management Review/Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Adapted with permission.